

**TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE
VACANCY
Inclusion Through Diversity**

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office
125 E. Court Street
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-5526

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Minorities and women are encouraged to apply

TITLE: Communications Director

SALARY: 92,747.20 hire rate - \$97,635.20 work rate after 9 months

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT: Full Time

ISSUE DATE: 11/07/24

THE FINAL DATE TO FILE APPLICATIONS: 12/08/24

DATE THAT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM POSTING: 12/09/24

RESIDENCY WAIVED

Lead strategic communications, media relations, and community outreach for our innovative County government. Shape public engagement, promote transparency, and ensure consistent messaging across departments. Ideal candidates have leadership experience, strong public relations skills, and a passion for public service. Join us and make an impact!

Please submit a cover letter and a resume.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS: EITHER:

1. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Master's Degree in Communications, English, Journalism, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing, Public or Business Administration, Social Sciences or a related field; **OR**
2. Graduation from a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications, English, Journalism, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing, Public or Business Administration, Social Sciences or a related field; **AND** two (2) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in a position with substantial public information responsibility; **OR**
3. Completion of two years of study (at least 60 college credit hours) in a regionally accredited or New York State registered college or university with major coursework in Communications, English, Journalism, Public Relations, Public Administration, Marketing, Public or Business Administration, Social Sciences or a related field; **AND** four (4) years of full-time paid (or the equivalent part-time) experience in a position with substantial public information responsibility; **OR**
4. Any combination of training and experience equal to or greater than that described in (a), (b) and (c) above.

Tompkins County is Committed to Equity and Inclusion. We encourage those with similar values to apply.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF THE CLASS:

The Communications Director acts as a member of the Tompkins County leadership team, and is responsible for developing and managing the delivery of a comprehensive engagement strategy and communication plan for community outreach, public relations, public information and media relations that amplify the County's priorities and drives engagement across internal and external communities, while clearly defining objectives, channels, timelines, and measures for success. The incumbent develops and implements the organization's brand and the branding for County departments and programs and serve as the organization's primary point of contact for the local, regional, and national news media, delivering pitches, fielding questions, ensuring accurate coverage, and planning for media appearances by County officials. The Communications Director works directly with and assists the Legislature and department heads to develop and issue key information about County government, its services, finances, people, special projects, serving as a leader and advisor in all communications as needed.

The Director plays a critical role in building public trust through various communications programs and initiatives and advancing transparency and accountability of Tompkins County government. The Director ensures that critical public information is accessible in different languages, pursuant to policies on translation and language access. The incumbent issues policy level directives and functions in a highly autonomous manner, serving as lead emergency Public Information Officer (PIO) for Tompkins County working with community first-response agencies and other County and outside agency PIO's in the event of a widespread or long-term disaster. Supervision is exercised over the Media Production Assistant. The incumbent performs all related duties as required.

TYPICAL WORK ACTIVITIES:

- Directs staff and contracted vendors in the coordination, development and implementation of internal and external communications, public information and community relations activities (i.e., broadcasting or streaming of meetings, website, social marketing programs, special events, etc.);
- Supports County Administrator and other organizational leaders in the development of communications, including speeches, presentations and print/digital communications. Oversees the creation of background briefing documents for the Administrator before major interviews, meetings and presentations;
- Advises and counsels management and staff on policies, plans, and practices that affect the County's relationship with the public;
- Coordinates, plans, and manages integrated internal and external communication activities;
- Interacts with administrators, elected officials and staff across multiple departments and agencies to coordinate messaging and public information for special projects and during emergency events;
- Develops key messages, press releases, social media, website content, print and electronic communication;
- Assists departments with the development and implementation of communication strategies and crisis communications;
- Provides accessible, easily understood information about Tompkins County services and programs using various communication strategies, tools, and tactics, including language translation;
- Anticipates media responses, prepares spokesperson(s) accordingly and responds to media inquiries;
- Administers and manages public and employee information programs;
- Provides oversight and direction for digital communications, including the website, e-newsletters, digital signage, intranet, and social media;
- May act as lead Public Information Officer or a team member of the PIO team responsible for communication functions during emergency or crisis events;
- Manages Tompkins County's role with the government access channel and digital streaming services;
- Plans, organizes, and directs efforts that enhance Tompkins County's image in the community through relationship building, special events, branding, and information sharing;
- Manages the dissemination of prompt, accurate information during emergency and disaster situations;
- Develops and recommends new communication methods and enhancements to better achieve County goals, including fostering the organization's core values and marketing County services to residents, community groups, and other external organizations;
- Coordinates public events, including open houses, ceremonies, and other public functions;
- Works cooperatively with the Public Information Advisory Board;
- Supervises the broadcasting of County Legislature and other public meetings;
- Responds to requests to produce video programming and photography;
- Prepares Highlights of Legislature meetings;
- Advises and trains County staff and officials in effective use of media;

- Engages departments in community outreach and education events;
- Monitors and manages the public information program budget.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES, AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- Thorough knowledge and understanding of the organization, functions, laws, policies, regulations, programs and goals of Tompkins County government;
- Superior oral and written communications skills, and the ability to create and articulate messages to a wide range of audiences;
- Advanced skills in graphic design and graphic software;
- Exceptional writing and presentation skills;
- Excellent organizational and strong project management skills to manage multiple projects which and the ability to design and execute process where none exists;
- Excellent editing and proofreading skills;
- Excellent organizational and interpersonal skills;
- Considerable knowledge of public relations principles and practices as they pertain to internal and external communication needs of a large organization;
- Ability to interact effectively with senior leadership, elected officials, community leaders and external constituencies;
- Self-starter, able to establish priorities and work independently;
- Demonstrated knowledge of current communications trends in a government setting, including extensive knowledge of the use of social media;
- Demonstrated ability to deliver complex messages in simple, concise and understandable ways;
- Attention to detail that drives high quality outputs;
- High-energy and optimistic;
- Comfortable with change and uses feedback to drive personal growth and development;
- Consistently acts with integrity and maintains a high degree of confidentiality;
- Initiative, courtesy, integrity and tact are required;
- The employee's physical condition shall be commensurate with demands of the position.

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FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Falsification of any part of the "Application for Employment" will result in disqualification.

Accepted candidates will be notified when and where to appear for the examination. If you do not receive your notice to appear at least three days before the date of the written examination, call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources at 274-5526. If an application is disapproved, due notice will be sent. This department does not make formal acknowledgment of the receipt of an application or take responsibility for non-delivery or postal delay.

Applicants must answer every question on the application form and make sure that the application is complete in all respects. Incomplete applications will be disapproved.

ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS OR DISABLED VETERANS desiring to claim additional credit will request the Veterans Credits application form, at any time between the date of application for examination(s) and the date of the establishment of the resulting eligible list. You must meet the requirements set by NYS for these credits and they may be used only once. **YOU MAY NOT CLAIM ADDITIONAL CREDITS AFTER THE ELIGIBLE LIST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT IS THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REQUEST THE VETERANS CREDIT APPLICATION FORMS AND TO SUBMIT THESE FORMS AND ANY SUPPORTING PAPERWORK BEFORE THE ELIGIBLE LIST IS ESTABLISHED.**

Tompkins County's written examinations are prepared and rated by the New York State Department of Civil Service in accordance with Section 23-2 of Civil Service Law. The provisions of the New York State Civil Service Rules and Regulations, which deal with the rating and review of the examinations apply.

The duration of the eligible lists may be fixed for a minimum of one and a maximum of four years and may be extended beyond four years if there has been a restriction against the filling of vacancies in that title.

The candidates must complete a separate "Application for Employment" for each open-competitive and/or promotional examination that the candidate is eligible to take.

All experience required meeting the acceptable training and experience is full-time experience. (Part-time experience will be credited on a prorated basis).

Appointment from an eligible list must be made from the top three candidates willing to accept the appointment.

Tompkins County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As part of its efforts to provide employment opportunities to the physically handicapped, Tompkins County Civil Service has adopted a rule permitting the employment of qualified physically handicapped persons without competitive examination (pursuant to Section 55 of Civil Service Law). If you meet the minimum qualifications for this position and wish to know more about this rule, please contact the Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Office.

Unless otherwise notified, candidates are permitted to use quiet, hand-held, and solar or battery powered calculators. Devices with Typewriter Keyboards, Spell Checkers, Personal Digital Assistants, Address Books, Language Translators, Dictionaries or any similar devices are prohibited. You may not bring books or other reference materials.

CROSS-FILING - APPLYING FOR CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS IN MULTIPLE JURISDICTIONS WHEN EXAMINATIONS ARE SCHEDULED ON THE SAME DATE: When applying for examinations across multiple jurisdictions - all of which are scheduled on the same day - you must submit a Tompkins County Cross-Filing Form. This form must be submitted no later than 4:30 PM on the final filing date of the examination. On this form, list each examination that you are taking and then tell us where you would like to sit. The purpose is to ensure that all of the test materials for the various examinations that you are taking will be available in one location. If you do not provide the cross-filing form to us by the final filing date, we cannot ensure that we can accommodate your desire to cross-file. If any of the examinations are State level examinations, you must sit at the State test center. You will still need to complete the Tompkins County cross-filing form. If sitting at the State site, the State will notify you of when and where to report for your examination(s) and you should bring all admittance letters to the State site. If you are not taking a State examination, bring all admittance letters to your chosen testing site. If you have any question please call Tompkins County Department of Human Resources Department (607) 274-5526. The Cross File form is located at <http://www.tompkins-co.org/personnel/CivilSrvForms/index.html>

FOR RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION AND HANDICAPPED PERSONS: If special arrangements for testing are required, please indicate this on your application.

ALL CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR POSITIONS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND BOCES GOVERNED BY TOMPKINS COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE MAY HAVE THE FOLLOWING SPECIAL REQUIREMENT. PER CHAPTER 180 OF THE LAWS OF 2000, AND BY REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION, TO BE EMPLOYED IN A POSITION DESIGNATED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR BOCES AS INVOLVING DIRECT CONTACT WITH STUDENTS, A CLEARANCE FOR EMPLOYMENT FROM THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS REQUIRED.

In conformance with Section 85-a of the Civil Service Law, children of firefighters and police officers killed in the line of duties shall be entitled to receive an additional ten points in a competitive examination for original appointment in the same municipality in which his or her parent has served. If you are qualified to participate in this examination and are a child of firefighter or police officer killed in the line of duties in this municipality, please inform this office of this matter when you submit your application for examination. A candidate claiming such credit has a minimum of two months from the application deadline to provide the necessary documentation to verify additional credit eligibility. However, no credit may be added after the eligible list has been established.

BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION: Applicants may be required to undergo a State and national criminal history background investigation, which will include a fingerprint check, to determine suitability for appointment. Failure to meet the standards for the background investigation may result in disqualification.

TOMPKINS COUNTY PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT, 125 EAST COURT STREET, ITHACA, NY 14850