

CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	Legislative Assistant	E-PLAN
CLASS TITLE:	Program Technician	SG:E-9
DEPARTMENT:	Legislative	CS:N
		FLSA:N
		EEO4CODE:PP

JOB SUMMARY:

Performs advanced technical support activities and paraprofessional work for the City Council and handles the administrative functions of the Council office. Works with the Council President and other Council members, Department Heads, the Mayor's staff, other agencies and community groups to schedule Council meetings and set the business agenda. Prepares and disseminates the Council agenda. Serves as a resource on the municipal legislative process and other issues as needed, by coordinating orientation for new Council members, providing research, responding to public inquiries regarding City or Council actions, reporting trends in public opinion obtained through public contact, and explaining rules, projects, plans and initiatives to the public. Maintains schedules and calendars and serves as liaison to local, State and federal agencies. Works collaboratively with Executive staff, Department Heads and other staff. Maintains effective working relations with various community stakeholders in schools, business and public agencies, as well as with media representatives. Work requires a high degree of confidentiality and discretion in a sensitive public environment. Provides guidance as needed regarding the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, the Open Public Records Act and Roberts' Rules of Order.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS:

Directly responsible to the Council President (at the direction of the full Council) with coordination from the City Attorney. Works independently and establishes office procedures and work routines under the guidance of applicable Legislative Office and City policies and procedures, as well as federal, State, City and departmental laws, rules and regulations. May receive day-to-day guidance from the City Attorney, as needed. May assign and monitor work of part-time and/or temporary employees and interns.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

- 1. General Administrative Support:** Provides high level administrative support to the City Council. Works with the Council President to develop and monitor Legislative Department's budget, policies and procedures. Prepares and maintains the Legislative Department's budget and financial records, time sheets, etc. Maintains inventories and determines need for supplies, furniture and equipment. May research information needed for purchasing decisions.
- 2. Council Agendas and Agenda Bills:** Coordinates the preparation of Council agendas for various meetings. Schedules, coordinates, and prepares background materials for regular and special Council Committee meetings, workshops and retreats. Receives agenda bills and attachments and reviews for completeness. Works with departments to ensure Council receives all necessary agenda bill information for their deliberations. Assigns bill to Council standing committee(s) with estimated time for review and action. Schedules public hearings,

- dates and other agenda topics. Performs follow up work from agenda with department heads and staff for Council action needed.
- 3 **Public Notice:** Assists in the preparation and processing of public hearing notices for legal publication and required notification of appropriate property owners in accordance with state and local regulations. Provides timely notice of Council meetings, including to key stakeholders. Oversees the distribution of weekly agenda packets accordingly.
 - 4 **Council Committee Meetings:** Attends and records/tapes all public Committee meetings, prepares minutes and ensures necessary follow-up to all Committee/Council actions. Coordinates with the City Clerk Representative and other departments to ensure adequate administrative support for all Council meetings. Works with Council President to organize Council's annual reorganization meeting and retreat.
 - 5 **Scheduling and Logistics:** Maintains Council calendar of meetings and activities and Council member schedules. Organizes and coordinates logistical elements of Council meetings and retreats. Makes or coordinates travel arrangements for Council and staff members as needed; schedules appointments, meetings and appearances, maintains a disciplined, organized schedule. Coordinates joint meetings with other agencies as required.
 - 6 **Communications:** Receives and responds to a variety of inquiries, concerns and complaints from citizens and individuals with a business interest in the City. Screens and refers calls as appropriate. Acts as liaison between the Council and Mayor's office, City employees, and the public. Assists in the resolution of problems and concerns through explanation of City or departmental practices and policies. Researches issues. Attends meetings in order to keep informed of departmental activities, City projects, issues and actions. Establishes and maintains communication links with community stakeholders, other public agencies, and other entities regarding Council business.
 - 7 **Media and Public Relations:** Maintains a good working relationship with members of the media; supplies appropriate and accurate and timely information. Detects emerging issues in the community and advises on planning agendas, timing issues for action and wording of potential communications or actions.
 - 8 **Staff Supervision:** Hires and supervises part-time and temporary support staff and consultants as required: assigns and reviews work; may conduct performance appraisals, assess and provide for training and development needs, and attend to performance issues.
 - 9 **Records Management:** Acts as records manager for area of responsibility; maintains and updates office filing system; updates various policies and procedures manuals; responsible for sending/retrieving archival materials. Keeps accurate records of all contracts, bonds, or other legal documents.
 - 10 **Council Processes Expert:** Serves as Council's subject matter expert on the municipal legislative process, Open Public Meetings Act, Open Public Records Act and Roberts' Rules of Order. Provides continuity between Councils and is an information resource on issues and historical background. Assists Council members to make sound decisions regarding appropriate Council member actions and communications.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. May provide back up to City Clerk Representative and other City staff members as appropriate.
2. Other duties within the scope of the assigned classification or the classifications below.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities):

Knowledge of:

- The Municipal legislative process, public notice requirements, Open Public Meetings Act, Public Records Act and Roberts' Rules of Order.
- Municipal administration and familiarity with the functions and activities of the departments and divisions of municipal government.
- State and local related codes and regulations, policies and procedures regarding legislative procedures and public notice requirements.

Skills:

- Excellent literacy skills including reading, composition, knowledge of standard and business English usage, punctuation, spelling, grammar, and format.
- Excellent interpersonal skills to deal with the public, staff, elected officials and media using courtesy and tact in sensitive or high pressure situations.
- Excellent listening skills and the ability to communicate orally and in writing in clear concise language appropriate for the purpose and parties addressed.
- Problem solving, decision making, time management, planning and organizing skills.
- Proficient in the use of standard software applications including word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, database management and document/records management programs.

Ability to:

- Read, understand and apply ordinances, laws, policies and procedures applicable to the scope of work.
- Develop and maintain a working familiarity with Council business and priorities, current and on-going City legislative issues, and community stakeholders.
- Maintain the highest level of professionalism, tact and discretion in a frequently high-pressure environment.
- Tolerate stress and handle several tasks simultaneously while maintaining accuracy and attention to detail in an environment of frequent interruptions.
- Work independently and assume responsibility in carrying out position responsibilities.
- Exercise sound judgment to solve problems in stressful situations.
- Organize, prioritize and schedule work to meet legal and business deadlines and demands of peak workloads while maintaining accuracy and attention to detail.
- Apply critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Handle information with discretion and maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information and materials.
- Deal tactfully with the public and respond effectively in potentially confrontational situations.
- Communicate and work effectively with co-workers, City employees, public agencies, attorneys, and the public.
- Demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance, including during periods of inclement weather.
- Physically perform the essential functions of the job, including:
 - Frequently operate a computer and read a computer screen or typewritten page;

- Frequently communicate verbally;
- Operate a multi-line telephone using a clear, well-modulated voice and good diction;
- Hear in an environment with background noise and foot traffic;
- Sit for long periods of time;
- Occasionally lift and transport objects up to twenty-five (25) pounds;

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed in an executive office setting of high public contact and visibility, as well as in a semi-private office with computer workstation. May experience frequent interruptions. May also require occasional travel.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- High school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) required. College or vocational training in area related to the position, such as office management, public administration, or other related area is preferred.
- A minimum of five (5) years office administration or executive support including at least two (2) years as an executive secretary/assistant preferred.
- Proficiency with word processing, spreadsheet, document management and other technology applications.
- Keyboarding skills required at 50 words per minute.
- Municipal or other governmental experience strongly preferred.
- Experience in a public service organization preferred.
- Combination of education and experience that provides the applicant with the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the job will be considered.

PREPARED BY: Barry Bjork
1/16/80

REVIEWED BY: _____
Cathy Lehman, Council President

REVISED BY: BS 9/85
BS/KH 4/86
PB 3/95
KH 4/04
CL/LK 1/14