Human Resources: Or, “...And I Thought We Were Friends!”

The Human Resource Policy

The heart of any good personnel management system is a well thought-out, written HR policy.

All employees of a city library are city employees and subject to the city's personnel policies and classifications, unless the city council has passed a city ordinance that states that library employees will be treated differently [33-2608]. The director of a city library is hired, supervised, and evaluated by the library board [Idaho Code 33-2607(8)] and serves at the pleasure of the board [33-2608]. As the director of a city library, then, you should become thoroughly familiar with the human resources policy of the city, or with whatever substitute policy the city or library has created for library employees.

It is also a good practice to get to know your library's human resources professional and attorney. If yours is a city library, this will be the city HR manager and city attorney. District libraries will have their own HR person and should have a qualified attorney on retainer. Every library should also make use of a risk management provider. If you find yourself dealing with disciplinary issues or other difficult HR problems, these are the experts to consult.

One of the largest risk management providers in Idaho is the Idaho Counties Risk Management Program (ICRMP). To learn more about ICRMP (pronounced EYE crimp), visit http://icrmp.com/.

If you are a district library director, your board should have approved HR policy for your employees. It is advisable for your attorney or risk management provider to review these policies, which should include:

- The mission statement of the library
- General expectations of all employees
- Job descriptions for all employees
- General description of compensation
- Description of benefits, including paid leave
- Description of staff development and continuing education opportunities
- Hiring procedures, including promoting from within the organization
- Job evaluation procedures
- Procedures for promotion
- Procedures for progressive discipline
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- Grievance procedures
- Procedures to terminate employment

“Public library service” ([33-2702(6)](33-2702(6))) means the provision of planned collections of materials and information services provided by a library established under the provisions of chapter 26 or 27, title 33, Idaho Code, and paid for primarily through tax support provided under these statutes. These services shall be provided at a facility, accessible to the public at regularly scheduled hours and set aside for this purpose. These services shall be governed by a citizen board appointed or elected for this purpose and shall be administered and operated by paid staff who have received appropriate training in library skills and management. The services shall meet standards established by the board of library commissioners.

Your library’s personnel policy should be reviewed by your library’s attorney or risk management provider before it is finalized and approved by the library’s board. Attempting to save money by skipping this step could prove to be very costly in the future.