



Tips on Reducing your Human Resources Practices Risk Exposure

There are many things you can do to ensure your company is preventing employment risks; **disclaimer: this is not an inclusive list but a high-level summary of practices that your company can do to prevent some employment risks.**

- 1. Documentation:** Having proper and thorough documentation is an essential practice in your human resources management. This provides clarity in agreements and communications. At a minimum you should have:
 - Employee Contracts
 - Employee letters when terms of employment have changed
 - Documentation on Employee Performance discussions
 - Documentation for Termination of Employment (especially company terminations)

Lakeland HR Solutions can support you with custom templates for the key employment documentation requirements, systems to ensure documentation is completed and filed appropriately, as well as advise on performance and termination situations.

- 2. Personnel Policies:** are a great practice to ensure employees have clear expectations, that your company is aligned with provincial standards and legislation, and has fair and consistent practice for dealing with breaches. So what policies should you have? Here are my recommendations for all companies, and there are many more that can be tailored depending on your company.
 - *Anti-harassment policy* – with clear process on what happens with workplace concerns, every company needs to ensure they comply with Alberta Human Rights and a policy is a great preventative and proactive approach to this.
 - *Code of Conduct/Ethics/Basic Employment Expectations* – usually aligned with your company's vision or mission statement this can be included in another policy or a stand alone. Provides clear expectations on key performance items to your business.
 - *Attendance Management Policy* - details expectations regarding workplace attendance, process when expectations aren't met, and can include any leaves you may offer (with any benefits over and above minimum standards) and process around them. Provides a fair and consistent approach to managing workplace absences.
 - *Performance/Progressive Discipline Policy* - describes process around dealing with workplace performance concerns as well as details termination for cause process; can include the basic employment expectations in this policy
 - *Privacy Policy* - discusses alignment with Personal Information Protection legislation (PIPA Personal Information Protection Act) and how your company safeguards personal information as well as how employees can access their personal information

- *Workplace Health and Safety Program* – usually as a stand alone program and policies, outlines your commitment to workplace safety and OH&S

Lakeland HR Solutions offers policy development, review and implementation tailored to your company needs.

3. Knowledge of Key Employment Legislation: ensure you are aware of your responsibilities in the following legislation:

- Alberta Human Rights
- Alberta Employment Standards
- Protection of Personal Information Act (PIPA)
- Occupational Health and Safety

There is lots of information online and government resources regarding these. If you are concerned and do not have the time to review all your companies responsibilities, Lakeland HR Solutions can do a full HR Audit for your company to identify potential gaps as well as management training on these items. Also having policies is a great preventative approach to breaches of these legislation.

4. Pay and Benefits: ensure that you company is paying fairly, within minimum standards and CRA requirements, and strategically.

- If you are not confident that you are making proper deductions for your employee's pay you must get this assessed immediately.
- Often benefits deductions are not fully understood from a tax perspective – ensure that your company is providing proper deductions and taxable benefits reporting. Also if your company provides disability benefits understand the tax implications if the premiums are company or employee funded.
- Ensure that you have fair and equitable pay that is free from systemic or other forms of discrimination.
- It is the company's responsibility to track and approve time – make sure you company is doing a thorough job of this and understand the risks if you are not.

Lakeland HR Solutions can identify opportunities in compensation and benefits strategy as well as audit payroll practices.