

DEPUTY PRESS SPOKESPERSON/ DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Communications Unit of the Office of the Speaker is responsible for developing and executing the communications strategy of the House Democratic Caucus and its members. The Deputy Press Spokesperson/Deputy Communications Director supports a team of Communications Specialists, Graphic Designers, Videographers, Photographers and administrative staff, and reports directly to the Communications Director.

Ideal candidates will have experience in media relations, communications strategy, and developing a clear message around an issue as well as managing a team. The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to (i) execute an overall strategy for the relationship between the media and the Office, and (ii) thrive in a professional, fast-paced work environment.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Continually build relationships with key traditional and non-traditional media outlets, advocacy groups, and key stakeholders;
- Condense complex legislative concepts into persuasive and concise writing for caucus-wide, regional, and district-specific messaging and communications campaigns;
- Prepare rapid response protocols and pre-emptive responses;
- Proactively work to identify local, regional, and statewide issues that members will have to respond to;
- Work with Legislative Director to understand members' legislative priorities and plan issue-based communications support accordingly;
- Oversee a staff of communications specialists, graphic designers, photographers and videographer and provide final approval for all written communications produced by the unit;
- Plan and execute staff and member training and professional development; and
- Assist in other projects and duties as assigned.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Respond to media inquiries received by the Speaker and the staff in conjunction with Communications Director
- Assist with the preparation of external communications material for the Speaker and other designees concerning information the Speaker wishes to highlight, on behalf of both himself and the Office of the Speaker and the Illinois House
- Develop and execute best practices for consistent, optimized regional/local communications
- Assist in the preparation of the Speaker and caucus members for media interviews and speaking engagements

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree, preferably in a communications-related field, and at least 5 years of work experience;
- Experience managing diverse, distributed teams;
- Strong writing skills with AP style knowledge;
- Persuasion skills, both written and oral;
- Ability to work in an unpredictable work environment and the willingness to work long hours, when needed;
- Professional demeanor and the ability to adapt and work with different or difficult personalities;
- A demonstrated interest in state government, politics and policy, current affairs, public service or non-profit work, particularly in Democratic politics;
- Computer proficiency, preferably with the ability to work with data and social media;
- Ability to provide direction and feedback to a broad cross selection of staff; and
- Strong understanding of Illinois media, the legislative process, and the political landscape
- Proven ability to work well within a team
- Ability to thrive in a fast-paced work environment, work well under tight deadlines, and readily adapt to changing priorities
- Demonstrated organizational skills and ability to manage multiple tasks/projects at once
- On the record experience and experience working with news media

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

- Work is largely performed in the Illinois State Capitol Building Complex in Springfield, Illinois, or in the Bilandic Building in Chicago, Illinois, both of which are open to the public. Security for the Capitol Complex is provided by Illinois Secretary of State Police. Security for the Bilandic Building is provided by the Illinois State Police.
- The working environment can be noisy, and the building can be congested with constituents, lobbyists, tour groups, and demonstrators.
- The person in this position needs to be able to remain in a stationary position for extended periods of time, as well as to move about inside the capitol building and grounds as necessary.
- The person in this position constantly operates a computer and other office productivity machinery.
- The person in this position frequently communicates with staff, legislators, lobbyists, and members of the public, and must be able to professionally exchange accurate information in these situations.
- Typical work hours are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm on non-session days. Evening hours will be required on days when the House is in session. Hours are subject to change. Occasional weekends may be required.
- Some travel may be required.

SALARY RANGE:

- Competitive salary with a minimum of \$90,000.
- Health, dental, vision, prescription, behavioral health, and life insurance, for details visit:
<https://www2.illinois.gov/cms/benefits/StateEmployee/Pages/StateInsuranceProgram.aspx>
- Participation in State Employees' Retirement System
- Optional participation in health savings account and deferred compensation programs
- Competitive vacation, sick, and personal time

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS SHOULD SUBMIT COVER LETTER, CV, AND CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THREE PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES TO:

Pamela Lassiter
Human Resources Director
Illinois House of Representatives
Office of the Speaker
Room 419, Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706
plassiter@hds.ilga.gov

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