Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

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<th>1. Date</th>
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<td>6/24/22</td>
<td>California High-Speed Rail Authority</td>
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#### 3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Office of Strategic Communications

#### 4. CEA Position Title

Assistant Deputy Director of Communications and Public Relations

#### 5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (2-3 sentences)

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) requests to establish a Career Executive Assignment (CEA), Level A, as the Assistant Deputy Director of Communications. The position will serve as the principal policymaker responsible for managing, directing, providing leadership, and developing and implementing policy relative to external communications, press/media relations, social media, public-facing website, publishing services, public outreach and education, Public Records Act (PRA) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The proposed position will provide executive level coordination and collaboration on the relative topics with the Governor's Office, the California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA), CA High-Speed Rail Authority's Board of Directors, federal departments, other State departments, and key stakeholders.

#### 6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

Chief of Strategic Communications, Exempt

#### 7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- [ ] Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- [x] Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain): The incumbent advises the Chief of Strategic Communications, CEO and the Executive Management Team regarding policy development, interpretation and implementation.

#### 8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- [ ] 1st
- [ ] 2nd
- [x] 3rd
- [ ] 4th
- [ ] 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)
9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

Under general direction of the Chief of Strategic Communications, the Assistant Deputy Director of Communications and Public Relations exercises significant independence and decision-making authority relative to managing the Communication's Office, and the DEI program.

This position will serve as the principal advisor to the Chief of Strategic Communications, as well as the Authority's CEO, Executive team, Board of Directors and CalSTA supporting executive level policy and decision-making on matters related to external and internal communications, media and press relations, social media, the Authority's public facing website; work closely with the Multimedia Branch for video production and graphic design, and publishing services; and, oversee the Authority's DEI program and public outreach and education activities to meet the mission, business needs, and objectives of the Authority.

The Assistant Deputy Director plans, organizes, and directs the Authority's public information and external communications activities; develops and implements a strategic communication plan for the Authority, including planning, organizing, and directing the news and outreach functions to engage stakeholders and ensure that they are fully informed of the relevant policies and programs of the Authority. The position regularly advises and consults with the CEO, Chief Deputy Director, Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Director of Legislation, the Regional and Deputy Regional Directors and other members of the Department's Executive Management Team, as well as the Governor's Office and the CalSTA, to provide pre-policy communications input and to provide post-policy implementation and dissemination strategy.

The position oversees all media relations (including social media platforms and messaging), and oversees the Media Relations Branch which acts as the main point of contact for all press inquiries and outreach. This position serves as a spokesperson for the Authority with the media.

The Assistant Deputy Director develops and implements policy dissemination strategies, including establishing information program objectives tied to goals. Administers the Authority's PRA Program and the DEI Section. Coordinates the handling of issues and policies that are highly sensitive, controversial, and complex; are subject to a high degree of scrutiny by the public, the media, and the State Legislature; and have significant impact on stakeholders and the State.

The position oversees the maintenance of the Authority's public-facing website and social media platforms; coordinates with the Multimedia Branch for video and graphic design, and publishing services for Department programs; develops and publishes internal and external messaging that communicates the Department's key policy positions and activities; and records and analyzes all communications-related statistics and other data.

The Assistant Deputy Director develops and maintains critical partnerships with the media, other local, state, and federal agencies, and community stakeholders to further shared media advocacy goals. It also leads internal and external teams to implement statewide marketing and coordinates closely with other agencies and organizations, including the Governor's Office, the Authority's CEO, Executive team, Board of Directors, the CalSTA, legislators' offices, local government, community organizations, and other external stakeholders.
10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

**Description:**

The CEA role is critical to the Authority’s success as it manages the Authority’s communications efforts to ensure successful and effective messaging regarding the Authority mega-infrastructure project, which is the largest infrastructure project in the United States and one of the ten largest in the world. The Strategic Communications Office is responsible for a variety of audiences, including the media, members of the public, stakeholders, and the Authority’s employees and contractors. In addition, the Strategic Communications Office is tasked with managing the Authority’s public and stakeholder outreach strategy, and developing comprehensive external affairs outreach plans, presentations, policies, and procedures.

The Strategic Communications Office plays a critical role in maintaining positive media relations by acting as the primary point of contact for media inquiries and interacting with the media. Failure to perform effectively in this area may result in problematic Authority/media relations. The Strategic Communications Office is responsible for drafting, posting, and responding to inquiries on the Authority’s official social media accounts, responding to any stakeholder/communications related inquiries and requests and working with CEO and executive management on appropriate responses. This critical function plays an important role in managing the Authority’s messaging.

The Strategic Communications Office is also responsible for crisis communications and management for internal and external issues (worksite issues, natural disasters, health, and safety issues, etc.) Through effective management the OSC will ensure that improper communications will not exacerbate the public’s perception of the crisis.
B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

The California high-speed rail system is the largest infrastructure program in the nation and receives significant interest from the Governor, the Legislature, the federal government, media, and stakeholders. This interest has, and will continue to, intensify over the years as the project is implemented. Given the project's size, scope and sensitive constituency concerns, the program will continue to be scrutinized by every level of government, both locally and nationally.

The Authority has undergone significant changes from a "start-up" type of organization entity to a mature state agency. It is critical that the Authority have the correct positions in place to oversee, direct and ensure that highly sensitive and controversial detailed media strategy is executed. It is also imperative that the media relations team establishes, cultivates, and maintains relationships with news media and stakeholders.

In 2019 the Administration directed the Authority to reduce its reliance on contractors and transition duties to state. This resulted in a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) with the May Revision of the Fiscal Year (FY) 20-21 budget ("Form to Function") that began the process. The establishment of this CEA is a continuation of that process and aligns the organization chart with the Legislatively approved "Form to Function" multi-year proposals to have state positions overseeing contractors and Rail Delivery Partner (RDP) consultants, and state positions reporting to state positions.

This proposed CEA position will not only be responsible for overseeing, directing, and implementing policies and procedures for external and internal communications, media and press relations, social media, the Authority's public facing website, public outreach, and the Authority's PRA program; it will also be responsible for the implementation of the DEI Branch and DEI Task Force. In the past few years, a change as occurred within California’s culture that acknowledged the need for greater efforts to promote DEI within public and private institutions. Therefore, the state now seeks to enhance and promote DEI within its organizations and how it impacts the state internally and externally. This CEA will ensure that the strategic goals, objectives, and action items in coordination with the Authority's DEI Task Force are implemented. This position will ensure that the DEI goals, policies, and procedures are implemented to identify and eliminate barriers and to address DEI gaps that may exist within the Authority.
C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

The proposed CEA A will regularly provide significant advice and recommendations to the Chief of Strategic Communications, CEO, Executive team, Governor's Office, CalSTA, and Authority's Board of Directors on policy issues relative to the PRA program, external communications, media relations, social media, the department's public facing website, and public outreach to meet the mission, business needs and objectives of the department.

1) The CEA will collaborate with the Regional Directors, Program Delivery Office, and regional stakeholders to develop policies and procedures for stakeholder and community outreach consistent with the Authority's policy to inform the public of the activities and objectives of the Authority as it carries out its mission of planning, designing, building, and operating the high-speed rail system in California. The impact of such polices are state-wide from the Los Angeles area to the Bay Area to the Central Valley.

2) The CEA will develop specific policies, processes, and procedures for when and how to keep the public informed of changes to the project, and how to keep stakeholders informed and how to facilitate communication between stakeholders and Authority partners. This is important as stakeholder support is critical to the success of the project.

3) The CEA will develop policies to ensure that specific community outreach mandates are achieved. This includes policies to fulfill the mandates of the National Environmental Policy Act, the California Environmental Quality Act and the Authority's Business Plan (regarding public information) which mandates the Authority to inform stakeholders and the community of proposed environmental and Business Plan actions to provide opportunities for public review and comment.

4) Additional critical polices includes directing and overseeing the development, implementation, and evaluation of DEI related policies that affect internal and external departmental programs and the work performed by those programs. The CEA will collaborate on policy that affects the Authority's personnel to ensure DEI initiatives are incorporated into events, daily processes, strategies, structure, and personnel-related actions.

5) In addition to policies stemming from the DEI Task Force, the CEA is charged with developing, implementing and managing Authority DEI policies and activities regarding providing guidance to the CEO, Executive team and Authority Board of Directors, and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that there is an open and strong level of communication with regards to DEI.
C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?
The proposed CEA reports, advises and provides support to the Chief of Strategic Communications, who is a key management member of the Authority's executive team; and acts on behalf of the Chief of Strategic Communications. The CEA will ensure that critical communications policies and strategies are developed and followed. The position will function with a high degree of independence, working with the Authority's Executive Team, Regional Directors, and Program Directors on all matters relative to external and internal communications, press/media relations, social media, the Authority's public facing website, video production and graphic design, publishing services, and public outreach and education to meet the mission, business needs, and objectives of the Authority.

The CEA will be the primary decision maker for all daily media and communication of the Authority including daily media inquiries, newsletter content review and approval, website update approval, social media content approval, PRA coordination and recommendation for approval.

The CEA will also serve as the primary lead and oversight of successful execution of the Authority's bi-annual Business Plans and Project Update Reports, and the annual Sustainability Report in coordination with the CEO and the Executive Team.

The CEA will serve as the primary lead on the development of the Authority's quarterly statewide and Small Business newsletter, as well as the six yearly employee newsletters.

The CEA will work directly with the Authority's PRA officer to advise on the PRA program to Executive staff and ensure that statutory requirements related to the PRA are being met.

As the Departmental expert on all matters related to DEI, external communications and press/media relations, the position takes initiative in recommending policy directives to ensure the State's statutes and regulations are implemented and followed.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

The CEA will develop and implement new policy in the areas of external communications, media and press relations, social media, the Authority's public facing website, video production and graphic design, publishing services, public outreach, PRA, and DEI to meet the mission, business needs and objectives of the Department, as well as updating current policies and procedures as necessary.

The CEA will provide guidance and recommendations to the Chief of Strategic Communications, CEO, the Executive team, Authority's Board of Directors, Governor's Office, CalSTA and stakeholders in the development, interpretation, and administration of communications related policies.