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ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PORT OF LONG BEACH, CA

Salary: \$172,840 – \$241,977 DOE/DOQ

Apply By: May 28, 2025

The Port of Long Beach (POLB), a global leader in sustainable seaport operations and one of the most significant economic drivers in the nation, is seeking a seasoned and strategic communications leader to serve as its next Assistant Director of Communications & Community Relations. This is an exceptional opportunity to join a world-class organization that sets the standard for innovation, environmental stewardship, and public service. Reporting to the Director of Communications & Community Relations, the Assistant Director will help guide a high-performing division responsible for the Port's public voice. This includes internal and external communications, public outreach, media relations, brand strategy, and community engagement. The Assistant Director will play a critical role in assisting the Director in advancing major initiatives, such as the Green Port 20-Year Campaign, preparing for the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, navigating messages for the business community, and shaping messaging around policy changes at the international, federal, state, and local levels. The ideal candidate is a collaborative and politically astute leader with a calm and steady presence, who thrives in a fast-paced environment and embraces creative problem-solving. They will bring strong judgment, deep communications expertise, and a commitment to supporting a culture of trust, transparency, and professional growth within a mission-driven team.



Port of
LONG BEACH
THE GREEN PORT

THE COMMUNITY

Idyllically located on the Pacific Coast just south of Los Angeles and adjacent to Orange County, Long Beach is a vibrant city of approximately 450K residents. Known for its diverse and inclusive community, Long Beach features a unique blend of urban sophistication, cultural richness, and coastal charm. The City encompasses about 51 square miles; offering an array of parks, beaches, and recreational opportunities. Residents enjoy mild climate year-round perfect for outdoor activities such as biking, hiking, and surfing. Long Beach is home to world-class attractions; including the Aquarium of the Pacific, the historic Queen Mary, and the annual IndyCar Acura Grand Prix of Long Beach. Long Beach will be the largest venue city for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Long Beach also boasts a thriving economy supported by industries such as aerospace, education, health services, manufacturing, and professional services. With two advanced educational institutions — California State University Long Beach and Long Beach City College, and robust K-12 schools, the City is a hub for learning and innovation. Transportation options abound. The Long Beach Transit system, and the City's own airport provide convenient access throughout the broader Southern California region. Long Beach is recognized as one of the nation's most walkable and bike-friendly cities.



THE PORT OF LONG BEACH

The Port of Long Beach (POLB) operates as an independent department of the City of Long Beach, separately governed by a five-member Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board). These commissioners are appointed by the City of Long Beach's Mayor and confirmed by the City Council, with the responsibility of setting policy and guiding the strategic direction of the POLB. The Board also appoints the POLB's Chief Executive Officer, who oversees day-to-day operations and leads an award-winning executive team.

Established as an independent department of the City in 1925, the Harbor Department – also referred to as the Port of Long Beach — manages all aspects of POLB operations, infrastructure development, and community engagement. The POLB is a global leader in green port initiatives and top-notch customer service, moving cargo with reliability, speed and efficiency.

Operating entirely on revenue generated from its operations and grants, the POLB is not funded by taxes or the City's General Fund. As the premier U.S. gateway for trans-Pacific trade, the Port handles trade valued at more than \$300B annually and supports 2.7M jobs across the United States, including 716k in Southern California. In 2025, the Port is celebrating "20 Years of Leading Green," marking two decades of its landmark Green Port Policy that has dramatically reduced environmental impacts from operations. In 2024, industry leaders named Long Beach "The Best West Coast Seaport in North America" for the sixth consecutive year. During the next 10 years, the Port is planning \$3.2B in capital improvements aimed at enhancing capacity, competitiveness and environmental sustainability.



THE DIVISION

The Communications & Community Relations Division is the steward of the POLB's public voice, storytelling, and strategic outreach. Led by the Director of Communications & Community Relations, this multifaceted team of **20 dedicated professionals** operates with an annual budget of approximately \$7.7M (salaries not included), including the management of a significant \$3M annual sponsorship program that supports nonprofit and governmental organizations to educate the public about and promote the Port's mission as a key part of the local, regional, national and international economy.

The division plays a vital role in managing internal and external communications, developing public messaging, translating technical subject matter into accessible content, and ensuring consistency across the POLB's brand and mission. The team is comprised of communications professionals with expertise in writing, media relations, crisis communications, video production, digital engagement, graphic design, website management, and event coordination – requiring seamless collaboration and shared vision.

Current Key Initiative:

As the POLB celebrates the 20th anniversary of its landmark Green Port Policy, the division is leading the **Green Port 20-Year Campaign**, highlighting its pioneering environmental leadership and commitment to sustainable operations.

The team also plays a critical role in shaping the messaging around federal, state, and local administrative policy changes, ensuring that the Port's resiliency, values, and operations are communicated with clarity and strength to key audiences across the nation.



THE POSITION & IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Assistant Director of Communications & Community Relations is a trusted partner to the Director and a key leader within the Port's communications ecosystem. With two direct reports and a total of 17 staff under their direction, this role requires someone who is steady, experienced, and deeply committed to the mission and integrity of the organization. Acting as a strategic thought partner, the Assistant Director must operate in tandem with the Director — someone who can be counted on to lead confidently, navigate complexity, and manage sensitive political and public-facing situations with discretion and professionalism.

The ideal candidate will be a seasoned communications leader who thrives in high-stakes, fast-paced environments. They must possess a broad understanding of communications disciplines — from branding and media relations to messaging and event strategy — and be able to guide and support a diverse team of specialists with empathy, transparency, and purpose. This individual will be skilled in building strong, collaborative teams, tailoring event staffing based on each person's strengths, and mentoring staff to grow in their roles and share ideas confidently.

Crucially, this leader must bring strong political acumen and a principled mindset — someone who won't be swayed by external pressures or changing political landscapes, but instead keeps the focus on fairness, transparency, and advancing the mission.

The selected candidate will also bring...

- Deep experience in strategic communications, public messaging, and stakeholder engagement
- The proven ability to manage crisis communications, especially involving complex or politically sensitive issues
- Expertise translating subject matter expert content into clear, compelling public messaging
- A strong understanding of branding, scriptwriting, and public event communications
- A leadership style grounded in integrity, empathy, and collaboration
- Experience building cohesive, high-performing teams and cultivating talent

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in Journalism, Communications, Public Relations or closely related field.

EXPERIENCE: Seven years of progressively responsible communication management experience supervising staff dealing with media relations and five years of supervisory experience.

DESIRED: Master's degree.

SUBSTITUTIONS: Education may be substituted for lengthy experience and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.



SALARY & BENEFITS

Salary: \$172,840 - \$241,977 DOE/DOQ

Plus a generous benefits package that includes:

RETIREMENT: For new employees, the CalPERS retirement formula is 2.0% at 62, coordinated with Social Security. Currently, member contribution is 8.00% for CalPERS, and 6.2% for social security, paid by the employee. For employees with prior CalPERS status, Central Payroll will review and determine the formula. For prior employees with a break in service greater than six (6) months, this could be 2.0% at 62, coordinated with Social Security.

GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE: Medical and dental options (HMO & PPO). Free vision coverage.

LIFE INSURANCE: \$20K plus executive insurance benefit equal to three (3) times annual salary up to a maximum of \$500k.

SHORT- AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE: City paid.

VACATION: 3.7 hours accrued per pay period increasing with years of service. Prior years of public sector service counted towards vacation accrual tier.

EXECUTIVE LEAVE: 40 hours per year.

SICK LEAVE: 8 hours accrued per month; conversion upon retirement to cash credit toward health and/or dental insurance premiums or retirement service credits.

HOLIDAYS: 11 designated holidays per year, plus four personal holidays.

TRANSPORTATION ALLOWANCE: \$550 per month.

PAY FOR PERFORMANCE: Awarded based on achievement of individual goals, required competencies, and available budget funds.

ANNUAL PHYSICAL: Eligible to receive annual City-paid physical examination.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION: City match of base salary for all qualified members.

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE: After six (6) months of City employment; up to 30 consecutive days (160 hours) for eligible employees to take paid time to bond with the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child, up to the age of 17.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE: Five (5) days for death or critical illness of immediate family member.

OTHER: Education reimbursement, Public Student Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program eligibility, and 529 College Savings Plan.

CANDIDATE CONNECT

To learn more about this exciting career opportunity and the Port of Long Beach, please join our voluntary virtual information session on **May 19, 2025, @ 5:00 pm PDT via MS Teams**. This is a unique opportunity to hear first-hand about the position, speak directly with hiring leaders, ask questions, and learn why the Port of Long Beach is your employer of choice! Candidates are not required to be on camera. **To join audio only, call +1 323-451-1087, Phone Conference ID: 994 063 369#**



CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE MEETING

INTERVIEWS: Interviews have been firmly scheduled to take place virtually on **June 18** and in-person on **June 25**. Candidates must be available for both interview dates.

HOW TO APPLY

For first consideration, apply by **May 28, 2025**, at: www.tristargovsolutions.com/careers

QUESTIONS?

Please contact your recruiter, Sam Sackman, with any questions:

Email: sam@tristargovsolutions.com

Website: www.tristargovsolutions.com

Phone: 408-605-0790

