



Government Relations Director

Recruitment Announcement



ABOUT AWC

Founded in 1933, the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan corporation that represents Washington's cities and towns before the state legislature, the state executive branch and with regulatory agencies. Membership is voluntary. However, AWC consistently maintains 100% participation from Washington's 281 cities and towns.

The AWC Board of Directors is a 25-member Board composed of 23 elected officials and two members representing the Washington City/County Management Association. Fifteen of the 25 members are elected by district. The three most populous cities are directly represented on the governing board. AWC's annual budget is \$11 million and 65 staff serve member cities from its headquarters office two blocks from the Capitol in Olympia.

AWC's Government Relations department engages state elected officials and decision makers to ensure there is a common understanding that the state is only as strong as its cities and towns.

AWC's Statement of Policy, approved by the AWC membership, outlines positions AWC holds on fundamental municipal issues; it serves as the framework for developing AWC's legislative priorities and positions. The Statement of Policy is reviewed and revised at least every six years by the AWC State and Federal Policy Committee, which consists of city officials representing AWC's board districts. After approval by the membership, the Statement of Policy is affirmed annually.

AWC's two legislative advisory committees, the Legislative Priorities Committee and the Federal Legislative Committee, identify and recommend city legislative priorities annually to the AWC Board of Directors.

AWC focuses its work in five service areas:

- **Legislative advocacy**
- **Communications**
- **Educational training, research and data**
- **Publications and resources**
- **Member pooling programs**, including municipal risk management for liability and property exposures, employee drug and alcohol testing, workers' compensation retrospective rating program, employee health benefits and wellness, and GIS services.

MISSION

AWC's mission is to serve our members through advocacy, education and services.

VISION

AWC is a highly respected voice of cities and towns before the Legislature, Congress, government agencies and others. We are the leader in providing valuable services and continuing education for our membership. We are the catalyst for promoting communication between cities and towns and for developing a broad public understanding of the important roles of cities and towns across the state.

ABOUT THE POSITION

The Government Relations Director leads and manages the organization’s non-partisan state and federal relations programs. The Director is responsible and accountable for providing leadership to a highly engaged team of lobbyists and policy analysts; leading, managing and implementing the policy agenda representing its 281- member cities, including policy development and strategic planning; and serving as the lead lobbyist and policy advocate at the State and Federal levels. The Director also represents the organization with external organizations, groups and individuals.

Reporting to the CEO, the Director works in conjunction with other AWC departments to promote and support staff participation in advocacy initiatives and to ensure the integration of advocacy and policy issues into all areas of the organization. As a member of the Executive Team, this individual is responsible for taking a leadership role and contributing to a positive organizational tone, culture, and climate.

Other responsibilities include:

- Managing and advancing state and federal legislative agendas as well as policy objectives sought via state and federal administrative agencies, including a broad subject area portfolio covering all aspects of local government
- Daily advocacy work during the State Legislative sessions advancing and defending cities’ interests
- Overseeing state and federal policy processes including working with the membership, committees and various groups charged with adopting those policies
- Communicating and advancing adopted policy objectives with the membership and outside parties
- Developing and maintaining positive relationships with the membership, other organization leaders, Governor’s Office and state executive agency staff, state and federal legislators, state and federal legislative staff, lobbyists from individual member cities and numerous other stakeholders
- Leading and managing department staff
- Coordinating the development and identification of key research topics and issues
- Providing a presence around the state, meeting regularly with members, affiliate groups, other local government officials, generally during the interim.



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Government Relations Director will be an energetic, resourceful, and mission-driven, high performing leader who loves challenges. Must have demonstrated leadership skills, organizational abilities, excellent relationship-building and cultivation skills, with ability to set a standard by intellectually and emotionally engaging a variety of people -- mayors, councilmembers, legislators, city management, interest groups and related professional organizations. For this important role AWC seeks a dynamic, highly credible leader who is deeply committed to working with state and local government leaders to develop and achieve policy goals in a way that reflects the priorities and values of AWC.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

A Bachelor's degree in Political Science, Business or Public Administration, or related field, with at least five years of progressively responsible lobbying experience. Three-five years' senior management experience, including supervising staff, in an association, non-profit, municipal agency, state agency or state or federal legislative body is preferred. A Master's/law degree is a plus.

In addition, candidates should bring the following:

- Knowledge of city governance, leadership, management, and operations
- Extensive working knowledge of the legislative process, including bill writing, budget writing, and legislative procedures both federal and state
- Proven experience leading and managing people, teams and projects
- Experience strategizing and negotiating positions advancing legislative objectives
- Proven experience establishing and maintaining excellent working relationships with state and federal policy makers and staff, as well as numerous other stakeholders, to advance the interests of members
- Excellent skills in creating and communicating persuasive arguments
- Ability to model the organization's high standards of quality service to all members, and
- internal and external groups and colleagues
- Ability to be flexible and open to changing priorities and managing multiple external and internal tasks simultaneously within compressed timeframes and deadlines
- Ability to juggle competing demands between long-term projects and emerging needs
- Ability to develop, control and monitor budgets and to read and evaluate financial reports
- Customer service focus and ability to work on behalf of members with diverse interests and opinions

COMPENSATION

The salary range for this position is very competitive. Benefits include comprehensive medical, dental, vision, life and LTD insurance; Employee Assistance Plan, Health Reimbursement Arrangement, Flexible Spending Account, training and development opportunities, 401K plan with generous employer contributions, holiday, vacation and sick leave.





LIVE AND WORK IN A GREAT STATE

Washington State is a great place to live, work, learn, play, and be a part of a community. Washington offers a quality of life that is unsurpassed. From the high-energy urban center of Seattle, one of the nation’s top-ranked cities, to the more relaxed pace of our rural communities, Washington’s distinctive Northwest lifestyle blends a progressive, creative culture with a casual nature.

The position is located in Olympia, the capital city of Washington State. Olympia is a vibrant city with a small town feel conveniently situated between Seattle and Portland, Oregon. Mount Rainier and the rugged Cascade Mountains provide majestic scenery to the east while

Washington’s Pacific Coast is just an hour’s drive to the west. Olympia enjoys the benefits of an engaged and educated community and a well-supported school system, augmented by two universities and a community college.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Persons interested in this job must submit a cover letter, salary history, and current resume by visiting www.karrasconsulting.net and clicking on “view open positions.”

If you have questions regarding this announcement, please call Marissa Karras at 360-956-1336. The position will remain open until filled; however, the screening process will move quickly. In order to be considered for the first round of interviews please submit your application materials as soon as possible but no later than April 16th.

AWC is committed to hiring and retaining high-performing, well-qualified employees with varied perspectives and experiences who represent the demographics of AWC’s diverse membership. In addition, AWC is committed to fostering a work environment that is fair and equitable to all employees. We will provide assistance in the recruitment, application, and selection process to applicants with disabilities who request such assistance.

