



Choosing the Right Workforce Management Software for Your Government Agency

Employee & Labor Relations

How to Choose the Best Workforce Management
Software for Your Government Agency



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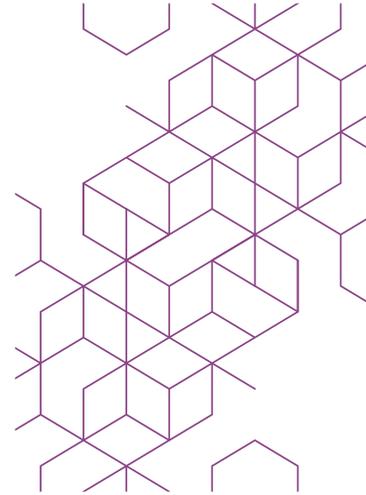
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About OPEXUS

Introduction

Welcome to the OPEXUS Buyer's Guide. The OPEXUS team has put together this comprehensive resource as part of our broader government workforce management solutions, to highlight key features that your agency's human resources leadership should look for when doing market research. At a high level, ER/LR software should be FedRAMP certified to ensure data security and built around the complex, highly regulated processes that help the Federal government manage its large workforce. Specifically, it should enable your agency's HR team and supervisors to effectively and efficiently:

- Support your employees
- Track, document, and monitor performance plans
- Retrieve and share documented behavioral actions
- Improve labor relations
- Launch, manage, and resolve investigations
- Navigate the complaint process and close more cases before litigation
- Maintain compliance with federal reporting requirements



Government workforce management professionals are facing a myriad of challenges, sparked by a broad need to digitize, President Biden's DE&I focused executive orders, NARA's digital record keeping mandate, workforce shortages, and uncertainty surrounding return to work plans. These challenges put pressure on agencies to quickly adapt to policy changes, implement new processes and workflows, hire younger employees to replace the record number of retirement age workers, and ensure integral data is protected. When not efficiently addressed, these challenges can lead to high backlogs, increased complexity of requests, staff burnout, and failure to meet compliance standards.

Private sector solutions not tailored to government specific needs fall short of addressing of them in a timely manner. They often do not meet security requirements, require extra labor hours to configure, and do not automatically integrate with reporting and compliance standards. Leadership should look for designed for government solutions that offer an intuitive experience, easy digitization of paper trails, and secure record keeping.

Use this guide to inform your market research on available workforce management solutions. It will help you prioritize your must-have buying criteria and provide a comparison framework for evaluating your options. You'll be better informed and prepared when making your final decision—and will be much more likely to select the workforce management software that works best for you and your team.



Buying Criteria

What is workforce management software, and how does it support my agency's HR team and supervisors?

Government workforce management software is any piece of software designed for use by federal, state, or local government and employee supervisors to conduct HR-related tasks, required to manage the employee experience, including creating and monitoring performance plans, processing and tracking anti-harassment claims, reviewing employee accommodation requests, and more.

For workforce management software to be effective and beneficial, it should exist as part of a solutions suite on a single platform versus as a standalone product. For example, you may have software designed to perform Employee Relations (ER)/Labor Relations (LR) tasks on the same platform as software for managing Equal Employee Opportunity (EEO) complaint workflows. This integration of HR functions and tasks eliminates the data siloes, procedural blindspots, and manual steps that make workforce management time-consuming, counterproductive, and possibly ineffective. If an employee submits a complaint that results in an investigation, a case management suite allows existing data associated with the case to be efficiently transferred to the the appropriate individuals, ensuring vital information is not lost along the way.

What can the right workforce management software do for your team?

On the following pages, you'll find the critical features and functions to prioritize when evaluating workforce management software for government. These are the software characteristics and capabilities that can help the HR team and employee supervisors in your agency maximize productivity, improve employee morale, strengthen relationships with labor representatives, and assist with submission of required paperwork to ensure compliance with far less difficulty.



1 Employee-Centric Case Structure

As an employee changes roles or departments, visibility into that employee's prior performance and conduct can become lost or incomplete. This often happens when a solution lacks employee-centric design, for example, missing a unique identifier such as an employee ID that can connect multiple cases together. So as an employee changes roles, departments, or supervisors, it falls to the previous manager to communicate all prior information regarding the employee's performance and behavior. This could lead to critical information being overlooked and needless risk for the agency. For example, say an agency is determining which of two employees to promote to a higher position. One employee has an exemplary record but all positive performance reviews were lost in the weeds. In comparison, her colleague has only a satisfactory record but their file is complete- the decision maker is more likely to go with the candidate they have more intel on.

An employee-centric workforce management solution gives HR specialists and supervisors a holistic view of every worker, including any prior performance plans, misconduct cases, actions taken, and outcomes. Trends across employee cases can be identified, employee performance and behavioral issues can be tracked across departments, and an end-to-end, in-depth view of each employee is preserved.

Look for solutions that:

- Are employee-centric and grant visibility into performance and conduct history regardless of where and when a worker moves throughout an agency or across multiple offices within a government
- Notify HR professionals and managers of previous performance and/or behavioral issues when they initiate an action against an employee
- Link case folders together so that all documentation, prior and ongoing cases, and information regarding an employee is maintained
- Offer a dashboard where cases can be viewed, assigned, and updated with new information

2 Commercial Off-The-Shelf Software

Prioritize workforce management software that comes with predefined applications for ER and LR case types. These applications should already come with the workflows and forms needed to create, manage, and track cases—and require only basic configuration.

Look for solutions that:

- Offer ready-to-use applications, tools, and templates for ER and LR case types
- Provide a complete look into an employee's history, regardless of whichever application the details originated from
- Establish communications portals for employees, labor represents, HR professionals, and supervisors to leave and respond to HR-related messages—from which employee information is also collected
- Improve process flow via multipoint integration between applications and tools



3 Built for Government

Workforce management software built for general enterprise use will need to be adapted and heavily configured to meet the unique needs of government agencies. Even after initial implementation, enterprise workforce management solutions must continuously be reconfigured to keep up with ever-changing regulatory demands and governmental procedures.

Look for solutions that are:

- Built specifically for government workforce management
- Require minimal coding to reconfigure as needs change
- Backed by a team of government experts and insiders
- Maintained on the backend to provide the most essential and up-to-date functions for government HR teams and supervisors
- Able to automatically adapt to policy changes or legislative updates
- Configured to stay compliant with U.S. Code Title 5 regulations

4 Strong Reporting Capabilities

Creating reports and working to maintain compliance can put a massive strain on HR professionals. With workforce management software integrated onto a single platform, all information critical for compliance reporting is collected and organized, which allows for reports to be generated automatically according to report schedules or anytime with a few clicks.

Look for solutions that:

- Equip your agency to stay on top of required reports
- Designed to ensure compliance with legislative updates
- Simplify workflows and reduce time to completion

5 Integration & Interoperability

Research shows software solutions that can integrate with other applications are beneficial for data integrity, productivity, and efficiency. ER/LR software that can connect to other workforce management programs, such as HR Investigations and Equal Employment Opportunity Platforms, makes it easier to stay compliant, offer a consistent experience for employees, and saves HR professionals time spent going between siloed systems.

Look for solutions that:

- Are offered by companies with other HR products and industry expertise
- Can connect with other agency systems
- Allow data sharing with other platforms to streamline case management

6 Implementation & Time to Value

Once software has been purchased, most agencies are eager to get it up and running as soon as possible. Solutions that offer fast implementation add value more quickly than those with lengthy implementation processes. Workforce management software that exists on an integrated platform with other HR solutions, is designed for government agencies, and comes with expert support is far easier to implement than a custom product or tool that wasn't already built out for end-to-end HR case management in a government setting.

Look for solutions that:

- Feature rapid installation
- Can be implemented in 3 to 6 months, depending on agency readiness
- Eliminate the need for users to train on multiple systems or several interfaces



7 Security

Government agencies have unique security requirements that an HR case management solution must meet in order to stay compliant with national security protocol. This fact reinforces the need for HR software that is built first and foremost for government.

Look for solutions that:

- Are FedRAMP-certified, with NIST 800-53 controls for physical security, encryption, monitoring, and more
- Offer role-based, granular security to control what information is shared and with whom from the application, folder, and document levels
- Provide audit logging, monitoring, vulnerability scanning, and firewall capabilities
- Uses FIPS 140-2 encryption for data at rest and HTTPS/TLS encryption for data in transit

8 Easy to Buy

Look for a straightforward procurement process that is transparent about pricing up front and reduces time to purchase.

Look for solutions that:

- Clearly roadmap the buying process, with tips from putting the Authorization to Operate (ATO) in place swiftly to guiding a best-practice implementation
- Can initiate implementation in a test environment
- Offer Blank Purchase Agreements as a fast route to purchase

Workforce Management Software Checklist

This checklist will help you in your buying journey see which vendors provide essential government workforce management features. Add vendors you're considering to the two open columns.

The more boxes a vendor's software checks, the better equipped your agency's HR professionals and supervisors will be to work efficiently, support employees, communicate with labor representatives, and meet compliance requirements.

Features	 OPEXUS	Vendor B	Vendor C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a holistic view and centralized control over each employee's performance and behavioral cases 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links case folders together to retain employee case history, including a cross-agency record of actions and outcomes 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Configurable case types for employee and labor relations available out of the box 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unites the managing, tracking, and reporting of all EEO processes 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides multiple predefined and trackable workflows for different types of investigations 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automates the creation of Form 462 and NoFEAR reports—and offers a validator tool to pinpoint and fix reporting errors 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for the creation and automation of workflows that eliminate manual, paper-based processes and prepopulates fields with existing data 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is FedRAMP certified, offers role-based access controls and configurable permissions, and uses FIPS 140-2 and HTTPS/TLS encryption for data at rest and in transit, respectively 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features integration and interoperability with other on the job tools 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		



About OPEXUS

OPEXUS has empowered professionals to elevate trust in public institutions through the design, development, and delivery of case management solutions since 1988. Our FedRAMP-certified, cloud-ready software transforms government processes and workflows with technology, driving operational excellence and improving program management, so that agencies can focus on delivering their missions.

We believe that “good enough for government” is not good enough. We aspire to provide all public institutions and their communities with the exceptional technology they expect and deserve.

Learn more at:
www.OPEXUSTech.com
<https://www.opexustech.com/product/employee-labor-relations/>

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