Public Information Officer Position Checklist

The following checklist should be considered as the minimum requirements for this position. Note that some of the tasks are one-time actions; others are ongoing or repetitive for the duration of the incident.

✓	**Task**
☐	1. Obtain briefing from Incident Commander: ▪ Determine current status of Incident (ICS Form 209 or equivalent). ▪ Identify current organization (ICS Forms 201 and 203, resource lists, etc.). ▪ Determine point of contact for media (scene or Command Post). ▪ Determine current media presence.
☐	2. Participate in Administrative Officer's briefing: ▪ Determine constraints on information process. ▪ Determine pre-existing agreements for information centers, Joint Information Centers (JICs), etc.
☐	3. Assess need for special alert and warning efforts, including the hearing impaired, non-English speaking populations, and industries especially at risk for a specific hazard, or which may need advance notice in order to shut down processes.
☐	4. Coordinate the development of door-to-door protective action statements with Operations.
☐	5. Prepare initial information summary as soon as possible after activation. If no other information is available, consider the use of the following general statement:

Sample Initial Information Summary

We are aware that an *[accident/incident]* involving *[type of incident]* occurred at approximately *[time]*, in the vicinity of *[general location]*. *[Agency personnel]* are responding, and we will have additional information available as we are able to confirm it. We will hold a briefing at *[location]*, and will notify the press at least ½ hour prior to the briefing. At this time, this briefing is the only place where officials authorized to speak about the incident and confirmed information will be available. Thank you for your assistance.

☐ 6. Arrange for necessary work space, materials, telephones, and staff. Consider assigning Assistant Public Information Officers to:

- Joint Information Center (JIC).
- Field (scene) Information.
- Internal Information.

☐ 7. Establish contact with local and national media representatives, as appropriate.

☐ 8. Establish location of Information Center for media and public away from Command Post.

☐ 9. Establish schedule for news briefings.

☐ 10. Coordinate, with Logistics, the activation and staffing of message center "rumor control" lines to receive requests and answer questions from the public. Provide statement to operators.

☐ 11. Obtain current incident status reports from Planning Section; coordinate a schedule for updates.

☐ 12. Observe constraints on the release of information imposed by the Incident Commander and according to agency guidance.

☐ 13. Obtain approval for information release from Incident Commander:

- Confirm details to ensure no conflicting information is released.
- Identify site and time for press briefings, and confirm participation by other Incident Management Team (IMT) members.

☐ 14. Release news to media, and post information in Command Post and other appropriate locations.

☐ 15. Record all interviews and copy all news releases:

- Contact media to correct erroneous or misleading information being provided to the public via the media.

☐ 16. Update off-incident agency personnel on a regular basis:

- Utilize electronic mail for agency updates.
- Establish phone line in the Command Post dedicated to internal communications to update agency personnel.
- Provide standard statement which can be given to general requests for information.

☐ 17. Coordinate information releases with information staff from other impacted agencies and jurisdictions:

- Ensure that information provided to the public is consistent across jurisdictional boundaries, when appropriate.

☐ 18. Attend Planning Meetings:

Sample Planning Meeting Agenda

	Agenda Item	Responsible Party
1	Briefing on situation/resource status.	Planning/Operations Section Chiefs
2	Discuss safety issues.	Safety Officer
3	Set/confirm incident objectives.	Incident Commander
4	Plot control lines & Division boundaries.	Operations Section Chief
5	Specify tactics for each Division/Group.	Operations Section Chief
6	Specify resources needed for each Division/Group.	Operations/Planning Section Chiefs
7	Specify facilities and reporting locations.	Operations/Planning/Logistics Section Chiefs
8	Develop resource order.	Logistics Section Chief
9	Consider communications/medical/ transportation plans.	Logistics/Planning Section Chiefs
10	Provide financial update.	Finance/Administration Section Chief
11	Discuss interagency liaison issues.	Liaison Officer
12	Discuss information issues.	Public Information Officer
13	Finalize/approve/implement plan.	Incident Commander/All

☐ 19. Respond to special requests for information.

☐ 20. Provide all news releases, bulletins, and summaries to Documentation Unit to be included in the final incident package.

☐ 21. Confirm the process for the release of information concerning incident-related injuries or deaths.

☐ 22. Document all activity on Unit Log (ICS Form 214).