

Working Title Labour Relations Officer III	Name
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Position Number	Reports to Position Number	Division, Branch/Unit Alberta Labour Relations Board	Ministry Labour
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Present Classification Labour Relations Officer III	Requested Classification
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Dept ID	Program Code	Project Code (if applicable)
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PURPOSE: Give a brief summary of the job, covering the main responsibilities; the framework within which the job has to operate and the main contribution to the organization (see [Section 2.3](#)).

The Alberta Labour Relations Board is the independent and impartial tribunal responsible for the day-to-day application and interpretation of Alberta's labour laws. The Board administers the Labour Relations Code, the Public Service Employee Relations Act and the Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act. Officers also acquire a working knowledge of the Post-Secondary Learning Act as well as numerous other pieces of legislation whose labour relations components defer to the Labour Relations Code. These Acts apply to all unionized employers and employees that come under provincial jurisdiction. The Board is also responsible for appeals under Employment Standards and Occupational Health and Safety legislation as well as adjudicating remedies for reprisals under the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act*. The Board actively encourages dispute resolution, provides Officers for investigations, processes applications, holds hearings and makes major policy decisions.

The Labour Relations Code encourages parties to settle their disputes through honest and open communication. The Board offers informal settlement options to the parties, but it also has inquiry and hearing powers to make binding rulings whenever necessary.

Under the direction of the Manager of Settlement, the Labour Relations Officer is responsible for:

- the investigation, processing and determination of various applications to the Board;
- the informal mediation of disputes;
- the provision of research, analysis and recommendations to support the formal adjudication process; and
- the ongoing education of Alberta's labour community in the interpretation of labour relations legislation and the Board's rules, policies and procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIVITIES: The purpose of the job can be broken down in different responsibilities and end results. Each end result shows what the job is accountable for, within what framework and what the added value is. Normally a job has 4-8 core end results. For each end result, approximately 3 major activities should be described (see [Sections 2.1](#) and [2.2](#)).

Work is allocated by the Manager of Settlement and Executive Director using a case management approach. Staff at the LRO III Level (expert) will have been exposed to all application types and levels of complexity. The Officer rarely requires supervision, and uses a high degree of discretion in the selection of processes and strategies in all assigned cases. The Officer will demonstrate skilled use of many different mediation styles. The incumbent constantly monitors decisions and issues affecting Board policies and procedures and brings both problems and possible solutions to the Executive Director or the Manager of Settlement.

1. Applications filed with the Board pursuant to the Labour Relations Code (e.g. application for certification; application for revocation; application for determination; application for a strike vote or a lockout; application

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for registration, etc.) are processed through the system in a timely and efficient manner involving all the parties concerned and wherever possible to the mutual satisfaction of all parties.

Activities

Application is reviewed for completeness and appropriateness. Applicants are interviewed and the applications are analyzed to ensure that they are in compliance with legislation and Board policies and past practices. Knowledge and experience will assist the parties in ensuring a timely case management.

- The application is thoroughly researched and any potential or outstanding issues identified.
 - Initial contact is made with all the parties affected by the application ensuring that they understand the legislation and the process and the impact it will have on them. Most cases that come before the Board initially are volatile and contentious. Information is gathered quickly and efficiently from the affected parties to include in the report.
 - Officers coach and educate all parties to an application of their rights and responsibilities.
 - Officers emphasize communication between the parties and the early settlement of differences between them, without adjudication.
 - As situations are often highly charged and volatile, Officers utilize a variety of dispute resolution processes to maintain an environment conducive to a satisfactory outcome.
 - Where issues are identified, the Officer is capable of resolving the full spectrum of cases brought before the Board with minimal assistance from the Executive Director or Manager of Settlement. The Officer provides case resolution strategies for all assigned files and amended strategies as the cases evolve.
 - A report is prepared for review by the Executive Director and Manager of Settlement prior to presentation to the Board.
 - Reports are used as evidence at hearings for Board panels and are relied upon by the panels in their decision making process and by the parties as a reference in their arguments and presentations. The more complex/high-profile the case, the more the panel relies on the report of the Officer to narrow and provide a better focus for the panel and the parties at hearing. This leads to quicker, more efficient hearings. Officers are held accountable for thoroughness and accuracy of investigation findings.
- 2.** Complaints/disputes/issues are reviewed and investigated, resolved quickly and efficiently, in an impartial, fair and trustworthy atmosphere and to the mutual agreement of all parties.

Activities

- Situation is evaluated for seriousness and issues identified.
- A strategy of resolution is presented to the Executive Director or Manager of Settlement prior to proceeding.
- An environment is provided to the parties involved that is conducive to the resolution of their issues.
- Where agreement is reached and the situation is resolved without a Board hearing, the necessary documentation and correspondence for signature and processing is provided.
- Where a Board hearing is required, the background information and research and a summary of the steps and processes undertaken in an attempt at resolution is provided.
- The affected parties are brought together to review and discuss the situation, exchange information, narrow down the significant issues, explore alternative solutions, and through mediation and facilitation reach an

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effective solution.

- The Officer brings a high level of experience, knowledge and experience to the case resulting in the parties having confidence in the Officer's abilities to provide guidance and recommend resolution.

3. Votes, as required, are coordinated and managed effectively and efficiently and in accordance with legislation and procedures.

Activities

- The coordination of voting is determined and the actual voting process is managed.
- Electioneering rules that govern the conduct of votes are enforced.
- Dispute resolution efforts are made to prevent Board hearings over disputed ballots and misconduct by the parties or voters at the polls.
- Votes involving complex logistical problems such as multiple parties, multiple locations voting constituency issues are assigned to working level Officers to take advantage skills and experience.

4. Ongoing coaching, mentoring and development of new staff in a team atmosphere to support their growth to the full working level of the Officer position.

Activities

- Serves as a resource to new staff.
- Provide feedback to the new staff on the successes and challenges that they encounter.
- Have new staff accompany and assist during mediation, conflict resolution situations.

5. Board policies and procedures are continually reviewed and improvements, enhancements made to ensure that they continue to reflect the needs of Alberta's labour relations community.

Activities

- Board decisions are reviewed and commented on as requested.
- Input is provided to the Board on potential issues that may be on the horizon from the Alberta labour relations community.

SCOPE: List specific information that illustrates what internal or external areas the job impacts, and the diversity, complexity, and creativity of the job (see [Section 2.4](#)).

Labour relations in Alberta follows an adversarial and confrontational model. Every situation is unique and the issues identified will vary with the parties. The Officer is expected to identify an issue and attempt to resolve but keep within the boundaries of their experience. As knowledge and confidence increases, the Officer will be expected to explore ideas and solutions with the parties and facilitate them to reach an end result that all parties can agree to – there is no right or wrong solution. The complexity component arises in the assessment of who are the affected parties, what their issues and priorities are, and the establishment of trust in order to be perceived as being unbiased and impartial.

Creativity develops and is manifested in the avenues and the alternate dispute resolutions explored, and the ongoing development of new approaches to problem solving. Officers must understand the concepts and principles of group dynamics. They must also develop an acute awareness of each employer's or trade union's unique culture and business practices to assist them in their dispute resolution efforts.

SCOPE: List specific information that illustrates what internal or external areas the job impacts, and the diversity, complexity, and creativity of the job (see [Section 2.4](#)).

The job's diversity, complexity and creativity are reflected in:

- Alberta's various labour relations legislation and how it is applied in different sectors as well as the impact of other statutes that govern employment in Alberta;
- Continuous changes in the labour relations climate and various issues that impact each industry and business sector of the province;
- The various dispute resolution processes and techniques and relationship-building strategies (including interest based conflict resolution) required to deal with labour relations issues;
- The complex, highly-charged environment of labour relationships and the need to deal quickly and effectively with urgent issues.
- The overlapping legal principles that impact labour relations (jurisdictional guidelines for federal and provincial issues and what is included and not included in the various Acts and Statutes that relate to employer and employee rights);
- the interface and impact of unionized labour relations on non-unionized environments;
- administrative law and principles of fair administrative process;
- The impact that the status of their leadership has on the broad cross-section of industries/employers in the province.
- past decisions and precedents both in Alberta and other jurisdictions and how they effect Board policies and processes;
- enhanced knowledge of individual and collective trade union, industry, and public sector policies, practices, politics and issues;

The internal areas impacted by the Labour Relations Officer are:

- input into team discussions on dispute resolutions and investigation;
- the ongoing enhancement of their own knowledge and expertise;
- input into changes to Board policies and procedures;
- input into changes/improvements to Board administrative procedures;
- to develop and promote strategies to improve dispute resolution and Board practices;
- development of new Office staff.

External areas impacted are:

- employers and employees across the province, their legal counsel and unions;
- other departments within government and other government boards and agencies, hospital and municipal boards through the interpretation and application of the Labour Relations Code and Public Service Employee Relations Act;
- managers across government through the interpretation and application of the Management Exclusions Regulations;

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- other Labour Relations Board staff across the country to identify and share precedents and situations;
- public in responding to inquiries and providing information.

As the Officer progresses, they have a great deal of leeway in the development of their strategies of resolution for each assigned file. To obtain different perspectives, the Officers will often consult among themselves over certain files. In their reports the Officers make recommendations on bargaining unit inclusions, certification issues and other decisions on a daily basis.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES: Provide a list of the most important knowledge factors, skills and abilities including knowledge about practical procedures, specialized techniques, etc.; analytical and conceptual skills and abilities; and skills needed for direct interaction with others not only diplomas and degrees. Specific training if it is an occupational certification/registration required for the job.

Enhanced and demonstrated knowledge of:

- Alberta labour relations legislation and how it is applied in different sectors as well as other statutes that govern employment in Alberta;
- labour relations climate and issues in each industry and business sector of the province;
- a broad spectrum of dispute resolution processes and techniques, and relationship-building strategies including interest based conflict resolution;
- the various dispute resolution processes and techniques available and their use in relationship-building strategies;
- labour arbitration issues, trends and decisions;
- well-developed political acumen regarding the parties' issues;
- dealing with complex, highly-charged and often urgent issues and relationships.
- general legal principles including labour relations jurisdictional guidelines for federal and provincial issues and what is included and not included in the various Acts and Statutes that relate to employer and employee rights;
- the interface and impact of unionized labour relations on non-unionized environments;
- administrative law and the principles of fair administrative process;
- past decisions and precedents both in Alberta and other jurisdictions and their application;
- individual and collective trade union, industry, and public sector policies, practices, politics and issues;
- the collective bargaining process;
- business software applications.

Enhanced skills and abilities:

- research and analytical skills - ability to determine the applicable policies, decisions, collective agreements and legislation;
- exceptional interpersonal skills including excellent listening, superior oral and written communication, presentation, and interest based conflict resolution skills; ability to assess the parties, be seen to be neutral,

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impartial, and fair;

- mediation/facilitation skills - ability to work with various parties understanding the influences on their behaviour and attitudes. Ability to use alternate dispute resolutions as the need arises;
- ability to establish, develop and strengthen individual relationships with a wide range of persons including senior and junior lawyers in the community, facilitators, mediators, trade union leaders and business owners and presidents by establishing credibility and trust;
- ability to manage a wide variety of highly sensitive and confidential files, projects, and processes while meeting multiple deadlines;
- ability to draft and substantiate Board policies and procedures in addition to recommending changes to Board practices based upon analyzing trends and differences in Board decisions;
- ability to use discretion and flexibility with considerable independence and to adapt policies and procedures to individual cases;
- ability to manage complex group and personal dynamics and relationships while contributing effectively in a team environment.

The Officers use the following guidelines:

Legislation: Alberta Labour Relations Code, Public Service Employee Relations Act (PSERA), Police Officers Collective Bargaining Act, Management Exclusion Act and other Legislation (e.g. Post-Secondary Learning Act, Employments Standards (appeals), Occupational Health and Safety (Appeals) and *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* which make references to processes in the Labour Relations Code and PSERA.

Policies: Board Information Bulletins, Board Procedure Guide

Law: Basic understanding of quasi-judicial administrative tribunals and the laws of natural justice

Case Law: Labour Relations Board Decisions and related jurisprudence

The legislation, policies and case law form the framework under which labour relations functions in Alberta and are used as guidelines in the every day workflow of the Officers.

Note: Use of personal vehicle is required for this position.

ORGANIZATION CHART: Please attach an organization chart including supervisor, peers and staff (where applicable).

This information is being collected under the authority of Section 10 of the Public Service Act and will be used to allocate positions within a classification plan and to manage the Alberta government human resources program. If you have any questions about the collection of this information, contact the Compensation Manager, 6th Floor, Peace Hills Trust Tower, 10011 – 109 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 3S8, phone 408-8400 or contact your Ministry Human Resource Office.

Signatures

The signatures below indicate that all signers have read and discussed the information in this Position Description.

Incumbent

_____	_____	_____
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Name

Signature

Date

Supervisor

_____	_____	_____
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Name

Signature

Date

Division Director/ADM

_____	_____	_____
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Name

Signature

Date