HRP of CPA
Human Resource Professionals of Central PA

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 2 | FEBRUARY 2026



Celebrating Black History Month

Celebrating 100 Years of Black History

Every February, we pause to honor stories that shaped our workplaces long before many of us entered them. Black History Month is more than a calendar observance, it is a reminder of the courage, advocacy, and leadership that continue to influence the work we do in HR every single day.

The celebration began in 1926 when historian Carter G. Woodson and members of the Association for the Study of Negro Life & History established “Negro History Week.” Their vision was simple but powerful: ensure the achievements and contributions of Black Americans were recognized and studied. Fifty years later, in 1976, U.S. President Gerald Ford expanded the observance to a full month, encouraging the nation to participate in honoring Black history. Today, we also recognize that this year marks 100 years of celebrating Black history, a century of reflection, progress, and continued responsibility.

For HR professionals, this history is not abstract. In 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act transformed the workplace by prohibiting employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. That legislation reshaped how organizations hire, promote, and protect employees—and positioned HR as stewards of fairness and compliance.

But our role goes beyond policy. We lead initiatives that cultivate inclusive cultures, expand access to opportunity, and create spaces where every employee feels seen and valued. Black History Month challenges us to move from awareness to action, strengthening equitable hiring practices, investing in development pathways, and ensuring accountability in our workplaces.

As we celebrate this month, let us remember that honoring Black history is also about shaping the future of work—intentionally, inclusively, and together.

Communications Committee

Have news to share? We want to spotlight you in our newsletter!
Email communications@hrppca.org for more info.

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Message from Diversity Committee

Respect When It's Hard

Respect is most meaningful when it costs us something. It is easy to respect people who think like us. The real test comes when values collide, when conversations stretch us, when certainty dissolves.

HR professionals are often the bridge in these moments. You can help teams learn how to listen without preparing a defense, how to disagree without diminishing.

Respect, practiced deeply, becomes a stabilizing force in uncertain times.

How are we teaching people to honor dignity—even when they feel misunderstood or challenged?

UPCOMING EVENT SCHEDULE

- SHRM & HRCI Credit Eligible!

FEB/MAR 2026

24 FEB 2026	**CHAPTER MEETING (VIRTUAL): WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS*** 8:00-9:30 AM VIRTUAL
19 MAR 2026	**PHILLY SHRM SYMPOSIUM** 7:30-4:30 HILTON CITY AVENUE
24 MAR 2026	**CHAPTER MEETING (IN-PERSON): BUILDING RESILIENT, PEOPLE-CENTERED WORKPLACES*** 7:30-9:30 AM HACC MAIN CAMPUS - RM 209

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HR Compliance in 2026: Where Old School Meets New School



Hey friends, let's talk compliance — and I promise, it's cool! Stick with me.

In 2026, compliance is where HR shines. It's where we use our superpower to protect our people, show our value, and shape culture — all at once. It's the perfect mix of honoring the rules while driving impact — blending an **"old school meets new school"** perspective.

Old School Compliance

HR fundamentals remain essential: wage and hour laws, leave requirements, anti-discrimination protections, workplace safety, thorough investigations, and solid documentation. These basics matter now more than ever. Policies alone aren't enough — it takes consistency, follow-through, self-awareness, transparency, engagement, and a clear understanding of laws and regulations to reduce risk and ensure compliance.

New School Compliance

This is where it gets exciting - and HR gets to lead the way.

- **Fair Pay & Pay Transparency:** Salary ranges, pay equity audits, worker classification — employees and regulators are watching.
- **AI & Technology:** Recruiting and performance tools must be fair, transparent, and privacy-conscious. Efficiency is great, but not at the cost of compliance.
- **Leadership, Culture & Conduct:** Compliance lives in leadership behavior, psychological safety, "see it, say it" mechanisms, and ethical practices. A strong culture often prevents problems before they start.

The Shift

Compliance no longer lives just in handbooks — it lives in systems, leadership, transparency, and culture.

Our Role in 2026

Honor the old school. Embrace the new school. Protect our people. Strengthen culture. And yes — have a little fun doing it. Because that's the HR way!

Jackie Williams, MHRM, SHRM-CP, PHR
HRPCPA Immediate Past President

Want to get involved in 2026? We are now accepting sponsors for virtual and in-person chapter meetings, our Risk and Mitigation L&L webinar series, our professional development lunch & learn series, and annual conference!

Visit our SPONSORS page at www.hrpcpa.org for more info!

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