CHIEF OF STAFF, GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The California Association of REALTORS® (C.A.R.) is seeking a strategic, highly organized Chief of Staff, Governmental Affairs to serve as the principal integrator for the Association's Governmental Affairs department. Working closely with the CEO and Governmental Affairs leadership, this executive will provide operational leadership and strategic coordination across the department's three divisions, connecting people, priorities, and information while establishing the structures and processes that help the department operate effectively.

We are looking for an experienced leader who excels at navigating complex organizations, building alignment across teams, and creating the conditions for timely, well-informed decision-making. The successful candidate will combine strong government affairs and advocacy experience with the operational discipline, political acuity, and judgment necessary to work effectively with senior leaders in a fast-moving environment.

Based in Sacramento, this role offers the opportunity to work at the center of a statewide Governmental Affairs operation, strengthening coordination and information flow while supporting the substantive policy and programmatic leadership of the department's division heads.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Chief of Staff for Governmental Affairs serves as the department's principal integrator, providing operational leadership and ensuring strategic alignment across its three divisions. Based in Sacramento, this role is accountable for the systems, processes, and governance structures that enable the department to function effectively, including planning, meeting rhythms, and decision-making processes.

As a trusted extension of the CEO within Governmental Affairs, the role maintains situational awareness of departmental activities, strengthens communication and collaboration, and promotes alignment around priorities. The position enhances coordination and organizational effectiveness while supporting, rather than directing, the substantive policy and programmatic work of division leaders.

Compensation Range: $220,000 to $250,000 annually
Benefits: Competitive benefits package including health, dental, vision, 401(k) retirement plan with generous company profit-sharing contribution (historically 10-15% per year), 12 Paid Holidays, PTO, life insurance, EAP, and more!

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to

Chief Executive Officer

Direct reports

Three Governmental Affairs division heads

Other key relationships

- Governmental Affairs leadership and staff
- Corporate Communications
- C.A.R. executive leadership
- California policymakers, regulators, and other government affairs stakeholders
- Association and industry partners

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Own the master operating calendar, the weekly reporting cadence and compiled roundup, and the decision-rights framework.
- Line-manage the three division heads; resolve cross-divisional conflicts and remove obstacles.
- Serve as the single, integrated channel of escalation to the CEO; filter what genuinely requires the CEO.
- Drive cross-divisional initiatives and the intelligence-flow interface to corporate Communications.
- Oversee departmental administration and the enabled adoption of operating tools and AI-supported workflows.
- Serve as a conduit on political and PAC matters, ensuring information flows.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Government affairs and advocacy experience

8–10+ years of progressively responsible government affairs and/or advocacy experience, ideally within a trade association, corporation, campaign organization, or government environment.

Leadership and management experience

7+ years of management and/or project/program management experience, with demonstrated success leading people, complex initiatives, and cross-functional work.

Experience managing senior professionals or functional leaders and coordinating priorities across multiple teams, divisions, or functional areas.

Executive and organizational operations

Experience establishing or managing organizational planning, reporting, meeting, workflow, and decision-making processes. Demonstrated ability to connect strategic priorities with the structures and operating practices needed to move work forward.

Education

Bachelor's degree in Political Science, Public Administration, Public Policy, Government, Business Administration, Organizational Leadership, or a related field, or an equivalent combination of education and relevant professional experience.

California government and association environment

Knowledge of California government, politics, advocacy, public policy, or the legislative and regulatory environment is preferred. Experience with a trade association, membership organization, public affairs organization, government entity, or similarly complex organization is also preferred.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic Thinking and Organizational Alignment

- Sees both the broader strategic picture and the operational details necessary to move priorities forward.
- Synthesizes complex topics into clear, executive-level communications that support timely decision-making.
- Connects priorities and information across functions and identifies dependencies, barriers, and issues requiring senior-level attention.
- Establishes effective planning and operating practices that create clarity and accountability across a complex organization.

Leading and Coordinating Across Teams

- Builds alignment across teams, divisions, and leadership groups with different priorities and areas of expertise.
- Successfully works with varied leadership styles to advance shared objectives.

- Drives execution across cross-functional teams, including circumstances where influence and coordination are as important as formal authority.
- Resolves cross-divisional obstacles while respecting the substantive expertise and decision-making responsibilities of division leaders.

Judgment and Political Acuity

- Demonstrates exceptional judgment, discretion, and political acuity in handling confidential, politically sensitive, and executive-level matters.
- Understands what requires escalation to the CEO and what can appropriately be resolved within the department.
- Operates effectively in high-stakes, fast-moving environments with competing priorities.
- Maintains situational awareness across the department and anticipates emerging issues that may require attention or coordination.

Communication and Influence

- Communicates clearly and effectively with executive leaders, staff, policymakers, stakeholders, and organizational partners.
- Distills complex information into concise, actionable communications for senior audiences.
- Builds productive working relationships across organizational levels and functional boundaries.
- Promotes effective information flow among Governmental Affairs, the CEO's office, and corporate Communications.

Operational Leadership

- Brings discipline and consistency to planning, reporting, workflows, meeting rhythms, and decision-making processes.
- Maintains focus across multiple concurrent priorities and initiatives.
- Uses technology, operating tools, and AI-supported workflows to strengthen departmental effectiveness.
- Supports an operating environment that enables Governmental Affairs leaders to focus on substantive policy, advocacy, political, and programmatic priorities.

APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

If you wish to submit application materials to apply for this position, please email: carsearch@car.org

Please include a resume and cover letter outlining your interest in the position and relevant experience.

ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

The California Association of REALTORS® is one of the country's most influential statewide trade associations dedicated to the advancement of professionalism in real estate. C.A.R. comprises 95 local member associations and more than 200,000 REALTORS®, REALTOR®-associates, and affiliate members. The Association develops products, programs, and services for its members and advocates on public-policy issues affecting real estate and property ownership.

C.A.R. Mission Statement

Shape, promote and protect an environment for the entire real estate industry, one in which California REALTORS® can succeed in meeting the real property needs of consumers.

C.A.R. Vision Statement

C.A.R. drives innovation and opportunity in the real estate profession and market.

C.A.R. Operating Values

Property Ownership. We believe property ownership builds financial security and thriving, sustainable communities. We strive to make property ownership attainable for all who are committed to working toward it.

Property Rights. We believe that the freedom to buy, sell, maintain, and improve real property is a fundamental right.

Inclusion. We believe that a conscious, persistent effort to further diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging within our community and our organization will drive greater success and innovation through the contribution of different perspectives and ideas.

The REALTOR® Difference. We believe that REALTOR® signifies:

- **Professionalism**: a commitment to the highest ethical standards in the real estate profession.
- **Competence:** a commitment to lifelong learning and a high level of knowledge and expertise in the ever-changing profession of real estate.
- **Trust**: reliable, credible real estate guidance and accurate, comprehensive data.
- **Community**: belief in the power of community and the commitment to engage, contribute, educate and lead.

Collaboration and Trust. We believe we are stronger when we collaborate and form relationships based on mutual goals, open communication, fairness, and transparency.

Key C.A.R. Programs and Services

- **Legal services**: Provides summaries of legislation and real estate cases, as well as a Legal Hotline for transaction questions.
- **Political advocacy**: C.A.R. advocates for REALTOR® issues in Sacramento and Washington D.C. and works with local associations to advocate for property rights.
- **Transaction support:** Development and continuous updating of standard forms available to members.
- **Education**: Develops and supports a wide array of real estate educational courses and certifications.
- **Meetings and events**: Virtual and in-person educational and networking events, including the annual REimagine! Real Estate Conference & Expo, AI NOW and Woman Up!
- **Knowledge center**: Centralized information on California's housing market, economy, and issues impacting the industry.
- **MLS and professional standards**: Guidelines about MLS rules and professional standards.
- **Community and foundation programs:** A range of programs in which C.A.R. members may participate, including Californians for Homeownership, the Scholarship Foundation, and Diversity and Inclusion Programs.
- **Marketing tools and resources:** Develops and partners with third parties to provide materials to educate consumers about the intricacies of buying and selling a home and the value of using a REALTOR® as well as tools to help members personalize their own marketing.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The California Association of REALTORS® is headquartered in Sacramento, California, with a staff of 160. For further information, please visit https://www.car.org/.