

**HRA-ECI**

**October 2022**

OCTOBER  
MEETING

Friday, October 14th  
11:30 am—1:00 pm

Dieterich Bank  
Corporate Center  
Effingham, IL 62401

This meeting was  
Approved for HRCI  
Credit!

# Conducting an Investigation

Laura Miller, SHRM-SCP, PHR, is a Senior HR Professional with Ameren. She has been with Ameren since 2012 and specializes in internal investigations, charges from external agencies, labor law compliance, union environments, and absence management. She holds her Master's in HR management, is an adjunct professor for University of Illinois-Springfield, and a current Director for ILSHRM. Her focus for our presentation will be conducting an investigation.

Laura will present on:

- ◆ Which complaints to investigate
- ◆ Prepping for the investigation
- ◆ Fact-finding interviews
- ◆ Closing an investigation

## Employee Benefits Move to the Executive Agenda

Benefit offerings have changed over the years and what used to be special benefits have become more mainstream. If an organization is going to be competitive as an employer, it must go well beyond the traditional benefits package.

The importance of employee benefits is growing, and the C-suite is paying attention. Historically, employee benefit conversation at that level have centered around the cost of health insurance which makes it easy for employee benefits to be taken for granted and the focus be put on compensation, not benefits, for employees and job candidates. However, benefit offerings are still extremely important as part of a total rewards package and offering the minimum or medium in benefits isn't going to cut it for much longer. Benefit offerings can be catered to your workforce to have it make sense and be what employees actually want and expect.

Companies like Verizon have made some changes to their benefit offerings by allowing the employee more flexibility in choosing what is best for them. Verizon's CHRO said, "We are building a range of benefits to serve employees where they are in life." This is being accomplished through offering employees a stipend that can be used to purchase personalized benefits that meet their unique needs, such as pet insurance, elder care assistance, yoga classes, and telehealth among others. Another popular incorporation Verizon has done since the pandemic is allow work flexibility in terms of remote options or the flexibility to decide for themselves.

Some of these benefits may not be feasible for smaller organizations, so consider what works and is attainable for your workforce. Verizon conducts quarterly employee engagement surveys and supplements findings with feedback and conducts focus groups to discuss and take action on the results. Surveying and listen to your employees is a good start in creating a way to stand out from other employers.

It is no surprise that benefit trends are ticking up even from 2020 to 2022 for the following categories:

- ◆ Flexible/remote work
- ◆ Health and wellness
- ◆ Acknowledgment of the importance of employees' lives outside of work
- ◆ Strong training, development, and advancement opportunities
- ◆ Boundaries on employee work hours

~Source: SHRM: *Employee Benefits Move to the Executive Agenda* by Joanne Sammer

## Keeping Pay Structures Current in a Volatile Market

The job market has been crazy for a couple of years as we all know. The competitive market for talent is driving volatility in compensation levels and a salary structure out of synch with the market can hamper recruitment and retention efforts.

While the market has dictated higher pay, it can be detrimental to an organization when pay becomes too high and labor costs become unsustainable. So, what is the magic answer?

Unfortunately, there is no magic answer. The best way to address a volatile market is intentionally building a compensation plan that works for your organization. This includes creating a plan on how and when an organization reviews their pay structure. Some recommended considerations to keep your pay structure relevant are:

- ◇ Review pay structures more frequently
- ◇ Broaden your approach
- ◇ Develop guidelines

It's better to be proactive than reactive, so what will your approach be?

~Source: SHRM *Keeping Pay Structure Current in a Volatile Market* by Joanne Sammer

## Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

As we are familiar, Illinois has specific requirements in regards to harassment process, compliance, and training. As we near the end of the year, it is a good time to confirm your 2022 harassment commitments have been met for this year.

Lawsuits are never ending for harassment, and the EEOC recently brought a sexual harassment suit against an employer in Texas. This is a reminder for employers on what to consider in building an effective harassment prevention, investigation, and education program.

Check out Illinois' requirement for harassment training that went into effect in 2020 at the following link. Policy requirements: <https://bit.ly/3Ezk6fw> and Model Training: <https://bit.ly/3Voa46K>

~Source: SHRM *Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace* by Matt Gonzales



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