CITY OF BELLINGHAM

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: **Human Resources Employee Benefits Manager** **E-PLAN SG:E2-10**

DEPARTMENT: **Human Resources** **CS:N FLSA:N EEO4CODE:PR**

JOB SUMMARY:

Manages and supervises all aspects of employee benefit programs, including health benefits, the City's self-insured Workers' Compensation program, safety programs, leave programs, and LEOFF-1 pension program. Stays informed of new employee benefits related laws, regulations and trends. Performs research and analysis, provides consultation and makes recommendations to the Human Resources Director and City administration regarding benefits program design and policy development. Provides direct service to employees. Develops the benefits and Workers' Compensation budgets. Works in a highly sensitive public setting, with a variety of federal, state and municipal regulations, including labor contracts.

SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIP:

Reports to the Human Resources Director who provides oversight and general direction. Works independently under general supervision and the guidance of City and departmental policies and procedures, union contract provisions, state Workers' Compensation regulations, health benefits contracts, and other applicable governmental regulations. Supervises benefits staff. Consults with, and works collaboratively with, Human Resources colleagues and management of other City departments.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB:

Health and Welfare Benefits:

1. Plans, organizes, directs and evaluates the City's employee health and welfare programs, including medical, dental, vision, life and disability insurance plans, Workers' Compensation, wellness, safety programs, leave programs, retirement savings programs, PERS and LEOFF retirement plans, and Section 125 Flexible Benefits plans.

2. Stays informed of new employee benefits-related laws, regulations and trends. Performs research and analysis related to benefit plans to assist in Union negotiations, plan maintenance and improvement and health benefits policy development.

3. Provides administrative management of City benefit programs, including budget development and leadership of the benefits advisory committee. Partners with the City's broker to ensure viable benefit offerings, including plan design, strategic planning, benefit forecasting, monitoring usage trends and directing broker negotiations with benefit carriers.

4. Oversees Affordable Care Act (ACA) compliance and reporting. Responsible for annual reporting to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the State Risk Manager for self-insured benefit program(s).

5. Ensures appropriate and timely communications and employee education.

6. Advises Director and City management on health and welfare issues and trends in order to maintain affordable and appropriate benefits for employees and continuing compliance with state and federal regulations and City policies

7. Effectively manages relationships with third parties to ensure that agreed upon service levels are met and any issues are promptly addressed. Reviews benefit contracts for accuracy and monitors contracts to ensure compliance with negotiated terms and conditions.

Workers' Compensation:

8. Manages the City's self-insured industrial insurance program in accordance with relevant statutes related to industrial insurance. Selects and oversees the City's third-party claim administrator.

9. Manages day-to-day operation of the program, including claim filing, records retention, reviewing and authorizing payment vouchers, preparing the Workers' Compensation budget, and preparing and presenting management reports in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

10. Oversees the implementation of early return-to-work opportunities. Coordinates job accommodation and alternative job placement with Human Resources colleagues and department managers.

11. Manages legal issues in consultation with City legal counsel. Retains outside legal counsel if necessary.

12. Prepares excess Workers' Compensation application, determining self-insured retention level and mandatory reporting compliance.

13. Presents City of Bellingham's cases at Labor and Industries claim conferences, formal hearings, board appeals and mediations, with assistance of counsel when necessary.

14. Recommends and implements a Workers' Compensation reserve policy that enables the City to meet statutory financial requirements. Oversees Workers' Compensation claim reserves.

Leave Program:

15. Manages the City's leave programs in accordance with federal and state laws (e.g. Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WAPFML), FMLA, ADA, USERRA, Pregnancy Discrimination Act), and City of Bellingham Policies and Procedures and Collective Bargaining Agreements.

16. Provides guidance and oversight of day-to-day operations of the leave programs with direct involvement in resolving complex leave issues.

LEOFF-I Pension Program:

17. Manages the City's LEOFF-I pension program, including staffing Pension Boards meetings, supervising payment of medical claims and preparing budgets. Prepares data and analysis submitted for annual actuarial valuations.

Safety:

18. Oversees Drug and Alcohol testing program to ensure compliance with federal law and City of Bellingham Policy. Serves as City Designated Employer Representative under Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) guidelines.

19. Oversees the development, planning, implementation and evaluation of the City's employee safety programs. Ensures coordination of safety programs with medical and workers' compensation programs.

Personnel Management:

20. Provides leadership and motivation to benefits staff. Participates in and recommends hire. Assigns and oversees work. Establishes systems and methods for training and orienting employees, completes performance appraisals, provides coaching and takes appropriate corrective action as needed.

ADDITIONAL WORK PERFORMED:

1. Assists other departments with accommodation requirements under the American Disabilities Act.

2. Assures compliance with federal HIPAA regulations.

3. Conducts research and analysis on areas relevant to benefits administration. Advises and counsels City management on policy issues.

4. Participates in payroll software system maintenance and issue identification and resolution as it relates to benefits deductions and employer contributions.

5. Performs other related work of a similar nature and level.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities):

Knowledge of:
- Employee health and welfare programs (insured, self-insured, and self-administered) including financial management, service and industry trends.
- All applicable employment and benefit laws and regulations especially those relating to health benefits, insurance, pension, Workers' Compensation and safety.
- Principles and practices of financial record keeping: systems, procedures and controls applicable to processing benefits payments.
- Federal, state and local statutes, rules and regulations applicable to benefits accounting and deductions, City personnel and benefits rules, policies and procedures and collective bargaining agreements.
- Financial and records management including budgeting, cost and revenue projections and budget oversight.
- General knowledge of the principles, practices and current trends in public HR administration including recruitment/selection, classification, job analysis, performance management, compensation, labor relations and employee training and organizational development.

Skill in:
- Maintaining accurate and complete record system including the use of computer software applications and hardware.

- Facilitating mutually agreeable resolution to issues with both employees and management, and also various agencies outside the City.
- Managing medical and vocational resolution of cases involving employees with disabilities.
- Oral and written communications; public presentations; interpersonal sensitivity; problem analysis and decision making; time and stress management.

Ability to:
- Plan, organize, lead teams and manage staff.
- Maintain the confidentiality and privacy of privileged communications, including employee medical issues and program planning.
- Read, understand, and implement legal and procedural changes affecting work performed.
- Efficiently and accurately utilize a variety of standard office equipment and software applications.
- Compose and prepare business correspondence using standard business English.
- Maintain consistent and punctual attendance.
- Ability and willingness to demonstrate the Public Service Competencies of Service Orientation, Results Orientation, and Teamwork and Cooperation.
- Physical ability to perform the essential functions of the job, including:
  - Frequently operate a computer and other office machinery such as a keyboard, mouse, phone, and fax machine;
  - Frequently communicate accurate information and ideas with others;
  - Occasionally move between work sites;
  - Occasionally transport objects up to 25 pounds.

WORKING ENVIRONMENT:

Work is performed primarily in an office setting with the majority of time at a computer workstation. Work involves occasional fieldwork, where City field or satellite work is conducted. Occasional overnight travel to conferences and training sessions. This is a sedentary position with minimal physical exertion requirements.

EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, human resources or industrial relations, business administration, or a related field **AND** three years of professional work experience in health benefits management.

OR

- Equivalent combination of education and experience administering health and welfare benefit programs.

AND

- Demonstrated experience and ability in analytical research and report writing.
- Supervisory experience preferred.
- Significant Workers' Compensation and/or disability insurance experience preferred.
- Relevant experience with a public sector employer desired.
- Certified Benefits Professional (CBP) designation preferred.
- Professional in Human Resources or Senior Professional in Human Resources (PHR/SPHR) designation preferred.

NECESSARY SPECIAL REQUIREMENT:

- Employment contingent on passing a criminal background check.

PREPARED BY: A. Rowlson/L. Klemanski
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