Western Cooperative Electric

Communications Specialist			
Pay Status	Hourly	Reports to	Manager of Member Services and Communications
FLSA Status	Non-Exempt	Supervises	Non-supervisory position
Revision Date	09/29/2026	Normal Work Schedule	M-F 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. *
Job Family/Code	22-3371 (14C, 14E)	Job Class	200 - Inside

Occasional evenings, weekends, and after-hours work may be required for Cooperative events, outages, emergencies, and other communication needs.

POSITION FUNCTION:

The Communications Specialist leads Western Cooperative Electric's internal and external communications, helping members, employees, the media, and the communities Western serves understand and connect with their Cooperative. The position develops and delivers timely, accurate, engaging, and consistent communications that support Western's mission.

This position is responsible for the planning, development, and delivery of Western's communications, including publications, digital communications, social media, website content, advertising, graphic design, photography, video, public relations, member education, and community engagement. Working under the direction of the Manager of Member Services and Communications and collaboratively with departments throughout the Cooperative, the Communications Specialist tells Western's story, strengthens member and employee engagement, promotes Cooperative programs and services, and maintains a consistent and professional image across all communication channels.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Within the guidelines of established policies, budgets, legal requirements, brand standards, and authority delegated by the Manager of Member Services and Communications, the Communications Specialist assumes responsibility for and personally performs the following activities.

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING & CONTENT DEVELOPMENT:

1. Develops and carries out annual communication priorities, plans, and project budgets in partnership with the Manager of Member Services and Communications, aligns with the Cooperative's mission, values, and organizational goals.

2. Researches, writes, and edits content that tells Western's story and communicates Cooperative programs, services, accomplishments, initiatives, industry issues, and safety information to members, employees, media, and other stakeholders, ensuring it is accurate, timely, and consistent.

3. Translates technical, operational, regulatory, and electric utility information into clear, understandable communications for a variety of audiences, collaborating with employees and departments throughout Western to gather information and confirm accuracy before publication or distribution.

4. Tracks and evaluates communication metrics, including digital and social media engagement, website activity, and campaign results, and recommends improvements to the effectiveness and reach of Western's communications.

PUBLICATIONS & PRINTED COMMUNICATIONS:

5. Manages the monthly communication and design process for Western's Kansas Country Living content, including developing story ideas, gathering information, writing and editing articles, coordinating photography and graphics, designing content as applicable, proofreading, obtaining appropriate approvals, and meeting publication deadlines.

6. Develops and maintains member and employee communications, including newsletters, brochures, bill inserts, flyers, advertisements, direct mail pieces, signage, presentations, and other printed or electronic publications, and regularly reviews existing materials to ensure they remain current, accurate, and consistent with Western's branding.

7. Coordinates with printers, publications, advertising representatives, vendors, and other outside resources to ensure accuracy, quality, cost-effectiveness, and timely delivery of communication materials.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA:

8. Develops and maintains a social media content plan, and creates, schedules, publishes, and monitors content for Western's social media platforms and other digital channels in support of communication priorities, member education, community involvement, and Cooperative programs and events. Responds to member questions and comments in accordance with established procedures.

9. Manages website content, ensuring information is accurate, current, useful, accessible, and consistent with Western's communication and branding standards.

GRAPHIC DESIGN, PHOTOGRAPHY & MULTIMEDIA:

10. Designs and produces professional graphics, advertisements, social media content, presentations, publications, signage, and promotional materials for print and digital use.

11. Photographs and creates and edits video of Cooperative employees, projects, events, community activities, facilities, and field operations for use in publications, social media, the website, presentations, advertising and member and employee communications, following Cooperative safety requirements in field settings.

12. Maintains an organized library of Cooperative photographs, videos, graphics, logos, and publications along with communication calendars, vendor information, and other records related to the position.

BRANDING, MARKETING & ADVERTISING:

13. Maintains and strengthens Western's brand by ensuring consistent use of the Cooperative's logo, messaging, visual identity, and brand standards across printed and digital materials.

14. Develops and carries out advertising, promotional, and marketing campaigns for Cooperative programs, services, initiatives, events, and member education efforts, working with the Manager of Member Services and Communications.

MEDIA, PUBLIC RELATIONS & EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:

15. Serves as the primary day-to-day communications contact for newspapers, radio stations, and other media serving Western's service territory. Prepares news releases, media notices, and public service

announcements, builds positive working relationships with media and community organizations, and refers sensitive or policy-related inquiries to the Manager of Member Services and Communications or CEO/GM.

16. Executes outage, severe weather, system emergency, and other crisis communications with members, employees, media, and the public across all appropriate channels, under the direction of the Manager of Member Services and Communications as crisis communications coordinator and in coordination with Operations and Management.

17. Develops, maintains, and updates pre-approved emergency and outage communication templates to allow accurate and timely communication, and provides communications support during significant outages and emergencies, which may require work outside normal business hours.

MEMBER EDUCATION, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS:

18. Develops communications and educational materials that help members understand Western, the electric cooperative business model, Cooperative programs and services, energy efficiency, safety, and other topics affecting their electric service.

19. Supports Cooperative youth, school, and community engagement programs, county fairs, trade shows, and other public outreach, and represents Western professionally at community events, meetings, presentations, and other public functions as assigned.

20. Leads the communications side of Western's Annual Meeting and other member meetings and Cooperative events, including invitations, programs, presentations, signage, digital content, and photography, and assists with overall event planning and execution.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS:

21. Develops and coordinates employee communications, announcements, presentations, and publications that share Cooperative activities, programs, initiatives, and accomplishments, supports employee engagement events, and works with management and departments to promote consistent messaging across the organization.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

22. Keeps informed of developments in electric cooperatives, communications, marketing, public relations, graphic design, social media, and emerging technologies

23. Maintains a professional demeanor and positive working relationships with members, employees, media representatives, vendors, community organizations, and the public; maintains confidentiality of Cooperative, employee, and member information; and maintains regular work attendance.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES:

Performs other duties as assigned. This job description is not intended to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of all activities, duties, or responsibilities required of the employee. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time based upon the needs of Western Cooperative Electric.

EDUCATION:

Bachelor's degree in communications, marketing, journalism, public relations, graphic design, business, or related field required. Directly related experience in communications, marketing, public relations, journalism, graphic design, or digital media may substitute for the degree on a year-for year basis.

EXPERIENCE:

A minimum of two years of progressively responsible experience in communications, marketing, public relations, journalism, publication development, graphic design, digital media, or a related field is preferred. Experience in an electric cooperative, electric utility, or other member/customer-focused organization is preferred but not required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Excellent written, verbal, editing, proofreading, and interpersonal communication skills, with strong storytelling ability, exceptional attention to grammar, accuracy, tone, and detail, and the ability to communicate complex information clearly to diverse audiences.
- Knowledge of communications, public relations, marketing, branding, social media, and member/customer engagement principles.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications.
- Working knowledge of Adobe Creative Suite applications such as InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, and Acrobat, or comparable design and publication software, and proficiency with Canva or similar digital design tools.
- Working knowledge of social media platforms and social media management practices.
- Ability to develop and maintain website content using website content-management tools.
- Working knowledge of photography, photo editing, video production, and video editing.
- Ability to develop professional publications, graphics, presentations, advertisements, and digital content.
- Ability to manage multiple projects and priorities simultaneously, work independently, meet deadlines, and adapt to changing priorities.
- Strong organizational, project-management, research, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to collaborate effectively with employees at all levels of the organization and work across departments.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment when communicating information publicly and recognize matters requiring management review or approval.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion when handling sensitive information.
- Ability to learn electric cooperative terminology, programs, operations, and industry issues and communicate those subjects accurately and understandably.
- Professional presence and ability to represent Western positively in interactions with members, media, vendors, community organizations, and the public.
- Ability and willingness to respond to communications needs outside normal business hours during major outages, emergencies, meetings, and Cooperative events.
- Ability to pass pre-employment drug test, as well as ongoing random drug and alcohol testing.
- Ability to maintain a valid driver’s license.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

This position works primarily in an office environment but will also work in field and community settings. The employee may occasionally be exposed to varying weather conditions, noise, and electric utility field environments while photographing projects, attending events, or gathering information. The position requires local travel throughout Western’s service territory and may require occasional overnight travel for meetings, training, conferences, and other Cooperative business. Some evening, weekend, and after-hours work is

required on an as-needed basis for Cooperative events, meetings, major outages, emergencies, and other communication needs.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Primarily sedentary work involving extended periods of computer use, keyboarding, writing, editing, and graphic design. The position also requires periods of standing and walking while attending events, taking photographs or video, making presentations, and visiting Cooperative facilities or field locations. The employee must be able to occasionally bend, stoop, kneel, reach, push, pull, drive, and travel and occasionally lift and carry communication materials, displays, photography equipment, promotional items, and similar materials weighing up to approximately twenty-five (25) pounds. A valid driver's license and the ability to safely operate a motor vehicle are required.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS:

A. Reports to: Manager of Member Services and Communications

B. Supervises: None

C. Coordinates internally with: Manager of Member Services and Communications, Office Manager and Member Services Staff; CEO/GM; Operations; Human Resources; Finance/Accounting; and other Western employees and departments, as necessary.

D. Coordinates externally with: Western members; news media; printers and advertising vendors; schools; community and civic organizations; other electric cooperatives and utility organizations; communication and marketing vendors; photographers and other creative vendors; and the general public.

The employee signature below acknowledges the employee's understanding of the requirements, essential functions and duties of the position and does not create a contract of employment.

_____ _____

Employee Signature Date

_____ _____

Supervisor Signature Date

_____ _____

HR Manager Signature Date