



MEMO

To: Montana State Library Commission
From: Jennie Stapp, State Librarian
Subject: Public Information Officer position
Date: October 2, 2023

The Governor has directed all agencies to work closely with their Public Information Officer (PIO) to tell our agency stories. He wants us to be proactive in our work with the media and others to best convey our work. MSL has worked closely with the Governor's office to draft a job profile that meets the needs of the agency. This directive confirms the need for State Library to hire a PIO.

Background:

The State Library had a half-time PIO prior to 2017 Legislative budget cuts. At that time the position was eliminated.

While conducting a public awareness campaign, the contractor identified two problem statements that must be addressed through a sustained effort to promote the work of the State Library: People are not aware of the State Library or people are using State Library services without recognizing the State Library's role to support them. We believe this lack of awareness directly attributed to the 2017 budget cuts.

The State Library faces urgent needs to identify and grow subscribers for the Montana State Reference Network at risk, to successfully launch the new cadastral application at the end of this year, and to promote the use talking book services. Additional priorities for this position include aiding the Commission in your ability to communicate the importance and value of the State Library, and to respond to media inquiries after Commission action, and to create and manage a customer relations database to help the State Library prioritize outreach and engagement with the media and key stakeholders.

Request:

Successful public relations and communications requires staff with unique knowledge, skills, and abilities that the State Library does not currently employ. After analyzing business needs

