

## Labour and Employment Law Bulletin

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### Pallett Valo LLP Introduces a Workforce Risk Management Solution

As part of the firm's Right-sized Thinking approach, as well as a recognition of the human resources needs of its clients, Pallett Valo is enhancing the capability of its Labour and Employment Law Group with the introduction of a new service designed to significantly reduce an organization's risks in the area of human resources.

#### Why This Could Benefit Your Company

The Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group is a cost-effective solution that will give your company the benefit of human resources expertise, with both a pragmatic and a legal perspective. If you have specific human resource issues, whether legal or non-legal, we can assist with our Right-sized Thinking perspective, to simply help you "get it done right, with the right resources". This will help you avoid the need to have both lawyers and a consulting service address your human resources issues simultaneously.

#### Here Are Just A Few Ways You Will Experience The Benefit:

##### How much does staff turnover cost YOUR company?

Studies have estimated the DIRECT costs of replacing an employee to be 20 - 30% of an employee's salary/benefits package. The HIDDEN costs can skyrocket that percentage by as much as 50%. **Our Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group could help implement the right processes to assist your company in reducing employee turnover.**

##### Does your company have the right systems and training in place to avoid the costs associated with inappropriate behaviour?

Inappropriate conduct by anyone in your workplace, including negligent misrepresentation when enticing new employees, bullying, poisoned work environments, mishandling terminations, and so on, can cost employers punitive and bad faith damages. **Our Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group could help you deal with these difficult issues to minimize your risks and related costs, should a legal situation occur.**

##### Do you have a Health and Safety Program in your company?

Employers with more than 20 employees must have a Joint Health and Safety Committee under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* of Ontario. In addition, the *Criminal Code* has been amended to impose criminal penalties for health and safety violations. Under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* of Ontario, corporations face potential fines of up to \$500,000 per offence. Individuals face potential fines of \$25,000 or up to twelve months imprisonment. **Our Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group can assist you to comply with your health and safety legal responsibilities.**

##### Do you properly document the Job Evaluation System in your organization?

Private sector companies with more than 10 employees, including seasonal employees, have legal obligations under the *Pay Equity Act* of Ontario. A complaint from an employee could result in an investigation, which could lead to retroactive pay adjustments for qualifying employees and fines of up to \$50,000. **Our Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group could help you avoid a Pay Equity dispute.**

#### How Will This Work?

Our new specialty Group will focus on important human resource issues that can have major economic implications for your company, and can arrange "right-sized" legal services when required. The Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group *complements* Pallett Valo's legal services. It allows you to manage your risk upfront, before legal needs arise, thus potentially saving you a great deal of money.

The Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group may help you save money by:

- offering cost-effective solutions aligned with the goals of your organization
- customizing and implementing risk management audits, processes, and systems
- providing cost-effective human resources advising
- delivering risk prevention training to all levels of your organization

## What We Offer

This new specialty Group will offer a range of comprehensive human resources services, including:

### Human Resources Management:

- Human resources audits - legal compliance review; policies, practices and procedures review; employee handbook review; recruitment, selection and orientation review; job descriptions and compensation structure review; privacy and disaster recovery audits; health and safety audits
- Employee surveys - organizational issues; morale issues; training needs assessments
- Developing your human resources strategy

### Human Resources Administration:

- Policy development; employee handbook development;

health and safety policy and program development; installation of processes (for example payroll administration, salary administration, and benefits reviews); absenteeism administration; development of personnel forms, documents and processes

### Owner, Executive and HR professional education:

- Best hiring practices; employment contracts – contractor vs. employment; conducting effective workplace investigations; employee terminations and how to minimize exposure; preparing for wrongful dismissal litigation; coping with sensitive and litigious employees

### Manager and Supervisor Training:

- Interviewing, selection and orientation; HR documentation; performance evaluation; progressive discipline; managing risk at work – the legal implications; harassment in the workplace; managing absenteeism; health and safety in the workplace; union organizing and certification; collective bargaining strategies; pay equity; privacy issues in the workplace

### Employee Training:

- Harassment in the workplace; health and safety; performance evaluation

Using the new Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group to improve your recruiting practices, reduce staff turnover and avoid costly human resource mistakes will have a significant positive impact on your bottom line.

## Contact Members of the Workforce Risk Management Solutions Group at Pallett Valo LLP

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