

Employment Relations Specialist

Horopaki | Context

Kaunihera Taiao ki Waitaha | Canterbury Regional Council, also known as Environment Canterbury, is the Regional Council for the largest region in Aotearoa/New Zealand, covering an area of 44,500 square kilometres, with a population of approximately 700,000.

As a regional council, we are responsible for managing natural resources including air, soil, water and land. We work in partnership with mana whenua Ngāi Tahu to protect the health of our environment to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for our region.

The region's evolving environmental and political context means we will continue to be agile and adaptive, as we respond to regulatory and environmental changes.

Our mahi (work) is organised around the delivery of our three core services:

- Environmental Regulation and Protection
- Community Preparedness and Response to Hazards
- Public Transport

We are guided by our strategic drivers (pou):

- Putting the community and our customers at the heart of everything we do
- Growing our relationship with mana whenua into a true partnership
- Maturing our governance model and understanding of our political environment
- Removing pain for our people (and customers) by improving our systems and processes.

Our mahi is also underpinned by our values:

- Kaitiakitanga (stewardship)
- Pononga (integrity)
- Manaakitanga (people first)
- Whanaungatanga (collaboration)
- Māiatanga (can do).

Aronga | Purpose

The purpose of this role is to lead and provide legal advice, represent Environment Canterbury and provide professional supervision to People and Capability (P&C) Business Partnering and Advisory team.

As a technical leader, this role will provide engaging and dynamic advice, integrating operational and functional alignment to drive high performance and outcomes that ensure quality services are delivered to our communities in accordance with our values, strategies, ways of working and Long-Term/Annual Plan commitments.

This includes thinking about organisation-wide interests and impacts when interacting with customers or when planning activities and expenditure, collaborating inside the organisation to achieve the desired culture, making sound business decisions and taking ownership of leading and managing our people.

Ngā Haepapa | Accountabilities

- Providing legal advice on employment law to Canterbury Regional Council
- Driving a high-performance culture within the People team
- Coaching and growing the capability of our P&C Business Partnering and Advisory team, and our wider people leadership team
- Delivering on our strategic direction to create a more relational, informal, employment relationship resolution system
- Interpreting policies and procedures consistently and objectively
- Engaging with our union partners, and negotiating terms of settlement, as needed
- Engage in the development and maintenance of resources, templates and tools to ensure there is a consistency in employment relations (ER) practice across our organisations
- Ensuring the ongoing development and growth of kaimahi capability by coaching and mentoring colleagues, in order to support them to create a high performing and engaged workforce

Toitū Te Tiriti | Treaty Partner Excellence

- Deliver outcomes that underpin and give effect to achieving Ngāi Tahu cultural and environmental aspirations, including but not limited to, mahinga kai and revitalisation programmes.
- Connect with our Ngāi Tahu partner to ensure understanding of Ngāi Tahu aspirations and priorities so that there is genuine input and contribution, which can be considered in mahi programme development and prioritisation.
- Demonstrate openness and courageousness in approaching issues and in co-design of processes and systems, supporting thought leadership that can give effect to the progression of the partnership.
- Contribute toward our effective, strong and valued relationship with all Papatipu Rūnanga within Waitaha/Canterbury and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, to demonstrate our commitment to recognise and provide for the kaitiaki/responsibility Ngāi Tahu has for the natural environment. This will include sharing of knowledge and information, creating opportunities for increased participation in decision-making processes, effective engagement and development of existing working relationships.
- Support the organisation's cultural capability journey, leading by example and identifying clear priorities, expectations, and development opportunities for individual capability; planning and aligning work to support organisational cultural capability across all aspects of delivery.

Hauora me te Marutau | Health and Safety

The health, safety and wellbeing of our kaimahi and community is a priority for the Council, and we proactively implement robust health and safety practices. To meet our legal obligations you must:

- Understand the health and safety and risk obligations that rest with this position, and care for your own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others you may interact with.
- Ensure awareness of, and compliance with, legislative and operational standards, policies and guidelines, including the Council's code of conduct.
- Maintain an enquiring mind, undertake your own due diligence, and apply your knowledge of best practice to ensure a detailed understanding of any risks associated with this position.
- Ensure that relevant certifications are maintained, if applicable.

Hononga ā-Mahi | Working Relationships

Kai rō Kaunihera | Within the organisation

- Accountable to Chief People Officer
- Key internal relationships with members of Executive Leadership Team, people leaders and leaders in the People team.
- Coaching, mentoring and developing people leaders and members of the People team.

Kai waho i te Kaunihera | Outside the organisation

- Contribute toward our effective, strong and valued relationship with all Papatipu Rūnanga within Waitaha /Canterbury and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
- Demonstrate Council's commitment to recognise and provide for the kaitiaki responsibility Ngāi Tahu has for the natural environment. This will include sharing of knowledge and information, creating opportunities for increased participation in decision making processes, effective engagement and development of existing working relationships.
- Engage with external consultants, unions and other external kaimahi representatives effectively.

Ngā Herenga Motuhake | Special Conditions

As a regional council, we have a specific requirement to provide a civil defence function for Waitaha. Kaimahi are required to be available to assist, support or be associated, as reasonably required, with any Civil Defence emergency or any exercise organised in relation to this function.

Additionally, all kaimahi are expected to assist, support and respond, as reasonably required, to any event where the Business Continuity Plan is activated.

Māngai Whakahaere | Delegations and Authorities

Where specified, this role has delegated authority to make decisions in accordance with Council-approved delegations, and authority for decision making in accordance with policies and guidelines for financial, people management and media-related activities.

Additional specific delegations may be given by the Chief Executive to the Chief People Officer on people and safety matters from time to time.

Ngā Āheitanga | Capabilities

Tohu Mātauranga | Qualifications

- A minimum of tertiary qualification in law, with the ability to hold a practicing certificate as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.

Mātau ā-wheako | Experience

- At least 6 years' experience plus post qualification experience.
- Demonstrated experience in an in-house legal position, in a comparably complex and sizable environment.
- Previous experience working within an industrial relations environment, including experience in the advocacy and negotiation of matters.
- Proven experience in coaching and mentoring team members, and developing team capability.

Ngā Pūkenga Matatau | Core Competencies

Specific behaviours at the technical leader level sit beneath each of the following organisational competencies.

Customer Focus

Ensuring that the customer perspective is a driving force behind decisions and activities. Initiating and maintaining relationships inside and outside the organisation.

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| Business Acumen | Using an understanding of the organisation's position to contribute to effective strategies and tactics by using economic, financial and industry information. Thinking from the ratepayers' perspective. |
| Achieving Outcomes | Translating strategic priorities into operational reality; aligning communication, accountabilities, resources, internal processes and ongoing measurement systems to ensure that strategic priorities yield measurable and sustainable results. |
| Leading Change | Identifying and driving organisational and cultural changes needed to adapt strategically to changing demands, technology, and internal initiatives; using new approaches to improve results by transforming organisational culture, systems, or services. |
| Common Purpose | Working towards a compelling view of the future by engaging with the organisation's vision; understanding and aligning to the common purpose. |
| Building Capability | Attracting, developing, engaging, and retaining talented individuals allowing the organisation to meet current and future organisational challenges. Sharing authority, responsibilities and decision making to enable individuals to stretch their capabilities and accomplish strategic priorities. |

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed; they are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of the position and incumbent. From time to time the incumbent will be required to accept and carry out other duties.

Band / Grade
21

Position Code
EXECPSW.019

Last Updated
May 2025


I agree to undertake the responsibilities detailed in this job description:

Ingoa | Name:

Waitohu | Signature:

Rā | Date Signed:

***Taking action together to shape a thriving and resilient Canterbury, now and for future generations.
Toitū te marae o Tāne, toitū te marae o Tangaroa, toitū te iwi.***



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