

Chief People Officer / SVP, Mandel Leadership Excellence Center

Jewish Federation of Cleveland

Cleveland, OH

Salary: \$245,000 - \$260,000

The Organization

Since 1903, the Jewish Federation of Cleveland has created the critical scale necessary to drive meaningful social change and provide relief in times of crisis in ways no one person or organization could do alone. As Jewish Cleveland's hub for innovative solutions and collaborative services, the Federation is positioned to change and improve lives in Cleveland, Israel, and around the world.

Led by the Federation's priorities of Caring for One Another, Preparing for the Future, Sharing Our Perspectives, and Repairing Our World, the Federation provides innovative programming and investments to create sustainable change that strengthens Cleveland and beyond. Locally, the Federation supports education for all ages, elder care, access to resources that support better mental health, and leadership development for the private and public sectors. In Israel, the Federation makes deep investments to support youth at risk, victims of terror, and the geographic periphery. In 2013, the Federation also developed JFC Security, a stand-alone LLC that provides security to early education centers, Jewish day schools, numerous area synagogues, and other nonprofits in the Cleveland area. In 2025, Jewish Federation of Cleveland committed more than \$100 million in grantmaking locally and across the globe.

This level of impact is only accomplished through a large team of committed staff and volunteers. The Federation employs some 200 employees (including JFC Security), and they are the Federation's most important asset. The Chief People Officer / Senior Vice President of the Mandel Leadership Excellence Center (CPO) is the Federation's senior leader responsible for aligning people with purpose. As a core member of the Executive Team, the CPO drives the Federation's people strategy—developing strong teams, empowering inclusive leadership, and ensuring that policies, practices, and culture reflect the organization's Jewish values and communal mission.

The Position

Reporting to the President, the Chief People Officer provides strategic vision and operational leadership for human resources, talent strategy, leadership and professional development, organizational culture, and workforce planning. The CPO ensures the Federation attracts, develops, and retains exceptional professionals and lay leaders; fosters an inclusive, engaged, and values-driven workplace; and maintains strong, compliant, and forward-looking HR practices. The CPO plays a critical role in stewarding a culture where people in both lay leadership and professional roles are empowered to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the Federation's impact.

The Chief People Officer leads a team comprised of the Director of Talent Development, the Lay Leader Engagement Director, the Senior Manager of Recruitment, an HR generalist, and an administrative assistant. The CPO is a member of the senior leadership team which includes the President, SVP/Chief Financial Officer, SVP/Chief Development Officer, SVP/Chief External Affairs Officer, and SVP/Chief Information Officer.

ROLE OVERVIEW

Executive Leadership & Strategic Partnership

- Align talent strategy, leadership development, and HR infrastructure with evolving organizational and community priorities.
- Serve as a trusted advisor to the President and senior management team on organizational design, workforce planning, leadership transitions, and succession planning.
- Act as the chief advocate and voice for the Federation's people, leadership development, and organizational culture agenda with senior management and lay leadership.
- Contribute to Federation-wide vision, strategy, and long-term planning as a member of the senior management team.

Organizational Culture, Engagement & Values

- Champion a culture of belonging, care, accountability, and shared purpose grounded in Jewish values and communal responsibility, and reflected consistently in policies, leadership behaviors, and organizational practices.
- Lead strategies that strengthen employee engagement, connection, and recognition across departments.
- Create meaningful opportunities for cross-team collaboration, professional growth, and alignment between mission and daily work.

Human Resources Operations, Total Rewards & Compliance

- Provide executive oversight of all HR operations across the employee lifecycle, including recruitment, onboarding, development, performance management, compensation, benefits, employee relations, and offboarding.
- Develop, implement, and regularly review HR policies, procedures, codes of conduct, and the employee handbook to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local employment laws, regulations, and industry standards.
- Stay current on legislative and regulatory changes affecting employment, benefits, workplace safety, labor relations, and data privacy, ensuring organizational policies and practices are updated accordingly.
- Identify and proactively mitigate HR-related organizational and reputational risks, through thoughtful policy design, training on HR compliance topics, and partnership with legal counsel and other stakeholders.
- Oversee employee relations matters, including the investigation and resolution of complaints, grievances, and allegations of misconduct, ensuring fair, consistent, and compliant processes.
- Partner with Finance on payroll administration, HR systems, records management, audits, and regulatory reporting requirements.
- Use data and insights to monitor workforce trends, engagement, and talent outcomes, providing actionable guidance to senior leadership.
- Continuously assess and strengthen HR and talent processes to ensure alignment with best practices, organizational strategy, and Federation values.
- Maintain the highest standards of confidentiality, integrity, and professionalism.

Talent Strategy & Leadership Development

- Design and implement an integrated talent and leadership development strategy for professionals and lay leaders that supports organizational effectiveness, succession planning, and long-term growth.

Talent Strategy & Leadership Development (cont.)

- Lead the development and delivery of Mandel Leadership programs, including the redesigned Mandel Course for Advanced Leadership (MCAL), ensuring relevance to Federation, agency, and participant needs.
- Partner with the Director of Leadership Engagement on the Mandel Symposium and other leadership skill-building initiatives.
- Champion a coaching-centered culture by embedding coaching practices into leadership expectations, team development, and performance management and improvement across the organization.
- Oversee performance management and learning systems that support goal-setting, regular feedback, accountability, and measurable growth and improvement.
- Provide guidance and support to senior leaders in fostering employee growth, facilitating constructive conversations, and addressing performance challenges effectively.
- Champion programs that identify and develop high-potential employees through mentoring, coaching, and targeted learning opportunities, including the Wolf Fellowship program.
- Ensure performance improvement plans and talent decisions are fair, consistent, and aligned with organizational goals and values.
- Provide internal executive coaching and oversee the Federation's professional coaching program.

Lay Leadership Engagement & Governance

- Strengthen pipelines for lay leadership across Federation and agency boards and committees.
- Provide staff leadership and support to the Human Resources Development (HRD) Committee.
- Partner with the Director of Leadership Engagement to staff the Federation's Nominating Committee and oversee governance-related appointment processes.
- Work closely with the President, Board Chair, and senior staff to ensure governance compliance and effective leadership transitions.
- Oversee recognition awards processes for lay leaders.
- Conduct individual outreach to key lay leaders in support of HRD and broader Federation priorities.

Mandel Foundation, Agency & External Relations

- Manage the Mandel Leadership Excellence Center's relationship with the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation, including reports, presentations, and Joint Advisory Team meetings.
- Collaborate with beneficiary agency executives and board chairs on leadership development and HR initiatives, providing consultation and convening the Agency Leadership Roundtable.
- Maintain active relationships with Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) and other Federations.
- Coordinate HRD and leadership initiatives with other Federation departments and partner agencies.

Departmental Leadership & Special Initiatives

- Provide overall management, supervision, and strategic direction for the Mandel Leadership Excellence Center HRD staff.
- Prepare and manage departmental budget.
- Participate in Annual Campaign responsibilities, as assigned.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate for the Chief People Officer role possesses the following competencies:

Instills Trust	Develops Talent	Communicates Effectively
Gaining the confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity.	Developing people to meet both their career goals and the organization's goals.	Developing and delivering multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.
Manages Conflict	Organizational Savvy	Drives Vision & Purpose
Handling conflict situations effectively, with a minimum of noise.	Maneuvering comfortably through complex policy, process, and people related organizational dynamics.	Painting a compelling picture of the vision and strategy that motivates others to action.

Additional Qualifications Required

- Bachelor's degree in Human Resources, Organizational Development, Business Administration, Social Sciences, or a related field.
- 10+ years of progressive leadership experience in human resources, talent management, leadership development, or organizational development, including senior-level or organization-wide responsibility.
- Deep knowledge of HR operations, employment law, and best practices across the employee lifecycle.
- Demonstrated ability to build trust and work effectively with senior professionals, boards, and volunteers.
- Strong strategic thinking, facilitation, and executive coaching skills.
- High degree of discretion and professional integrity; ability to manage sensitive and confidential matters, and aptitude to inspire confidence and cooperation.
- Working knowledge of and/or experience in the Jewish community, and Jewish culture and traditions.

Preferred

- Master's degree in Human Resources, Organizational Development, Leadership, Business Administration (MBA), Public Administration (MPA), or related discipline.
- Professional certification(s) such as SHRM-SCP, SPHR, and ICF or similar coaching credential.
- Experience in a nonprofit or values-driven organization; experience in a Jewish communal or Federation setting strongly preferred.

WHO WE ARE

Work Environment

The Federation has a hybrid work environment where all staff work onsite four days a week and have the option of working remotely one day a week.

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Jewish Federation of Cleveland is an equal opportunity employer—we celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.

The Foundation provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Salary

\$245,000 - \$260,000

- Generous low-cost medical, dental, and vision
- Employer-sponsored health spending account with eligible plans
- 20 days paid vacation
- 6 days paid sick leave
- Life & long-term disability
- Generous annual holiday schedule
- Up to 7% company 403b contribution

TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

To express interest in the Chief People Officer role, please [click here](#). All applicants will receive an email confirming receipt of their application.

We encourage candidates of all backgrounds to apply even if you do not meet all the qualifications outlined above. If you are selected to move forward for an initial screening call, we expect you to hear from us by June.

Dara Z. Klarfeld
Chief Executive Officer
dklarfeld@drgtalent.com

Laura Lovelace
Principal
llovelace@drgtalent.com

[Submit an application](#)

