

TITLE: Employee Relations Consultant
Final CLASSIFICATION:
ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

Working with the Public Service Commission (PSC), this position is the subject matter expert providing Employee Relations (ER) advice to Portfolio Team and clients.

Reporting to an ER/OHS Manager or Team Lead, the **Employee Relations Consultant (ERC)** provides strategic advice and coaching on complex and contentious ER advice to HR Business Partners (HRBPs) and/or directly to clients. The ERC leads or advises on Level 1 and Level 2 Grievance proceedings and supports arbitration preparation for Level 3 Grievances. The ERC leads or supports fact-finding processes for issues related to Respectful Workplace Policy complaints and conduct issues. As an ER expert within the portfolio team this position leads initiatives/projects related to workforce reductions, job action readiness, etc. The position plays an integral role in supporting the Portfolio Team with information and training on ER best practices, consistency in Collective Agreement/Directive application and new/emerging ER trends.

This position requires a specialization in the field of ER and an in-depth understanding of the Collective Agreement and HR Directives. The position requires excellent interpersonal skills to support clients through complex and emotionally charged ER issues. The position is required to liaise with the union to resolve union-management issues.

JOB OVERVIEW

The position exists to provide ER subject matter expertise to the HR Portfolio Team and to support client departments with managing complex ER issues.

ACCOUNTABILITIES
1. ER Advisory Services and Support

- Provides strategic guidance/coaching to HRBPs whom are accountable for managing day-to-day ER issues.
- Directly leads complex and contentious ER matters.
- Drafts and/or reviews non-disciplinary (i.e. Letter of Expectation) and disciplinary memos (Letter of Reprimand, Suspension, Dismissal, or Demotion), in consultation with HRBPs.
- Supports the HRBP with conducting a pre-disciplinary meeting to assess the need for progressive discipline measures and performance management.
- Provides guidance to HRBPs regarding the interpretation and application of applicable legislation, regulations, directives, or the Collective Agreement.
- Assists HRBPs with conducting research of relevant labour legislation, directives and case precedence to advise clients upon defensible courses of action.

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- Partners with Labour Relations Policy/Disputes and Arbitrations/Labour and Employment teams to seek policy interpretation or guidance at a corporate level or for advice in relation to employee relations or grievances that are complex, unusual, or legalistic in nature.
- Works in collaboration with the HRBP and Disability Management Consultants to support the medical clarification process, including drafting and/or reviewing medical clarification letters as required. May assist the HRBP with drafting return-to-work plans and accommodations processes, as required.

2. Lead and Support Grievance Proceedings

- Leads the preparation process for Level 1 and Level 2 grievance proceedings or partners with HRBPs whom have the capacity and expertise to lead the grievance on their own.
- Accountable for the following aspects of the grievance proceeding when leading the grievance process, in consultation with HRBPs:
 - Ensuring grievance timelines are met and extended as needed,
 - Identifying and communicating preliminary objections,
 - Liaise with Union, including negotiations for possible settlement or withdrawal,
 - Identifying and coordinating with the Designated Officer and Designated Officer Assistant (DoA),
 - Fulfill the role of the DoA (as required),
 - Scheduling meetings and/or hearings with all parties,
 - Preparing the employer's presentation and gathering of documents (i.e. case precedence, best practices and mitigating factors),
 - Sharing pertinent information with the Union before the meeting/hearing,
 - Ensuring the Designated Officer's decision is documented and communicated with all parties, and
 - Ensure the grievance is properly documented and appropriate trackers are updated.
- Supports Level 3 Grievance Proceeding by ensuring preliminary objections have been identified and all relevant contextual information and supporting documentation is provided to Labour Relations (LR) Advisors.
 - Liaises with the line area and relevant stakeholders to request required supporting documents, ensuring submissions are made in a timely manner.
 - Attends arbitration hearings and provides support as required, by managing witnesses and exhibits, as well as taking notes.

3. Conducts fact-finding and documentation preparation for Respectful Workplace Policy (RWP) complaints, conduct investigations, Human Rights complaints:

- Review the complaint and prepare for the fact-finding process,
- Prepare questions and schedule interviews with the applicable parties, and others pertinent to the fact-finding meeting,
- Prepare a brief summary of findings,
- Debrief with the client group on the findings and recommendations,
- Lead conclusion meetings with the applicable parties or others as needed, and
- Ensure the fact-finding meeting is properly documented and appropriate trackers are updated.

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- Works collaboratively with the Investigations Unit who is accountable for re-routing files requiring formal investigations, ensuring evidence and relevant documentation is provided within a timely manner.
 - Partners with HRBPs to gather relevant files and documents requested by Legal in preparing for Human Rights complaint proceedings.
4. Supports ER related projects and initiatives related to workforce adjustments, job action readiness, performance management, attendance management.
 - Involvement in ER related projects require alignment with PSC corporate direction and an understanding of client business and required outcomes.
 5. Develops effective and collaborative working relationships with Union representatives.
 - Represents the department at Union-Management committees for issues raised in relation to Employee Relations processes.
 - Supports the preparation process, ensuring pertinent contextual information, documentation and policy interpretations are gathered to effectively defend the employer's arguments at committee hearings.

JOB REQUIREMENTS

Position requires a depth of knowledge and experience in Employee Relations within a unionized environment, in addition to strong foundation in HR generalist functions. Position requires an in-depth understanding of the Collective Agreement and HR Directives. Position requires an understanding of how FOIP, Human Rights, Ethics Commissioner policies/processes relate to the employment relationship. The position requires excellent interpersonal skills to deal with contention and/or emotionally charged employment situations. The position requires strong listening skills, oral and written communication and presentation skills to support fact-finding and grievance presentations.

BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES

- Systems Thinking to ensure understanding of how ER situations might impact other employment systems and/or create precedent for the department or broader Government of Alberta. Position must integrate many diverse considerations when formulating options for resolving issues related to the employment relationship.
- Creative Problem Solving to integrate the advice of specialists to solve complex ER situations.
- Agility to quickly take action and remain objective in emotionally charged situations.
- Drive for results to provide courageous advice and options for leadership to consider when dealing with concerns related to the employment relationship.
- Develop Networks to ensure diverse perspectives are represented in decision-making.
- Builds Collaborative Environments by promoting positive conflict resolution through facilitating discussion and coaching others to resolve conflict.

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