



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Housing NWT	Manager, Communications	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
93-16898	Yellowknife	Policy and Planning/HQ

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Manager, Communications (Manager) is responsible for the management, development and coordinated implementation of the Department's communication strategies and plans and the provision of specialist advice and expertise related to media relations, promotion of Housing NWT's objectives and the goals through production of multimedia, audio visual, print and promotional materials. Work is undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation, policy and standards, including the Government of Northwest Territories Communications Policy, Directives, Guidelines and Business Processes, as well as overall departmental and government strategic direction.

SCOPE

Located in Yellowknife, the Manager, Communications (Manager) reports to the Director, Policy and Planning (Director) and oversees the development and implementation of timely and often politically sensitive corporate communications for Housing NWT. The Manager provides leadership to senior management and staff on communications with the overall goal of developing and delivering effective corporate communications for Housing NWT, and serves a leadership role in the management and execution of effective communication for the corporation.

The Manager is part of Housing NWT's Senior Management Committee. The duties of the position have an impact on the Minister Responsible for the Housing NWT, GNWT departments, Local Housing Organizations, community governments, Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations and individual clients of Housing NWT.

Housing NWT provides public and market housing programs and services including subsidized rental and homeownership programs (including purchase and repairs), and unsubsidized rental housing in rural and remote communities. Policy and program

development play a key role in creating appropriate programs to address the core housing need of NWT residents and promote self-reliance. Housing NWT incorporates energy-efficient technologies in its housing design and in the retrofitting of housing to improve its sustainability and energy efficiency. Housing NWT also works in partnership with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to cost share the development and improvement of housing infrastructure across the NWT. At the community level, Housing NWT partners with Local Housing Organizations, and municipal and Indigenous governments to manage and administer community housing services in 33 communities.

Since the April 2021, Housing NWT has been engaged in a renewal strategy process. This began with the creation of a new mandate in the fall of 2021 as directed by the Legislative Assembly, engagements with Housing NWT staff and the Council of Leaders Housing Working Group, and various reports and opinion papers. The new mandate reflects Housing NWT's role in social wellness, and sets the stage for further steps in the renewal. The mandate's new mission acknowledges that Housing NWT is part of an integrated wellness support system, composed of other government departments and partners, while also recognizing that supports must focus on those who need them most.

Building off the results and momentum of new Housing NWT mandate, the strategic renewal effort has now begun a review of Housing NWT programs and policies to shift the corporation and its programs towards improved service delivery, person-centred approaches, transparency and equitable treatment.

The Manager, Communications will be required to maintain a broad understanding of these and other key initiatives, governance models, operations, department and Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) priorities, program development and delivery, legislative and policy framework; and political matters related to housing at national and territorial levels.

It will be necessary for the incumbent to recognize the complexities, inter- relationships and diverse goals related to Housing NWT's role in the social wellness system and to build and maintain relationships and work in a collaborative manner with staff at all levels across Housing NWT, other GNWT departments and all levels of government, respecting that interests and perspectives do not always align, is essential to ensure success.

This position also consults and works with non-governmental organizations to develop and implement communications plans.

Primary client groups include policy and decisions makers within Housing NWT, more particularly the Minister, Deputy Minister and senior management of Housing NWT.

There are three distinct partners/components/pillars (Housing NWT/Corporate and Cabinet Communications/LHOs) requiring collaboration and coordination for effective communications in Housing NWT. Executive and Indigenous Affairs plays a critical role in the communications function within the GNWT and works directly with the Manager of Communications. The Local Housing Organizations (LHOs) operate separately from Housing NWT, have a communications function as well, however under the standards and policy

frameworks of Housing NWT, and are responsible for the administration of approximately 2,400 public housing units across the NWT. The Manager, Communications plays a key and pivotal role in the communications function and the flow of information across these partners/components/pillars.

The incumbent will work collaboratively and strategically with communications partners and staff to set communications direction, policies and procedures for Housing NWT, ensuring these are in accordance with legislation and broader GNWT communications policies and directives set by EIA.

Housing NWT programs and services are highly visible and directly affect the lives of NWT residents. Clear communication of Housing NWT's role and functions, both internally to employees and externally to clients, stakeholders and the public at large, is essential to ensure appropriate and timely information is provided to the public; clients are aware of available programs and services and how to access them; Indigenous governments, community governments and stakeholders are aware of Housing NWT initiatives and how they may be affected; and, staff are informed of Housing NWT's direction. It is the responsibility of the incumbent to manage the development and implementation of appropriate communications strategies to meet these objectives.

The Manager has significant latitude and freedom in developing strategies to meet these challenges. The Manager's degree of success has a significant impact on the internal and external relations of Housing NWT, including those with stakeholders, political leadership and the public.

The Manager directly supervises Communication Advisor positions, and supervision of an intern, summer student and other casuals may be required. The incumbent is responsible for supervising and managing their team in accordance with existing HR policy and procedures, and is accountable for the Unit's budget in addition to managing communications- related contracts on behalf of other Housing NWT staff.

The Manager, Communications is expected to honour and promote a culturally safe environment at all times and to ensure they and their staff interact with clients and families, community members, partners and colleagues in a tactful, respectful and humble manner that is free of racism and discrimination.

Working outside of regular hours may be required to assist with media issues or emergency situations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Lead and manages the development, implementation and monitoring of communications standards, policies, directives and procedures for Housing NWT.

- Develop and implement Housing NWT's standards, policies, directives and procedures for communication activities, in accordance with GNWT Communication Policy, *Official Languages Act*, Visual Identity Program, Common User Experience Guidelines.

- Ensure staff within Housing NWT and the LHOs are aware of these requirements.
- Collaborate with the Manager, Communications (Cabinet Communications) and Strategic Lead, Communications Operations, Manager to ensure that internal communications policies and procedures do not conflict with GNWT requirements and procedures.
- Monitor communication activities across Housing NWT for conformity to standards, policies, directives and procedures and take action to address problems or opportunities.
- Manage development and implementation of training in communications and media relations and participates in delivery

2. Provide strategic communications expert advice to Housing NWT program area staff, Senior Management Team, Associate Deputy Minister and President/CEO.

- Advise Senior Management and Housing NWT staff on various communications strategies, approaches and activities to advance and promote the overall mandate, vision, mission, goals and objectives of Housing NWT.
- Provide strategic communications advice directly to the Associate Deputy Minister, President/CEO and Minister with respect to politically sensitive activities of the Department that directly impacts relationships with communities and Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations.
- Recommend and advise Senior Management on communications initiatives anticipated and required to meet the information needs of Housing NWT's key clients and stakeholders.
- Recommend strategic communications approaches designed to complement and enhance Housing NWT's policy, legislative and program initiatives.
- Participate in interdepartmental and intergovernmental working groups established to advance projects or initiatives in which Housing NWT has an interest or a role.
- Build collaborative relationships with key stakeholders (including communities and Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations) to support Housing NWT's communication plans and strategies and to facilitate successful policy development and program delivery.
- Bring research, ideas, issues and observations together to bring clarity to others and facilitate sound decision-making related to Housing NWT communications.
- Manage and oversee the drafting and/or editing of Minister Statements for delivery at community and public events, in the Legislative Assembly and at federal, Provincial Territorial (FPT and PT) tables.
- Support the Manager, Communications (Cabinet Communications) to develop Issues Management Plans related to Housing NWT when necessary.

3. Participate in interdepartmental and intergovernmental communications by developing and/or providing Housing NWT positions and perspectives on shared communications initiatives

- Represent Housing NWT on interdepartmental working groups and with Cabinet Communications and Strategic Communications Planning.
- Represent Housing NWT in intra-governmental communications work for joint

communiqués, news releases and other announcements.

- Represent Housing NWT at Housing Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) meetings of communications officials.
- Participate in the development of nation-wide messaging and awareness campaigns.
- Participate in the development of FPT housing related communications plans and develop and maintain relationships with other communication professionals at a national level.
- Liaise with FPT counterparts of housing departments in the preparation of joint communiqués, news releases and other announcements.
- Provide communications expertise in developing and implementing Housing NWT's emergency communications plan (as part of the overall GNWT emergency plan) in the event of a public emergencies (e.g. flooding, COVID-19 related measures) and participate with GNWT departments and other housing jurisdictions on inter-agency planning and implementation.

4. Manage the development and implementation of communications plans and strategies for Housing NWT.

- Direct research to identify internal and external communications needs, risks and opportunities including identification of target audiences.
- Proactively monitor the internal and external environment to provide advice and make changes related to issues and trends that may influence or affect strategic communications plans.
- Manage the development of communications plans and strategies that include measurable communications objectives to support the delivery of policy and programs as well as appropriate and cost-effective approaches and channels to ensure messages reach target audiences.
- Ensure that Housing NWT plans are developed pursuant to established communications planning processes and procedures.
- Ensure messaging is consistent with the mandate of Housing NWT, is aligned with GNWT mandate, policy, legislation, goals and objectives where appropriate and focused for targeted audiences.
- Embed milestones and measurable outcomes, for the purpose of evaluation and tracking, into communications plans and strategies.
- Monitor, evaluate and report on the effectiveness and impacts of communications plans, strategies and initiatives and recommends alternatives or revisions as required.

5. Manage the development and implementation of operational public affairs, media relations and issues management.

- Provide expert advice on matters related to operational public affairs and media relations and recommend appropriate means for conveying messages to the public.
- Manage Housing NWT media enquiries and recommend strategies and messaging to manage controversial or negative media coverage of the department or its business.
- Develop and maintain a network of media contacts.
- Provide support for communications related to emergency situations and liaise with federal communications officials as required for emergencies.

- Participate as a member on issues management teams.
- Work with Cabinet Communications for the release of information to the media and for the development of plans and materials in support of political communications.
- Manage and oversee the drafting and/or editing of news releases, collateral material, messages and speaking notes.
- Ensure media relations and public affairs opportunities are considered along with other communications tactics as part of the overall communications planning process.

6. Manage the development and distribution of Housing NWT information, to the public, for marketing and promotional materials and activities.

- Provide advice on the development of public information, design of marketing initiatives and design and implementation of advertising and promotional activities in keeping with approved Housing NWT communications plans and objectives.
- Ensure that Housing NWT communications products are linked to communications objectives and approaches of established communications plans and are appropriate for the intended audience.
- Ensure Housing NWT communications products are consistent with official GNWT priorities and positions and developed in accordance with established government policies and guidelines, including the Visual Identity Program (VIP) and Common User Experience Guidelines.
- Ensure all internal and external communications materials are developed within established guidelines and standards, and in the appropriate languages, working with external contractors as required.
- Manage the corporate image including the visual standards for internal and external documents, corporate symbols and their applications, corporate reports, presentations, Ministerial speaking notes and speeches.
- Manage the development and maintenance of Housing NWT's website including reviewing content and ensuring compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.
- Manage Housing NWT's social media accounts including reviewing content and ensuring compliance with relevant policies and guidelines.
- Oversee the coordination of special events and media relations activities.
- Provide expert advice and assistance with the production and/or provision of communications products (print, audio-visual, social media, etc.) for internal and external audiences.
- Maintain an electronic and hardcopy inventory of communications resources.

7. Manage the Communications Unit and contribute to the achievement of Housing NWT objectives.

- Manage human resources (HR) functions including appropriate recruitment of staff following the HR guidelines for staffing, performance reviews, and discipline of staff reporting to the positions.
- Participate in strategic planning processes leading to the establishment of appropriate and measurable goals and objectives.
- Effectively communicate expectations and performance objectives to staff, and manage, monitor and evaluate performance at regular intervals.

- Develop staff capability through provision of ongoing advice, direction and support including provision of appropriate training or other development options.
- Ensure staff have access to necessary resources, supplies, equipment and information.
- Inform staff about governmental, departmental and divisional priorities.
- Develop and implement annual work plans which establish short- and long-term objectives for the unit.
- Assign work to staff in the unit.
- Assist in divisional budget planning and expenditure management.
- Prepare, manage and control the units' budget by monitoring expenditures, variance reports and taking corrective action as required.
- Develop and advertise Requests for Proposals and awards and manage contracts as necessary to retain contractors to undertake communications work for the department.
- Provide support to divisions management activities as directed from time to time.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

No unusual demands.

Environmental Conditions

No unusual conditions.

Sensory Demands

No unusual demands.

Mental Demands

The incumbent will be working in a high stress environment given the impact of the decisions that rely on the work of the position especially in relation to the credibility of Housing NWT and the Minister. Additionally, this stress is compounded by short and often shifting timelines and the incumbent is subject to deadline pressures, workload and concentrated efforts related to the issue at hand as well as keeping current with ongoing management responsibilities.

Travel may be required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of communications planning, public and media relations, including issues management, and evaluation methods.
- Knowledge of Housing NWT's goals and objectives and the political and social environment in which department programs and services are delivered.
- Knowledge of the current political, economic, social and cultural aspects of the NWT.

- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire knowledge of legislation for housing related matters in the NWT.
- Knowledge of and/or the ability to acquire and apply knowledge of relevant GNWT policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Knowledge in communications strategic planning methods and principles.
- Knowledge of problem-solving techniques.
- Knowledge of performance management and evaluation systems.
- Knowledge of project management concepts and practices.
- Knowledge of management theory and principles.
- Knowledge of parliamentary procedures.
- Management skills to lead, plan, organize, coordinate and complete complex and concurrent projects independently or in teams with time and resource constraints while monitoring progress and evaluating results.
- Knowledge of management of public consultation process.
- Ability to communicate effectively in writing and verbally to a variety of audiences with varying backgrounds, knowledge and levels of education.
- Ability to understand, develop and communicate complex material.
- Ability to analyze, interpret and critically assess relevant information that impacts Housing NWT's strategic communications.
- Ability to provide comprehensive advice to senior management based on analysis.
- Ability to interpret legislation and suggest an appropriate means of action.
- Knowledge of computer software including word processing, desktop publishing, email and internet applications.
- Ability to make effective oral presentations.
- Ability to lead teams and to build and sustain relationships with partners and stakeholders.
- Human relations knowledge and ability to supervise, train and mentor staff effectively.
- Skills in emergency and crisis communication with an ability to communicate Housing NWT's approach to these issues in a manner that will instill confidence in Housing NWT staff, Senior Managers, Minister and Executive Council.
- Ability to organize, prioritize and work under pressure and with deadlines.
- Ability to work with and manage contractor relationships.
- Ability to commit to actively upholding and consistently practicing personal diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness, as well as safety and sensitivity approaches in the workplace.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

A degree in a specialized communications field (such as media relations, public relations, journalism, or similar equivalent) and five (5) years of relevant experience including two (2) years in a supervisory role in communications, public administration or project management within a fast-paced environment that has changing and/or competing deadlines.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience will be considered.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)
 - Level required for this Designated Position is:
 - ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION
 - Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
 - READING COMPREHENSION:
 - Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
 - WRITING SKILLS:
 - Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
- ☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Select language

- ☐ Required
- ☐ Preferred