



LABOR RELATIONS CHIEF

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CA

Recruitment Services Provided By





The County

Located in the heart of Southern California, San Bernardino County thrives on the diversity of our communities that offer families affordable housing with access to excellent schools, and community resources, including libraries, parks, hospitals, and international airports. The County provides a safe, clean, and healthy environment with access to a variety of business and shopping opportunities, as well as cultural and educational enrichment opportunities through museums, theater, and higher education, including California State University, San Bernardino, University of Redlands, and Loma Linda University.

The County encompasses over 20,160 square miles of diverse geography and climate that includes snowcapped mountains, flowering deserts, pristine valleys, and lakes. The County's prime location allows for easy access to Southern California's premier beaches, resort destinations, and major metropolitan centers. The County has a population of over two million residents and is comprised of 24 incorporated cities and towns.

The County is the largest county in the contiguous United States by area, has 20,000+ full time employees and manages an annual budget of approximately \$9.7 billion. It is comprised of 42 departments and agencies, which are staffed by dedicated public service professionals who provide a wide range of vital services. The County's organizational culture is defined by four pillars: value, innovation, service, and vision.

The County is governed by a full time, five-member Board of Supervisors, who, working through the Chief Executive Officer, Luther Snoke, the County Administrative Office, and a workforce of dedicated public service employees, are committed to sustaining a vision of a "complete county that capitalizes on the diversity of its people, its geography, and its economy to create a broad range of choices for its residents in how they live, work, and play."



The Organization

San Bernardino County has approximately 27,000 authorized positions, with roughly 22,000 currently filled, and approximately 18,000 employees represented by labor organizations. The County operates across a wide range of departments, special districts, and public service functions, creating a labor relations environment that is both sophisticated and highly consequential to County operations.

The Labor Relations Chief reports to the County Administrative Office (CAO) and works in close partnership with Finance, Human Resources, executive leadership, County departments, and the Board of Supervisors. The Labor Relations team supports approximately 20 labor agreements, with multiple negotiations occurring throughout the year. Employee organizations include Teamsters, SEIU, firefighter and law enforcement associations, IBEW, and other bargaining units representing a wide variety of County employees.

The County is financially well-positioned and has maintained a disciplined, fiscally prudent approach to its operations. Leadership is not anticipating layoffs, furloughs, or broad budget reductions, allowing the next Labor Relations Chief to focus on strategic labor-management relationships, sound bargaining outcomes, operational continuity, and long-term organizational effectiveness.

The Organization has approximately 27,000 employees and an FY2026-27 Operating Budget of \$10.9 billion. For more information, visit [San Bernardino County - FY 26-27 Budget](#).

The Opportunity

San Bernardino County is seeking an accomplished County Labor Relations Chief to lead one of the most significant labor relations programs in California local government. This is a highly visible executive role requiring exceptional negotiation ability, strong judgment, political and organizational acumen, financial awareness, and the interpersonal skill to work effectively with elected officials, executives, department leaders, labor representatives, and employees throughout a large and complex organization.

The Chief serves as the County's principal labor relations strategist and chief negotiator, leading year-round bargaining activity and advising executive leadership on labor strategy, employee relations, contract administration, and the financial and operational implications of negotiated agreements. Because provisions placed into a memorandum of understanding can have long-term organizational and fiscal consequences, the successful candidate must understand not only the immediate bargaining issue, but how compensation, benefits, operating practices, and contract language fit into the County's broader strategy.

The position operates with meaningful autonomy, but within a culture that places a premium on communication, coordination, and organizational alignment. The Chief must know when to act independently, when to elevate an issue quickly, and how to keep the right people informed vertically and horizontally across the organization. Success will require someone who can quickly learn the County's culture, build credibility, and become a trusted conduit among Finance, Human Resources, County leadership, departments, and labor partners.



Key areas of responsibility include:

Labor Negotiations: Serve as the County's chief labor negotiator and lead complex collective bargaining processes involving multiple employee organizations and agreements throughout the year.

Executive Advising: Provide timely, candid, and strategic labor relations advice to the Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Director, Chief Executive Officer, department leadership, and the Board of Supervisors.

Board Relations: Prepare for and participate in closed sessions, present bargaining strategy and fiscal impacts, and seek negotiation authority from the Board of Supervisors as appropriate.

Financial Analysis: Understand and communicate the cost, operational impact, and long-term implications of compensation, benefits, and contract proposals in partnership with Finance and other County stakeholders.

Contract Administration: Ensure consistent interpretation and administration of labor agreements; advise departments on grievances, employee relations, and labor-management matters; and oversee the County's response to arbitration, PERB, unfair labor practice, and other labor-related proceedings.

Policy & Compliance: Ensure County labor practices remain consistent with collective bargaining agreements, Personnel Rules, County policies, and applicable state and federal labor laws, while monitoring emerging legislative and regulatory issues.

Organizational Navigation: Develop a strong understanding of the County's departments, special districts, governance structure, communication expectations, and political environment.

Team Leadership: Lead a skilled Labor Relations team that includes a Deputy Labor Relations Chief, two Senior Labor Relations Officers, two Labor Relations Analysts, and an Executive Assistant, with additional Human Resources staff assigned to support individual negotiations.

Relationship Building: Maintain productive, professional, and durable working relationships with labor representatives while protecting the County's operational, fiscal, and organizational interests.

The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate will be an exceptionally skilled negotiator who combines technical competence with strong character, sound judgment, and a collaborative leadership style. San Bernardino County is seeking more than a subject-matter expert; it needs a trusted executive who can operate confidently in high-stakes situations without allowing ego or defensiveness to interfere with good decision-making.

This individual will be calm, composed, and credible at the bargaining table, even when discussions move quickly or become contentious. The successful candidate will listen well, read the room, understand the interests behind positions, and know when an issue requires immediate escalation. They will be politically savvy without being political, comfortable working with strong labor organizations, and able to navigate differing perspectives while maintaining professional relationships and organizational trust.

The County values a “hungry, humble, and hustle” mindset: a leader who works hard, pushes for excellence, remains eager to learn, and is secure enough to acknowledge uncertainty or mistakes. Transparency, accountability, and integrity are essential. The next Chief should communicate early and often, avoid surprises, and understand that strong internal coordination is a core part of how the County operates.

Equally important, the ideal candidate will be a people-centered leader who treats employees, colleagues, and labor partners with respect and empathy. They will understand that data, costing, and strategy matter, but that labor relations is ultimately about people. The successful candidate will build a strong sense of community within the organization, develop staff, rely on the expertise of others, and work as part of a broader executive team rather than as a solo operator.

Candidates should be energized by the scale and intensity of this assignment. The County is open to strong labor relations professionals from other counties, cities, special districts, higher education, or the private sector, provided they possess the judgment and adaptability necessary to succeed in a large public-sector environment. Prior experience working with elected governing boards is highly desirable.

Desired Qualifications

EDUCATION/CERTIFICATION

A bachelor's degree in human resources management, industrial/organizational psychology, public or business administration, behavioral science, or another job-related field.

EXPERIENCE

All qualifying experience must be obtained within a public-sector organization (such as a government agency) or a large private-sector employer with a large, union-represented workforce (500+ regular employees), and include one of the following:

Four (4) years of recent professional-level human resources or labor law experience primarily performing labor relations functions, such as participating in collective bargaining negotiations, handling grievances and unfair labor practice charges, or representing management at formal grievance arbitration hearings; OR

Five (5) years of recent professional-level human resources experience performing employee relations functions, such as advising and representing management on employee relations matters, handling employee grievances, conducting disciplinary actions and hearings, and participating in labor negotiations.

A combination of relevant experience, education, and training that provides the necessary knowledge and skills may be considered.

Highly qualified candidates will have experience in managing in a union environment. Candidates from both the public and private sectors will be considered.

Compensation

The base salary range for the County Labor Relations Chief is **\$186,368 - \$265,345**. The County provides a 4% salary differential above base pay under its Modified Benefits Option, which enhances leave accruals and increases the compensation base used for retirement contributions, deferred compensation plans (RMT, 401(k), 457(b)), and leave cash-outs.

In addition to a competitive salary, San Bernardino County offers an excellent benefits package such as:

- 15 paid holidays, including one floating holiday under the Traditional Benefits Package.
- 80 hours of administrative leave with a cash-out option.
- Traditional leave package with up to 160 hours of annual vacation accrual, based on service hours, plus paid sick leave with unlimited accrual.
- Modified Benefits Package with up to 200 hours of Paid Time Off annually, based on service hours, with an annual cash-out option for up to 160 hours.
- County pension benefits with vesting after five years of service and retirement reciprocity with CalPERS, CalSTRS, and 1937 Act retirement systems.
- 401(k) defined contribution plan with a 2-for-1 County match, up to 8% of base salary.
- 457(b) deferred compensation plan with County contribution equal to the employee contribution, up to 1%.
- Retirement Medical Trust with County contributions based on service hours.
- Medical and dental insurance for employees and eligible family members with premium subsidies; County-paid vision insurance.
- Flexible Spending Account for qualified healthcare expenses with up to a \$40 County match per pay period.
- County-paid basic life insurance, short- and long-term disability, and optional supplemental life and accidental death and dismemberment coverage.
- Tuition loan repayment up to \$10,000 for eligible loans.
- Portable communication device allowance and automobile allowance.

More detailed benefit information is available here: [SB County - Benefits Overview](#)

How to Apply

Please apply **on-line** by **September 14, 2026** at:

www.alliancerc.com

First round of interviews with the County are anticipated during the week of October 5th, and second round of interviews to follow shortly after. For questions, inquiries or candidate recommendations, please contact:

Wesley Herman

wherman@alliancerc.com

(562) 901-0769 x 337

Rick Armendariz

armendariz@alliancerc.com

(562) 901-0769 x 338

Alliance Resource Consulting - LinkedIn

EEO/ADA: San Bernardino County is an **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)** and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant employer, committed to providing equal employment opportunity to all employees and applicants.

ADA Accommodation: If you have a disability and require accommodations in the testing process, submit the **Special Testing Accommodations Request Form** ([Download PDF reader](#)), within one week of a recruitment filing deadline.

Veterans' Preference: Eligible veterans and their spouse or widow(er) who are not current County employees may be awarded additional Veterans' Preference points.