



## POSITION DESCRIPTION

**TITLE:** GENERAL OFFICE ASSISTANT / PUBLIC RELATIONS

**STATUS:** EXEMPT

**REVISED:** 11/01/2015

**SALARY:** \$24,000.00 – 32,000.00 Commensurate with Experience

**REPORTS TO:** Executive Director

### **JOB SUMMARY:**

The General Office Assistant / Public Relations will provide administrative support to the programs of the Knox County Housing Authority (KCHA). This position shall perform a variety of clerical tasks including typing, answering telephones, filing, processing incoming and outgoing mail, rent collection, computer entry, and other tasks in support of agency operations, in accordance with established protocol; and provide information and assistance to the public regarding Authority policies and procedures. Employee shall exercise considerable judgment and initiative in carrying out day-to-day responsibilities subject to established procedures, practices and standards. Duties require knowledge of HUD regulations on participant selection and the ability to maintain records and prepare accurate and concise reports. Work involves regular interaction with the general public, at times under trying conditions. This position will be a point of contact for program participants, participant families, landlords, other social service agencies or community organizations, KCHA staff, neighboring housing authority staff, HUD staff, and the general public. Additionally, this position is responsible for working with the Executive Director (ED) for planning and coordinating all aspects of public relations for the KCHA. Work shall involve increasing community awareness about KCHA by developing and executing effective communication and media relations programs, including social media and website management.

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

The General Office Assistant / Public Relations shall exhibit a diverse range of skill within an office environment, including internal and external customer service, telephone etiquette, computer and word processing, office machine efficiency, clerical and receptionist services, and other standard office processes and procedures. As experience and proficiency are gained and demonstrated, assignments may become progressively varied and complex. This position is expected to have knowledge of the policies and procedures of the agency and to exercise

initiative, independent judgment and discretion in performing duties, delegations, and special assignments.

**MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

General Office Assistant / Public Relations duties include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

**1. Tenant Accounting:**

- a. Receives in-person payments from residents for rent, maintenance charges and security deposits;
- b. Issues receipts for payments and posts payment to resident files in computer system;
- c. Verifies cash received against receipts, develops Daily Statement of Operations (DSO) report and compares with bank deposits;
- d. Balances daily bank collections and works with bank personnel toward resolution of errors;
- e. Inputs rent payments, resident accounting transactions and resident file maintenance to the computer system;
- f. Posts housing information and data in connection with KCHA residents into applicable systems;
- g. Prepares analysis on resident accounts and verifies collection loss accounts;
- h. Assists in maintaining and compiling statistical and other data required for various records, reports and programs;
- i. Assists with the typing of notices and other documents related to tenant accounting;
- j. Works with the Finance Coordinator and other staff on reconciliation of account data, payments, bank statements, etc.

**2. Waiting List Management / Application / Intake**

- a. Application Processing: Accept and process public housing program applications from the public. Explain program procedures, eligibility criteria, waiting list preferences, anticipated waiting times, and other program issues to applicants and the public. Place applicants on the waiting list in accordance with KCHA's Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP), the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan, and applicable HUD guidance.

- b. Review applications and other documents for completeness, consistency, and validity
- c. Enter applications into the KCHA tenant management system (computer) accurately and in accordance with Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP);
- d. Participate in a waiting list update (purge) at least annually; update applicants' personal information and waiting list placement as required;
- e. Select applicants from the waiting list for admission in accordance with HUD regulations and other requirements including, but not limited to, 24 CFR part 5, subpart L, protection for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, and with KCHA policies stated in the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) .
- f. Process applications and information received from these families and determine eligibility for the program;
- g. Assist with the re-examination process as assigned;
- h. Utilize the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system in its entirety to reduce administrative and subsidy payment errors in accordance with HUD administrative guidance;
- i. Perform related work as required.

**3. Public Relations:**

- a. Greet visitors to the office and assist them with general questions and/or direct them to the appropriate person or location;
- b. Apply knowledge of federal rules and regulations, state and local law and ordinances, and agency policy and rules, and maintaining associated records;

**4. Other Duties:**

- a. Greet visitors to the office and assist them with general questions and/or direct them to the appropriate person or location;
- b. Apply knowledge of federal rules and regulations, state and local law and ordinances, and agency policy and rules, and maintaining associated records;
- c. Acts as office receptionist, answering telephone and in-person inquiries for information or services, directs visitors to proper person and/or office;

- d. Conduct research and compose replies to correspondence, detailed activity reports, memoranda, etc;
- e. Field telephone calls, answering or rerouting questions, complaints and requests;
- f. Schedule and cancel appointments, keeps a calendar of scheduled events for self, including travel plans;
- g. Prepare or assist in the preparation, calculation, typing, proofreading and recording of program statistical and financial data;
- h. Research and gather source material for the preparation of reports, articles, budget, speeches, and for other applicable purposes;
- i. Open, read and appropriately respond to email;
- j. Type a variety of complex narrative and technical reports, correspondence, memoranda and various related materials.
- k. Furnish persons with information about the KCHA programs, in person, through electronic communication (email), or by telephone;
- l. Complete special projects as assigned;
- m. Assist KCHA staff in program activities, perform responsible public relations duties through contact and association with visitors, federal and local officials, as well as general public;
- n. Attend and/or participate in various meetings related to Authority business during and after normal business hours;
- o. Perform related work as required.

**5. General Requirements:**

- a. Work cooperatively with other members of the agency, adjusting workload as necessary;
- b. Communicate with program participants, landlords, and other KCHA staff in a manner that is courteous and professional;
- c. Answer program participant questions, providing information on status of rent, unit inspections, provisions of the lease, tenant obligations, program regulations, Knox County Housing Authority policies and procedures, etc.;
- d. Return business-related calls within one business day;

- e. Participate in the revision of agency policies and procedures;
- f. Complete necessary and required training; ability to participate in a variety of settings – self learning, web based, classroom, travel, etc.;
- g. Submit monthly reports as requested; and
- h. Any other related tasks that support the goals and objectives of the KCHA.

**REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

1. Knowledge of proper methods of receiving, handling, receipting, and maintaining records of payments;
2. Knowledge of the practices, procedures, systems and policies of the Knox County Housing Authority and ability to interpret said knowledge concisely and accurately to program participants, the public, and other KCHA staff;
3. Knowledge of Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rules and regulations that apply to public housing authorities;
4. Knowledge of laws and standards that apply to public housing authorities;
5. Ability to carry out, without supervision, continuing assignments requiring the organization of material, the preparation of reports and the making of decisions within the framework of agency policies and procedures;
6. Knowledge of basic office practices, procedures, and equipment;
7. Knowledge of the principles of case supervision and file management;
8. Knowledge of the operation of KCHA computer systems and software;
9. Knowledge of the agencies that provide assistance and services to participants, including some knowledge of eligibility requirements;
10. Comprehensive knowledge of business English, spelling, arithmetic, punctuation, filing and grammar;
11. Ability to maintain required records such as participant files;
12. Ability to read and interpret policies and guidelines in order to make sound decisions;

13. Ability to research policies, procedures, and guidance in response to specific questions or issues; make recommendations regarding what guidance is applicable to the specific situation and what course of action should be taken;
14. Ability to prepare clear concise reports and make appropriate recommendations within scope of responsibility;
15. Ability to use basic office equipment such as telephone, fax, copier, and computer;
16. Ability to communicate verbally and in writing;
17. Ability to generate records, receipts, and reports efficiently using a calculator and the computer system;
18. Ability to establish and maintain effective work relationships with peers, superiors, participants, community service agencies and the public;
19. Ability to manage multiple priorities and multiple demands to accomplish tasks in accordance with established requirements;
20. Skilled in analyzing situations in order to identify problems and offer solutions, and exercising the use resourcefulness and tact in handling all situations;
21. Ability to exercise individual initiative and use discretion in handling confidential matters;
22. Skilled in communicating with all types of people in a wide variety of situations.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

The individual must possess the following knowledge, skills and abilities or be able to explain and demonstrate that s/he can perform the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation, using some other combination of skills and abilities.

1. Requires basic knowledge typically acquired with a high school diploma or GED, including basic writing, math, and reading skills, plus knowledge of basic office procedures and skills, or any combination of education, training or experience that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities.
2. Requires previous office experience working with the public in which the following skills were attained: effective telephone skills, ability to deal with a variety of people under constantly changing circumstances, ability to prioritize tasks with

minimal direction, ability to compose and type basic written and numerical documents, and familiarity with filing systems and standard business machines (such as copiers, calculators, postage meters, typewriter, computer equipment, fax machines, telephone systems, etc.).

3. Requires proficiency of word processing software, preferably Microsoft Office for Windows, or the ability to learn Microsoft Office with minimal training time. Requires proficiency and ability to use e-mail and the Internet. Ability to learn housing program software for data entry of applications, work orders, tenant account management, etc.
4. Must be capable of performing light lifting of up to 50 pounds, predominantly paper products, small office equipment, mail, files, etc. Many files are retrieved and stored in overhead shelving; these files may weigh up to 20 pounds. Files may be carried a distance of up to 500 feet from desk to storage facility. Mail is carried from office/car/post office a maximum of 500 feet. Mail is also retrieved daily from a postal box located on the outside of the office. Additional mail and documentation is retrieved from an inbox located at the Central Office/Cost Center.
5. Employees must have a valid Illinois Driver's license and a good driving record to be insurable under the KCHA's auto insurance. Employees must be capable of picking up and delivering mail to the local post office daily.
6. Although not mandatory, the following qualifications will enhance an individual's chance for success in the job and are desirable.
  - a. Previous experience working with public programs and/or a basic familiarity with various local community agency programs and services available to low income individuals
  - b. Familiarity and/or fluency in languages and dialects for which there is a current need.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS/MISCELLANEOUS:**

**1. Supervision Given and Received**

The employee receives work assignments and instructions from the Finance Coordinator. Normally, the instructions are broad and general, both written and oral. The individual in this position must be able to work independently, performing relatively complex work in an accurate and timely manner without close supervision. Situations not covered by instructions may be referred to the Finance Coordinator, Assistant Director, or Executive Director or handled by the employee, depending on the circumstances. The employee's work is reviewed sporadically for thoroughness,

accomplishment of objectives, and compliance with existing policies and procedures. Employee has no supervisory responsibilities.

**2. Guidelines**

Most work is performed according to existing procedures or written guidelines, such as HUD regulations, handbooks, desk references, or existing records. The employee will frequently be required to use independent judgment in making recommendations and decisions.

**3. Complexity**

The employee performs relatively complex work requiring a working understanding of HUD rules and requirements relative to public housing program. In addition, the employee must be able to handle complex interpersonal situations involving conflicts with skill and professionalism.

**4. Scope and Effect**

The employee works with the public housing program participants, other KCHA staff, other agencies, and participant families. The employee's work is essential to the successful operation of the Knox County Housing Authority. The employee's efforts affect the KCHA's ability to maximize funding eligibility as well as the agency's performance within assessment programs such as Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) and Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP).

**5. Personal Contacts**

The employee has continual contact with KCHA program participants, other KCHA staff, other agencies, and participant families. Most contacts are structured in nature and the employee is expected to use normal tact and professional courtesy. Occasionally a contact may be uncooperative or antagonistic, and the employee would be expected to use above-average tact and courtesy. Failure to respond courteously could adversely affect the public's opinion of the program and the KCHA.

**6. Work Environment**

The employee's work involves primarily sedentary office work in a typical office environment. Additionally there is some degree of stress resulting from contact with applicants, participants, the public and other employees. The work of the employee involves the normal risks or discomforts associated with an office environment, but is usually in an area that is adequately cooled, heated, lighted, and ventilated.



