

TITLE: ARBITRATIONS & DISPUTES (A & D) SPECIALIST
CLASSIFICATION: HUMAN RELATIONS 3

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

The Public Service Commission (PSC) provides human resources (HR) services to the Government of Alberta (GOA). It leads the development, implementation, and maintenance of policies and programs that ensure Alberta has a professional, non-partisan, diverse, inclusive public service that proudly service Albertans. This is achieved by providing expert advice, strategic leadership, and stewardship as well as developing and delivering innovative supports and services to Alberta Public Service (APS) employees.

In alignment with the APS *One-government. One-employer. One-HR.* vision, the HR frameworks and business excellence services encompass an array of HR functions to foster an agile, productive and engaged APS to service Alberta today and into the future. HR functions range from Talent Acquisition and Mobility, Classification, Compensation and Benefits, Employee Relations to Organizational Effectiveness, Leadership and Learning, Workforce Planning and Analytics, Wellness, Health and Safety and Strategic Policy. In addition, PSC is responsible for leading a coordinated approach to APS internal communications, designing and managing the GOA Jobs Website, and promoting a consistent approach to public agency governance, recruitment and compensation.

ROLE OVERVIEW

Reporting to the Director, Arbitrations & Disputes, the Arbitrations & Disputes Specialist provides labour relations policy advice, efficiently and effectively to PSC executive management, PSC Client Service Delivery Division, other PSC functional policy areas and other jurisdictional counterparts.

The Arbitrations & Disputes Specialist is an expert in labour relations providing innovative solutions to APS-wide issues while balancing the needs of stakeholders with competing priorities. With oversight from the Director, Arbitrations & Disputes, the position will lead and contribute to complex government wide projects and initiatives and make grievance case review / Alternative Dispute recommendations based on detailed analysis of the situation, the collective agreement language, and relevant policies and legislation. The position will conduct research and analysis in support of grievance case reviews and will lead development initiatives for teams consisting of a variety of stakeholders from the PSC and other departments.

The Arbitrations & Disputes Specialist provides interpretation advice on relevant legislation, the Collective Agreement and HR Directives and assists with the preparation, negotiation and implementation of the Collective Agreement and Essential Services Agreement. Working closely with Client Service Delivery Division to understand department needs, the Arbitrations & Disputes Specialist will identify optimal paths forward for resolution of grievance claims and develop recommendations for one-employer focused solutions to complex labour and employment issues.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. Training:
 - As labour relations experts, the A&D Specialists participates in the creation of and leads the delivery of training to Client Service Delivery.

Career Group:

Job Class:

Job Stream:

Job Code:

Revised Date: 2024

- Anticipates knowledge gaps and proactively develops resource material such as the development of Bulletins, training tools such as case law reviews and tool kits (e.g. disciplinary letter writing) to ensure consistent application of Labour Relations across the organization.
- Establish, lead and facilitate Human Resource wide learnings to share leading employee and labour relations trends and best practices across the PSC.

2. Consulting:

- The A&D Specialist provides expert advice to the Client Service Delivery Division in dealing with complex interpretation issues related to our collective agreement, essential services agreement, directives, and various pieces of legislation including:
 - Public Service Act
 - Public Service Employment Regulation Act
 - Human Rights Act
 - Labour Relations Code
 - Employment Standards Code
- Provides input into proposals or enhancements to related programs, policies and practices that are consistent with legislation, regulations and PSC and GOA direction.
- Provide expert consulting advice and review of complex employee and labour relations cases. This involves analyzing file assessments and proposed next steps that have been vetted through CSD leadership to ensure risks are understood and to flag possible alternatives for resolution. The specialist is relied on to escalate issues where risk to the Government of Alberta is identified and requires further review and consideration.
- Advise and influence decision-making of CSD staff regarding complex issues surrounding the level I and II grievance process and potential outcomes, should a matter escalate to level III arbitration. This includes a demonstrated knowledge of leading cases, relevant jurisprudence, labour relations best practices, and past precedence set through the arbitration process.
- The A&D Specialist develops and maintains relationships leveraging their influencing and negotiations skills with key senior stakeholders, including AUPE.

3. Project Management:

- Case Management initiatives, including completion of initial, level III grievance case reviews and analysis, researching and reviewing relevant jurisprudence to prepare complete risk assessments
- Preparation of briefings and mandate requests to present to senior leadership across the Government of Alberta and engagement in meetings with all parties involved to complete file preparation and provide consulting on file.
- Assisting with the preparation of all materials and briefings for Labour Arbitration, including case conferencing and negotiations with AUPE Counsel.
- Leading and executing settlement negotiations.

4. Professional Development

- Investing time in personal professional development, including completion and active engagement in a personal development plan.
- Developing and anticipating needs of both the Labour Relations & Negotiations team as well as CSD partners.

ROLE REQUIREMENTS

- Completion of a related degree in business, social sciences or equivalent supplemented by a minimum of five years of progressively responsible labour relations experience.

Career Group:

Job Class:

Job Stream:

Job Code:

Revised Date: 2024

- Requires extensive knowledge of collective agreements and the interpretation and application of those policies/agreements in different circumstances as well as diverse human resources principles, practices, and precedents, especially in relation to labour and employee relations.
- Significant experience in labour relations and employee relations including a background and knowledge of the union environment.
- Strong organizational and project management skills.
- A sound understanding of all human resource functions and government programs is essential for providing expert consulting to departments, researching issues and developing alternative options.
- Strong communication and influencing skills, including strong information recall ability, to lead discussions and influence stakeholders with the goal of resolution of labour and employee relations issues.
- Strong verbal, written and presentation skills, coupled with the ability to synthesize large volumes of information to make meaningful connections across diverse inputs.
- Ability to set and adhere to strict timelines and schedules.
- Thorough understanding of related legislation and regulation such as the *Public Service Act*, *Public Service Employee Relations Act*, *Public Service Employment Regulation*, *Employment Standards Code*, *Employment Standards Regulation*, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, *Occupational Health and Safety Act* along with the AUPE Collective Bargaining Agreement and GoA HR policies and directives.

BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES

- **Systems Thinking** – The incumbent requires systems thinking to create innovative and sustainable solutions that meet the short-term and long-term needs of the GoA as an employer. The incumbent needs to consider the inter-relationships among the legislation, regulations, collective agreement and directives when providing advice and developing policy including unintended consequences of decisions.
- **Creative Problem Solving** – It is critical that the incumbent provide innovative solutions by bringing together the right people to solve complex problems and asking the right questions to gain deeper understanding of the issues. The incumbent will assess, and address risks associated with grievance case files to ensure successful completion. The incumbent will review what made projects or actions successful with the Director, Arbitrations & Disputes, and share learnings with the Arbitrations & Disputes Team.
- **Drive for Results** –To be successful the incumbent will need to set grievance case review or arbitration preparation milestones and hold themselves and others responsible for completing agreed upon tasks. The Arbitrations & Disputes Specialist will clarify project objectives with assistance from the Director, Arbitrations & Disputes, and utilize expert resources within the organization to ensure the work is completed accurately and in a timely manner.
- **Agility** – The incumbent must anticipate obstacles to change and thinks ahead about next steps to keep projects moving ahead. The incumbent must be able to research and identify alternative approaches or courses of action to address complex labour relations issues.
- **Build Collaborative Environments** –The incumbent must ensure communication is ongoing by setting up processes or structures that facilitate open two-way communication amongst stakeholders. The incumbent encourages positive relationships in challenging circumstances and facilitates conflict resolution directly by initiating open dialogue and debate.
- **Develop Networks** – The incumbent must proactively connect and build trust with peers and executives in PSC, ministries, jurisdictional contacts, Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) and other experts in their field.
- **Develop Self and Others** – As the technical expert in their field it is critical that the incumbent share information, knowledge and experiences with the team and other stakeholders. The incumbent takes initiative to stay current with labour relations and employee relations trends and approaches.