



FIRST STEP WESTERN WAYNE COUNTY PROJECT ON DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Since 1978, First Step has proudly served Wayne County, Michigan with the mission to end domestic violence and sexual assault while providing free, life-saving services to survivors and their families.

JOB TITLE: Director of Employee Relations

GENERAL STATEMENT OF FUNCTION:

Under the supervision of the Executive Director, the Director of Employee Relations provides strategic leadership and is responsible for overseeing and executing all employee relations functions including payroll, benefits administration, and HR compliance. This position serves as a strategic partner to leadership while maintaining hands-on responsibility for day-to-day HR operations.

This position ensures accurate and compliant payroll processing, including managing funding allocation changes across multiple programs and grants. The Director of Employee Relations works closely with the Director of Finance and the Director of Grants and Compliance to ensure accurate payroll processing for budgeting, grant billing and reporting requirements.

This position also oversees the administration of employee benefits, leads open enrollment, provides ongoing employee education, and maintain positive working relationships with benefits brokers and vendors.

In addition, the Director leads employee relations efforts, including conflict resolution, investigations, and performance management, while fostering a positive, trauma-informed workplace culture. This position plays a key role in ensuring compliance with employment laws and supporting a productive, engaged workforce aligned with the agency's mission.

LOCATION: Plymouth Office, and other First Step sites as needed.

REPORTING: Reports to the Executive Director

TYPICAL DUTIES:

Employee Relations and Agency Culture:

- Lead and manage all employee relations matters, including conflict resolution, investigations, disciplinary actions, and performance management.
- Foster a positive, inclusive, and trauma-informed workplace culture aligned with the agency's mission and values.
- Develop and implement employee engagement initiatives to improve morale, retention, and agency effectiveness.
- Provide coaching and guidance to Leadership on employee relations issues, communication, with the goal of providing continued leadership development.
- Ensure compliance with all federal, state, and local employment laws and regulations, in partnership with the Executive Director and Pro-Bono Council.

Payroll Processing and Administration:

- Oversee and manage all aspects of payroll processing, ensuring accuracy, timeliness, and compliance.
- Implement and maintain payroll systems and procedures, including funding allocation changes across multiple programs and grants.
- Coordinate payroll audits and reporting, ensuring proper documentation and internal controls.

- Collaborate with the Director of Finance and the Director of Grants and Compliance to ensure payroll aligned with grant funding requirements and budget allocations.

Benefits Administration and Education:

- Administer the agency's employee benefits programs, including health, dental, vision, 401K, Life, LTD, and leave policies.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with benefit brokers, insurance carriers and other vendors.
- Collaborate with brokerage team on plan design, renewals, and rate negotiations.
- Analyze plan changes and employee cost impacts; develop recommendations supported by cost comparisons and overall strength of benefit offerings.
- Lead annual benefits renewal meeting and open enrollment process.
- Provide ongoing education and communication to employees about benefits offerings to ensure understanding.
- Support employees through the open enrollment process and provide support when necessary.

Employee Relations Operations and Compliance:

- Develop, update, and enforce Employee Relations policies, procedures, and agency Employee Handbook.
- Ensure compliance with employment laws, grant requirements, and agency policies, in partnership with pro bono council.
- Oversee HR and EWS timesheet system, personnel records, and reporting.
- Lead internal audits and prepare documentation for external audits or funder reviews.
- Support the agency's annual financial audit by providing payroll, benefits, and personnel-related documentation and responding to auditor requests in a timely and accurate manner.
- Oversee, maintain, and administer the agency's background check process, ensuring timely completion, compliance with applicable laws and funder requirements, while maintaining proper documentation for all new hires and current employees.
- Lead and respond to all unemployment questionnaires, documents and hearings as necessary.
- Update and keep current employee job descriptions and manage open position postings in partnership with the Philanthropy Program Coordinator.

Onboarding and Separation:

- Develop, implement, and continuously improve a comprehensive onboarding process that ensures new hires are effectively integrated into the agency.
- Coordinate pre-employment requirements, facilitate new hire orientation, and ensure completion of all required documentation and trainings.
- Partner with Program Coordinators to create structured and consistent onboarding plans.
- Monitor onboarding effectiveness, gather feedback from new employees and leadership, and refine processes to enhance engagement and retention.
- Develop, implement and continuously improve a comprehensive offboarding process that ensures employment separations are considerate and protect agency confidentiality.
- Assist with termination conversations when necessary, ensuring proper and throughout documentation.

Agency Collaboration and Mission Alignment:

- Work collaboratively with the Executive Director and leadership team to support effective agency management and strategic planning.

- Promote and model a strong commitment to the agency’s mission, values, and trauma-informed approach in all Employee Relations functions and interactions.
- Support Leadership in supporting employee performance, development and corrective actions.
- Contribute to a culture of collaboration, accountability, and equity across departments.

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor’s degree in Human Resources, Business Administration, or a related field required; advanced degree preferred. Minimum of five to seven years of progressively responsible HR experience, including leadership in employee relations and HR operations. Candidate must have demonstrated experience managing payroll processing, including compliance and funding allocation across multiple revenue sources, as well as administering employee benefits programs and leading open enrollment. A strong knowledge of employment laws is preferred, along with the ability to apply them effectively in a nonprofit or human services setting. Experience in mission-driven or trauma-informed environments is highly desirable. The successful candidate will bring strong interpersonal, communication, and conflict resolution skills, with the ability to handle sensitive information with discretion and build effective working relationships across all levels of the agency.

Experience collaborating with individuals from diverse racial, economic, and cultural backgrounds and a commitment to equity and inclusive practices is required. Understanding issues related to domestic violence and sexual assault is preferred.

The position requires a valid driver’s license, acceptable driving record, current proof of insurance, and successful completion of criminal background, sex offender registry, and child abuse registry checks. Ability to occasionally lift up to 30 pounds is required.

CLASSIFICATION: For purposes of employment standards, this classification is “exempt” from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. This is a full-time, salary position.

SALARY AND COMPENSATION: Base salary, commensurate with experience. Comprehensive benefits package includes medical, dental, vision, 401k match, life and LTD insurance, PTO, floating holidays, agency closure days, ESTA, and flex time.

To apply please complete an online application via <https://www.firststep-mi.org/jobapplication/>