

Number 6.8 - APPROPRIATE USE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING POSITIONS IN STATE GOVERNMENT

Effective Date: April 26, 2012

Subject: APPROPRIATE USE OF STATE PERSONNEL

Applicable To: All classified, exempt, appointed, temporary, and contractual employees in the Executive Branch of the State of Vermont

Issued By: Department of Human Resources

Approved By: Jeb Spaulding, Secretary of Administration

PURPOSE

The State of Vermont is committed to providing the public and governmental stakeholders with the information necessary to ensure the safety, health and well being of Vermonters, in a manner that is accurate, transparent and in the best interests of Vermonters. This policy is intended to provide guidance on the appropriate use of communications and marketing positions to meet this commitment.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the State of Vermont that it will only employ individuals in communications positions to provide fact-based information and educational materials to the public and governmental stakeholders in a manner that serves the public interest and engenders trust in state government. The use of communications positions to provide biased information is prohibited.

It is the policy of the State of Vermont to employ individuals in marketing positions only to promote the mission of state government and the public interest, including the promotion of the State, its citizens, and economy.

All Agency and Department heads should act as the spokesperson for their Agency or Department when communicating with the public, media and Legislature. Agency and Department heads may delegate this authority as appropriate, but not to a communications or marketing person in other than strict public information or marketing situations. Agency and Department Heads must conduct the affairs of their offices in a manner that will instill public trust and confidence. It is therefore essential that their interactions with the public, the media and other organizations be conducted in the best interests of the state and shall not be used to forward the personal or political interests of any individual or group. It is the responsibility of the Agency and Department Head to ensure all public and media interactions conducted on behalf of the Agency or Department are consistent with its mission and mandates.

Agencies and Departments must monitor the recruitment of personnel to determine whether a position is a communications or marketing position as defined by this Policy. If so, Agencies and Departments must notify the Department of Human Resources in writing of its intent to hire a person in a communications or marketing position, must describe the position's duties, explain how the position furthers any statutory, regulatory or other obligation, and must certify that the proposed position is consistent with this Policy. The Department of Human Resources may elicit additional information, and in its sole discretion, may withhold approval to hire for a position that is not consistent with this Policy.

DEFINITIONS

A "Communications position" focuses on providing information, particularly educational materials and public statements, to the public and/or the media. A communications position includes: Communications Directors, Communications Coordinators, Communications Managers, Communications Specialists, Media Coordinators, Directors of Public Affairs, Managers of Public Affairs, Outreach Coordinators, Information Specialists, and Public Information Officers.

A "Marketing position" focuses on the development and/or implementation of advertising or other promotional efforts to increase the sales and/or use of particular products or activities. A marketing position includes: Chief Marketing Officer, Marketing and Sales Director, Marketing and Sales Representative, Marketing and Sales Supervisor, Marketing Coordinator, Marketing and Outreach Specialist, Outreach Coordinator, Sales and Service Manager, Sales and Marketing Director, Sales and Marketing Supervisor.