



WASHINGTON LOW INCOME
Housing Alliance



Washington Housing Alliance
ACTION FUND

Title: Communications Specialist
Reports to: Executive Director

Are you a skilled communicator excited about working to ensure that everyone in Washington can live in a safe, healthy, affordable home? Consider applying to join our team.

The **Housing Alliance** is a 501(c)(3) that develops and advocates for public policy solutions to Washington's affordable housing and homelessness challenges. Our organizational members include housing and service providers across the state, and we mobilize those organizations plus a broad base of individuals to advocate for solutions.

The **Housing Action Fund** is the political voice in Washington for expanding access to affordable homes and solutions to homelessness. We are a 501(c)(4) that educates voters, promotes strategic public policy, and supports candidates who share our vision that all Washington residents have the opportunity to live in safe, healthy, affordable homes, in thriving communities.

The affordable housing and homelessness crisis in our state, and across the United States, has the greatest impact on Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. Just as policy decisions have created the crisis we see in our communities today; historic and current racist policies have caused these disparities. In working to root out and undo inequity in all its forms, we lead with race because racism is the foundation upon which this country was built and is still the driving cause of housing disparities. Undoing racism is foundational to our mission.

Position Summary: This position manages our communications work to ensure strategic and effective messages are presented to the public, lawmakers, members of the media, and others about affordable housing and homelessness issues. The position is shared between the Housing Alliance and Housing Action Fund. The person in this position will ensure that our communications lift up the expertise of people struggling to afford a home and support our efforts to reduce racial and other disparities in homelessness and housing instability.

Our staff are currently based in Seattle, Spokane, and the Vancouver area. We are in the process of shifting to a remote work environment for the long-term. The person in this position will work from home anywhere in Washington state. The organization will provide a laptop, a stipend for internet, phone, and office supplies, and other home office essentials.

Essential Responsibilities:

Narrative Development and Strategy (30%)

- Develop and implement overall media strategy, including press releases, guest editorials, letters-to-the-editor campaigns, and social media campaigns.
- Collaborate with appropriate staff to develop communication strategies for public policy priorities that elevate the voices of people experiencing housing instability and homelessness and promotes policy solutions grounded in equity and racial justice.
- Stay up to date and utilize best practices from messaging research related to affordable housing, homelessness, and poverty.
- Identify opportunities and strategies to drive the narrative about affordable housing and homelessness.
- Provide messaging training and tools to our members and other advocates to help build a consistent narrative.

Content Development (30%)

- Produce legislative agenda materials, fundraising documents, conference collateral, and other organizational publications and reports.
- Draft and edit newsletters, blog posts, editorials, and email blasts.

Website, Brand, and Social Media (20%)

- Ensure website is regularly updated with fresh and compelling content.
- Develop organizational style and brand guide and provide periodic training to staff.
- Manage content and engagement across social media channels.

Earned Media and Public Relations (10%)

- Develop and maintain relationships with members of the media.
- Coordinate press conferences and interviews for key staff, members, and advocates.
- Track and record coverage of affordable housing and homelessness in Washington.

Other (10%)

- Participate in organizational equity and racial justice work including regular racial justice conversations, race-based caucusing, and training.
- Regularly evaluate and adapt communications efforts.
- Manage contract web developers, graphic designers, printers, and other contract communications professionals.
- Participate in staff meetings, training, and retreats.
- Participate in communications coalition efforts as needed.

This job description is not intended to represent an absolute or final list of all elements, activities, or duties of the job. The statements above are intended to describe the general nature and level of work performed by the person assigned to this position. Time percentages are estimates and may change based on the season and needs of the organization.

What we're looking for:

Our ideal candidate is an advocate with exceptional writing skills and an eye for detail. You'll need to be able to communicate in a way that inspires others to take action – whether that is by voting, contacting a decision maker, writing a news story, or making a donation. If you already have relationships with members of the media, that's great. If not, that's okay too – you'll just need to be comfortable and proactive about reaching out and building those relationships.

Over the next two years we'll be doing important narrative development and messaging work using what we're learning from the [Housing Justice Narrative](#). The person in this position will play a leadership role in developing that narrative and creating tools and trainings for advocates. You'll also be communicating about sometimes complex policy so you should be good at distilling complicated issues into accessible language.

You should be excited about working on a statewide level and effecting change through public policy advocacy. We're a small team that does a lot. We try to have fun doing it and encourage (but want to get better at) work life balance. Since we juggle a lot at once you'll need good organizational skills to manage your work. We all work independently and as part of various teams, so you'll do best if you are proactive and able to motivate yourself and can also collaborate and communicate well with colleagues.

Our staff and board are committed to working toward becoming a fully equitable and anti-racist organization and are looking to bring on new team members who share that commitment and have a commitment to self-reflection, personal growth, and working on their own internal racial and other biases.

Ideal candidates will have many of the following qualifications:

- At least five years of experience in communications, advocacy, or a related field;
- An understanding of structural racism and a strong commitment to undoing racism and other forms of oppression;
- Be a skillful verbal communicator with exceptional writing skills;
- Be detail oriented (e.g., be able to conduct the final review of documents before they are made public);
- Be comfortable using social media platforms;
- Be flexible and responsive in a fast-paced and changing environment;
- Have a commitment to public policy advocacy as a social change strategy;
- Be able to work occasional evenings and weekends, especially during the legislative session;
- Familiarity with values-based messaging;
- Experience with Drupal, Salsa Engage, Canva, and Microsoft Office suite;
- Familiarity with affordable housing and homelessness issues in Washington;
- Understanding of the Washington state legislative process.

Salary & Benefits: The starting annual salary range for this position is \$65,000-72,000 depending on experience. Generous benefits package includes health, dental, and vision insurance with premiums covered by the Housing Alliance; employer contribution to retirement account (equal to 5% of your salary); subsidized ORCA pass (available for staff living in Pierce, King, Snohomish, or Kitsap County); life insurance; health care/child care flexible spending account; three weeks paid vacation to start; paid sick and safe leave; and 11.5 paid holidays per year.

How to Apply: Please send resume and cover letter to jobs@wliha.org. In your cover letter, please include a statement about how you would promote equity and racial justice in this role. We also request that you complete [our voluntary, anonymous demographic survey](#) to help us improve our hiring processes. No phone calls, please.

Hiring Timeline: The position is open until filled. We will give priority consideration to applications received by April 3. We will follow up with candidates as applications arrive in hopes of making an offer by late April. The position will ideally begin in May.

We are committed to providing equal opportunity for all employees and applicants. We value and desire a diverse workplace and strongly encourage people of color, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, and people who have experienced homelessness or housing instability to apply.