

# COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

Johnson County, Kansas

## MISSION

We provide exemplary government functions and services to keep our community healthy and safe, promote sustainable growth, support people with life's challenges, and contribute to a high quality of life.

## VISION

We choose to be a different kind of government:

- One that inspires trust for who we are and pride in what we do.
- One that dares to imagine what can be and strives each day to make a difference.
- One that cares about the health, the character, and the promise of community.

Through our service, Johnson County will always be an extraordinary place, second to none, where people want to be, to work, to live.

At Johnson County, you will be part of an organization that values employees as its greatest resource. As a dedicated team of professionals, we are committed to building and maintaining a highly engaged workforce. You will be challenged to learn and grow in an environment that fosters employee development and career-building. You will thrive in a culture of innovation. We believe successful employees are those that share these six core values:

Integrity - Professionalism - Humility - Humor - Respect





SIZE

476 square miles



POPULATION

622,237



MEDIAN INCOME

\$98,523



AVERAGE  
HOME VALUE

\$479,000



## THE COMMUNITY

Founded in 1855, Johnson County is one of the nation's premier counties, providing comprehensive services to its citizens in its role as a leading organization in the Kansas City metropolitan area. The Johnson County community is nestled in the southwestern quadrant of the Kansas City metropolitan area (combined population of over 2.2 million), along the Kansas/Missouri border, and exhibits all the hallmarks of a great, largely suburban, community: a thriving and growing business sector; nationally recognized public schools; first-class cultural and recreational amenities; and distinctive and welcoming neighborhoods. The largest county in Kansas, Johnson County is a growing and diverse community of about 629,000 residents. The county consists of several larger suburbs, including Olathe, the county seat, and Overland Park, the second most populous city in the Kansas City Metropolitan area and in Kansas.

With a national reputation for excellence, the county is proud to be amongst the top 2% of more than 3,000 counties that have achieved a Triple AAA bond rating and is ranked 14th on Niche's 2024 list of Best Counties to live in America. The County's population has grown 13.5% from 2010 to 2022, and continued growth is expected due to the high quality of life and excellent amenities that are provided throughout the county. Johnson County is a growth engine of the Kansas City metropolitan area. It is home to the headquarters of Garmin, Black and Veatch, and AMC Theaters. Panasonic recently selected the City of De Soto to locate its new EV battery facility, expecting to bring more than 4,000 jobs. The community is excited to welcome the World Cup and soccer fans from around the world to the Kansas City region in 2026.

Johnson County operates under the commission-manager form of government, with a 7-member elected Board of County Commissioners. Johnson County operates on a \$1.83 billion operating and capital budget, has more than 4,300 positions, and offers more than 450 services, from renewing car tags to providing emergency medical services. At Johnson County Government, we challenge ourselves to be a different kind of government because we care deeply about our community and each other. Committed to our shared values, we provide excellent public service, seeking always to improve ourselves and our organization. To learn more, go to: [www.jocogov.org](http://www.jocogov.org).

The Kansas City Metropolitan area is home to the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs, MLB's Kansas City Royals, MLS's Sporting KC, and NWSL's KC Current. Annual County and community events include a Juneteenth celebration, a Veterans Day event, Old Settlers, and Old Shawnee Days. Additional entertainment options include One Block South, historic Westport, the Power and Light District, the Country Club Plaza, and Crown Center. Cultural attractions like the Kauffman Center for Performing Arts, the Liberty Memorial, the Nelson Atkins Museum, Union Station, and numerous other museums, concert venues, and area landmarks, both in Johnson County and the greater Kansas City metropolitan area, are beloved by visitors and residents.

## ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Johnson County (Kansas) Government is thrilled to announce the search for a Communications & Engagement Director. This transformative role will lead the newly realigned Communications Department, serving as the central source of County information, media dissemination and the official channel of communication between the County and its audiences. This key position will play a critical role in shaping how the County connects with its residents, stakeholders, and internal teams. This leadership position is an opportunity to build and direct a department that will drive meaningful interactions and transparency within the community.

This strategic and visionary leader will bring a proven track record in designing and executing innovative communication and community engagement strategies. The role directs all aspects of media relations, public relations, marketing, and social media to effectively communicate the County's policies, programs, and services while maintaining effective relationships with key organizations, stakeholders, businesses, residents, and visitors.

## ABOUT THE POSITION

The Communications & Engagement Director will report to an Assistant County Manager and lead the direction and oversight of internal and external communications. As the department leader, the key responsibilities are as follows:

### *Strategic Leadership & Planning*

- Develop and implement a strategic plan for the Communications & Engagement Department to include policies, procedures, budget, and staffing needs to protect and enhance the Johnson County image with an increased awareness of County services.
- Establish strong partnerships with internal and external stakeholders to advise and collaborate on engagement and communication strategies through a customized approach across disciplines, cultures, and departments.
- Identify and execute metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of engagement and communications efforts, providing regular KPI reporting to the Commission and County Management.

- Serve as a trusted advisor to the Commission, County Management, and other leaders providing expertise and guidance on key communication decisions.
- Develop strategic messaging regarding sensitive issues and engagement initiatives that will enhance and protect the organization's brand.
- Advise and collaborate with County department leaders to develop marketing strategies and outreach campaigns that effectively promote services and encourage community engagement.
- Oversee the creation of high quality and consistent visual content telling the story of Johnson County across all marketing channels ensuring timely and efficient execution.

### *Strategic Engagement & Communications Strategy*

- Develop and execute short-term and long-term communication and engagement plans, adjusting for trends, public sentiment, and strategic objectives.
- Establish and manage methods for public feedback, market research, and community input to enhance engagement initiatives.
- Serve as a media liaison, building relationships and overseeing high-profile press events to enhance public awareness.
- Provide strategic leadership for crisis communication, working with emergency management teams to develop and implement rapid response plans.
- Plan, prepare, and supervise print and electronic publications, newsletters, brochures, fliers, magazine and journal articles, visual presentations, and award entries to enhance the County's brand image for publicity and promotion.
- Manage the design, layout, navigation, and overall content of the County's official website and employee intranet; determine web policies; coordinate function and content with other approved County websites; help maintain a strong website presence with relevant content.
- Oversee the development of multi-platform campaigns, including digital, print, and social media to increase transparency and community participation.
- Direct the County's media relations program including pitching stories, writing press releases and commentaries, media coaching, holding press briefings and conferences, and monitoring and tracking and archiving news coverage.

### *People & Resource Management*

- Lead, supervise, and mentor the communications team, overseeing performance management, professional development, and daily operations while fostering a creative, innovative, and solution-oriented culture.
- Develop and manage the department budget including associated contracts, to ensure resources are aligned to meet strategic goals and initiatives.





## IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is a dynamic leader with a strong background in communications and a passion for developing and executing multi-disciplinary campaigns that drive change, support organizational strategic goals, and provide transparent engagement. They will have a track record for proactively translating strategic thinking into action plans and outcomes. They will have supervisory experience in leading a creative department ensuring engagement and communication efforts are effective. The ideal candidate will also have experience working in the public sector, effectively managing multiple projects simultaneously, meeting stringent deadlines while maintaining a professional demeanor during stressful situations.

## EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

### Required:

- Bachelor's degree in communications, public relations, public administration, or a related field (Master's degree preferred).
- Fourteen (14) years progressive experience in direction, development, and management, implementing strategic communication and engagement plans, preferably in a government setting.
- Five (5) years of supervisory experience, with demonstrated success in leading a communications team.
- Valid driver's license.

**Preferred:** Proficiency in digital marketing, social media management, and modern engagement technologies.

## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

**Salary Range:** The annual salary range for this position is up to \$190,000 per year, dependent on qualifications and experience.

### Benefits:

- The organization provides health, dental, and vision insurance; a phone allowance; paid leave; employer-provided HSA contribution; and employer-provided life insurance.
- Johnson County offers two retirement plans, a mandatory 6% employee participation into a defined benefit plan (KPERS); and a voluntary defined contribution plan with an employer match administered by Voya Financial, with up to a 4% match into a 401(a).
- Additionally, the County offers supplemental group life insurance, flexible spending accounts, and health savings account.

## AWARDS

- #106 America's Best Mid-Size Employers by Forbes Magazine (2024)
- Seven Achievement Awards from National Association of Counties (2024)
- #12 Top 30 Local Government List of Green Power Users by the Environmental Protection Agency (2023)
- Triple AAA bond rating

## ABOUT THE COUNTY

**County Departments:** 28

**County Employees:** 4,300

**FY2025 Budget:** \$1.83 billion

## MAJOR PROJECTS

- \$5.1 million Shawnee Med-Act Station
- \$574 million Nelson Wastewater Treatment Facility renovation
- \$113.5 million Health and Human Services Building for Mental and Public Health

## MAJOR EMPLOYERS

- Garmin International, Inc.
- T-Mobile
- Black & Veatch
- AMC Theaters
- Farmers Insurance



## Application Process

### Please apply online

Johnson County is partnering with OMNI Human Resource Solutions' Executive Search Team to fill this role.

For more information, contact:

### **Stacey Cowan, Senior Search Consultant**

[scowan@omnihrm.com](mailto:scowan@omnihrm.com)

913-653-8085

*Johnson County Government proudly commits to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. We embrace diversity and prohibit discrimination against employees and applicants for employment because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion (or no religion), creed, sex or gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, age, disability, genetic information, military service or veteran status, citizenship, political affiliation or belief, and any other status or characteristic protected by law.*

*We support an inclusive workplace where employees excel based on personal merit, qualifications, experience, ability, and job performance.*

## RESOURCES

[Johnson County](#)

[Johnson County Chamber of Commerce List](#)

[Promotional Video](#)

