

# Toward Self-Regulation

## Executive Summary of CPHR Alberta's Application for POARA Inclusion

CPHR Alberta is working to achieve self-regulation. Over the past four years we have adopted rules and policies to ensure our members uphold the highest standards of practice in Human Resources. We have created valuable new research that leverages the unique position of HR, and provides timely data to our stakeholders. And we have worked to unify our members as a vital leader of our province's HR community through learning opportunities, communications and regular events.

## Human Resources in Alberta

Of the estimated 17,500 Human Resources practitioners in Alberta, almost 30% are members of CPHR Alberta. The field of practice for HR is broad, with a body of knowledge that includes Human Resources strategy, professional practice, employee engagement, workforce planning, labour relations, total compensation, learning and development, health and wellness, and Human Resources metrics.

As a professional calling, Human Resources practitioners are expected to manage the relationship amongst workers and optimize the productivity of an organization's labour force. This is inherently a complex field of practice dealing with the natural tension between an organization's goals and the personal ambitions, expectations and objectives of their employees.

## Background

Achieving self-regulation for the Human Resources profession is an important goal for Alberta's HR community. Since its foundation in 1984, CPHR Alberta has applied to the Alberta Government twice before to be included in legislation covering professional self-governance. Each rejection has provided useful guidance on the steps required to demonstrate that there is a public interest to HR becoming self-regulated, and that CPHR Alberta is the right organization to act as the regulating body.

Our most recent application was filed under our previous name, the Human Resources Institute of Alberta (HRIA) in December 2014. A special vote of our members this spring ratified a name change to the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources of Alberta (CPHR Alberta). CPHR Alberta is now part of the CPHR Canada family - our country's largest HR community.

## Mandate

CPHR Alberta is governed by a Board of Directors and guided by the following mandate:

### Professional Recognition

To position the Human Resources profession as a recognized and valued profession by securing a self-regulated profession legislated to act in the public interest, by ensuring that the CPHR designation is widely recognized and valued by our stakeholders and by continuing to advance Human Resources practices in Alberta.

### Professional Standards

By demonstrating that CPHRs provide the highest standard of service, advice, and credibility consistent with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct.

### Research, Trends and Information

To ensure that the organization consistently provides credible information on current and emerging Human Resources trends and issues, and facilitates access to expert opinions on the practice of Human Resource management to members, employers, government, educational institutions, and media.

### Professional Development

To provide CPHR Alberta members with enhanced competencies and capabilities through training and the sharing of best practices and experiences.

## Public Interest

A key test of the need for a profession to become self-regulating is the value it adds to the public interest. The principal public groups that HR professionals interact with through employers, government, organized labour, job seekers and employees are a considerable population. However, the work of HR professionals doesn't just affect their employers or clients; it also impacts families and, by extension, society at large. Therefore, there is a public interest in having HR professionals who are concerned and focused on balancing the interest of both their employers and the public.

Our application outlines eight key areas where self-regulation will contribute to the public interest:

- Safe workplaces, including workplaces free of harassment and bullying
- Productive workplaces
- Fair and equitable workplaces
- Respectful workplaces, free of discrimination
- Accessible workplaces for individuals with disabilities
- Workplaces that respect the rights of workers to self-organize
- Protection of Privacy
- Well-managed supply of talent
- An adequate supply of competent and ethical Human Resources professionals

CPHR Alberta is ready to assume greater responsibility for the Human Resources profession in Alberta. Through the maintenance of a rigorous registration process for the CPHR designation, CPHR Alberta is able to protect the public interest by setting and enforcing high professional and ethical standards, enforcing the continuous professional development program, routinely assessing the competency of members through an internal audit process, ensuring the enforcement of the Standards of Professional Conduct, and providing an efficient, transparent means for complaints to be fairly reviewed and adjudicated. CPHR Alberta has developed and refined these processes over the past decade to meet the standards of self-regulation, and now requires the legal tools to ensure the continued protection of the public.

## Risks

CPHR Alberta has worked to raise the standard of HR in Alberta with an enhanced Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct, as well as prudent internal processes to support these policies. Risks exist to CPHR Alberta members, as a contingent of the public, and to the public in general if registration is not granted.

CPHR Alberta members risk losing their designation without the authority to compel parties involved in a complaint to fully participate, such as by providing supporting documentation. The current enforcement process for the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct is entirely voluntary. Without registration, this voluntary process will diminish a member's ability to provide a complete defense during the disciplinary process.

The CPHR designation signifies a superior level of knowledge, skill and competence. Without registration, CPHR Alberta has little recourse against cases where the public has been misled into believing a higher quality service has been provided where it did not exist. Just as critical as a potential skills deficit is the risk of non-existent professional liability insurance coverage. CPHR Alberta requires all of its members in independent practice to obtain professional liability coverage to ensure the public is protected from errors and mistakes committed in good faith by its members. This requirement is backed by an annual audit, and encouraged through a below-market price program for CPHR Alberta members.

## Rigorous Membership Processes

CPHR Alberta takes its commitment to protecting the public seriously. From the good character attestation that is a requirement to becoming a member, through the certification process, and to the ongoing requirements of professional development and membership renewal, the processes that have been developed over the past decade ensure that our members are held to the highest standards of the Human Resources profession.

Our recent work with the province's post-secondary institutions and our national partners in CPHR Canada confirm a commitment to a more focused HR profession. Post-secondary institutions are submitting applications to have HR programs accredited at their respective

schools - with five approved over the past year in Alberta alone. These accredited programs are aligned with the CPHR Competency Framework, a national standard for HR knowledge. By working across the country to ensure present and future HR practitioners meet the requirements of the Competency Framework, we can better protect the public from fraudulent or incompetent practices.

## Toward Self-Regulation

Human Resources has emerged as a critical profession in the twenty-first century. Balancing the needs of the public with the goals of business is a complex and highly-skilled role. CPHR Alberta has built a community of HR professionals dedicated to strengthening our province through their profession. Our goal of a self-regulated Human Resources profession is one that ensures the protection of the public as our profession continues to grow and evolve.

Questions about CPHR Alberta and our application for self-regulation?

Contact:

Daniel Boucher  
Director, Regulatory Affairs & Research, Registrar  
CPHR Alberta  
403.541.8714  
[dboucher@cphrab.ca](mailto:dboucher@cphrab.ca)