



PERSONALIZED
HR SOLUTIONS



PERSONALIZEDHRSOLUTIONS.COM

(631) 449-3581

Frequently Asked Questions

The questions small business owners ask most — answered by a Fractional HR Executive with 30 years of experience. If you do not see your question here, schedule a free 20-minute consultation at personalizedhrsolutions.com.

GETTING STARTED

Q Do I need HR if I only have a few employees?

Yes — but what that looks like depends on your size, your industry, and your risk exposure. Even businesses with five employees can face wage and hour violations, discrimination claims, or documentation gaps that become expensive problems. The earlier you build a solid HR foundation the less it costs you in the long run.

Q At what employee count does HR become necessary?

In New York State many employment laws begin applying at 4, 15, or 20 employees depending on the statute. As a practical matter, most businesses benefit from structured HR support starting at 10 employees. At that size you typically have at least one manager making decisions that carry legal implications and the complexity has grown beyond what a founder can handle alone.

Q What does HR actually do for a small business?

At the senior level HR is a strategic business function — not just paperwork and policy. It includes hiring processes, onboarding, performance management, employee relations, compliance, compensation, and organizational design. For small businesses the highest-value HR work is identifying and closing compliance gaps, creating documentation that protects the business, and serving as a trusted advisor when difficult people situations arise.

Q Is my employee handbook legally compliant?

If it has not been reviewed in the past 12 to 18 months it may not be. New York employment law changes frequently. Paid sick leave, salary transparency requirements, non-compete restrictions, and lactation accommodation policies have all changed or expanded in recent years. A handbook that was accurate two years ago may already be creating liability.

Q What should I do when an employee reports a problem?

Document everything immediately. Do not promise confidentiality you cannot keep. Do not dismiss the concern before you understand it. Do not involve people who are not directly necessary. And contact an HR advisor before you take action — the decisions made in the first 24 to 48 hours of an employee complaint often determine the outcome.

Q How do I know if my HR practices would hold up in a lawsuit?

Most small businesses do not know until it is too late. The most common gaps are missing or outdated documentation, inconsistent performance management, terminations without a clear paper trail, and failure to follow required accommodation processes. An HR audit identifies these gaps before they become claims.

HIRING & ONBOARDING

Q When does a small business need HR for a hiring process?

Before every hire. The hiring process is one of the highest-risk moments for a small business. Interview questions, background/reference check procedures, offer letter language, and classification decisions all carry legal implications. A structured process protects you from discrimination claims, wage and hour violations, and misclassification exposure.

Q How do I reduce employee turnover in a small business?

Start by understanding why people are leaving. Exit interviews, stay conversations, and manager effectiveness reviews give you data. Most turnover in small businesses traces back to one of three things: unclear expectations, an ineffective or unsupported manager, or a lack of growth path. All three are fixable with the right HR support.

FRACTIONAL HR & COST

Q What is fractional HR and how is it different from a full-time HR director?

A fractional HR executive provides the same senior-level expertise and judgment as a full-time Chief Human Resources Officer or HR Director — but on a part-time or project basis. You get an experienced, dedicated HR partner without the cost of a full-time hire. For most small and mid-size businesses this is a significantly better model than hiring full-time before the workload justifies it.

Q How much does it cost to hire an HR consultant?

It varies based on experience level, scope, and engagement model. Senior fractional HR executives typically bill between \$200 and \$300 per hour or offer monthly retainer arrangements. When you consider that a full-time senior HR hire costs \$180,000 to \$250,000 or more annually in salary alone — plus benefits and overhead — fractional HR is a fraction of that cost for the same caliber of expertise.

Q How do I know if my business has outgrown its current HR support?

Common signs include: a manager making a decision you were not confident about, turnover you cannot explain, an employee handbook that has not been updated recently, an upcoming hire or organizational change, or a gut feeling that you are exposed and not sure where. If any of those sound familiar it is worth a conversation.

Find out where you stand

Schedule a complimentary 20-minute consultation with Kristin S. Harrison, MBA.

 PERSONALIZEDHRSOLUTIONS.COM

 (631) 449-3581

