Human Resources: An Online Course for Governmental Officials — Learning Objectives

Lesson 1 — Human Resources and Risk Management

This lesson will demonstrate the need for those who work in the public sector to realize that an organization’s most valuable asset is its people. Upon completion of this lesson, you should be able to define human resources management and have a clear understanding of the human resources function.

Learning Objectives:
• Define human resource management.
• Identify the hallmarks of a well managed organization.
• Describe how your organization’s vision, mission and values statements communicate purpose and direction to employees and customers.
• State a clear understanding of the HR functional areas.
• Identify the benefits of building a “risk-fit” organization.
• Recognize the steps to reduce the risk of lawsuits.
• Identify the ABCs of documenting HR matters.
• State the relationship between employer and employee.

Lesson 2 — Recruitment and Selection

Now more than ever, getting quality employees in the door is the key to building a successful workforce. With the qualified labor market changes that are expected in the future, it will be increasingly difficult to find the human resources an organization needs in order to provide services to the community. Hiring officials can take certain steps in accordance with best practices to ensure the best match between candidate and job placement.

Learning Objectives:
• Explain the importance of hiring the right person for the job.
• Examine how an organization’s reputation affects its ability to attract quality employees.
• Recall that job-related factors should be the primary focus of employment decisions.
• Review the importance of hiring decisions based on job-related factors.
• Recognize that interviewing is a selection procedure designed to predict future job performance.
• Cite the keys to conducting legally defensible interviews.
• Differentiate the need in the establishment of the two separate employee files (general file and confidential file).
• Recall the law regarding purging of public employee files.
Lesson 3 — Wages and Benefits
It is important for organizations to have a systematic method of classifying jobs, establishing pay ranges and administering salaries to ensure that employees are compensated in accordance with organizational policy as well as federal regulations and that pay levels are competitive and internally equitable. After you finish this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

Learning Objectives:
• Describe the components of a pay table in a compensation program, including the annual wage survey and benchmark jobs.
• Distinguish between the various types of health care insurance plans.
• Cite the types of health care plan administrators.
• Analyze the need to address increasing health care costs and ways of managing these costs.
• Identify the types of employer-provided benefits, including pension plans, disability protection, sick and annual leave, paid holidays, employee assistance programs and flexible spending accounts.

Lesson 4 — Performance Management and Appraisal
Upon completing this lesson, you should be able to distinguish between performance management, which is a continuous ongoing process, and the performance appraisal process, which is a once-a-year event during which time employees are recognized for their contributions to the overall mission of their department and the organization.

Learning Objectives:
• Describe the concept of performance appraisal.
• Define the three key elements of performance management (i.e., planning, coaching and feedback, and reviewing).
• Review the different types of feedback that an employer can give to an employee.
• Recognize how to evaluate employee performance and the importance of documentation and maintaining a performance diary.
• Define the various performance levels.
• Recall the steps in conducting a performance appraisal interview, including what to do if an employee refuses to sign a document.
• Examine the contrast between counseling and termination procedures.
• Recognize the important legal considerations used in the performance appraisal process.

Lesson 5 — Discipline and Discharge
It is imperative that public employers take swift and decisive action when employee problems arise in the workplace. If employee misconduct or substandard performance is not adequately addressed, it can have a negative effect on other employees and develop into a more widespread departmental or organizational morale issue. Ultimately, this will have an adverse impact on delivery of service to your community. Although you (the employer) may not have control over an employee’s misconduct, you do have control over the reactions toward these types of employees in the workplace.

Learning Objectives:
• Identify unacceptable employee behavior.
• Recognize the key aspects of progressive disciplinary measures, including the purpose of reprimands.
• Determine what to ask when it comes to dealing with difficult employees.
• Review the elements of discharge, including the need to involve HR and the importance of the termination decision meeting.
• Recognize the rights of terminated employees, including the importance of unemployment hearings and COBRA.
• Relate the concepts of discipline and discharge to real-world scenarios.
Lesson 6 — Legal Environment of Human Resource Management

Legal precedents and case law are fundamental to policy development and decision making in organizations. This lesson discusses the laws that have been adopted since the Civil Rights Movement of the early 1960s. In addition, federal and state governments have passed a number of laws protecting employees from discrimination based on factors not directly related to the quality of an individual’s work. Elected officials and public-sector managers are ultimately responsible for understanding antidiscrimination laws and being consistent in decisions impacting employees in order to ensure that they are protected from discrimination and harassment on the job.

Learning Objectives:
• Recall the major terms used in employment law.
• Differentiate the major employment laws.
• Relate when to refer to each employment law.

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For more information about Human Resources: An Online Course for Governmental Officials, contact us at questions@georgiacenter.uga.edu or by telephone at +1-706-542-3537.