

Creating and Maintaining Employee Personnel Files

Creating and maintaining accurate employee personnel files is valuable to your business. These files contain important documents about each employee in one easily accessible place for use when making promotion and layoff decisions, filing tax returns and when complying with government audits. It is wise to periodically review the contents of each of your employee's personnel files to ensure that the documents are accurate, timely and complete.

Use the chart below to determine if your personnel files are complete.

EMPLOYMENT DOCUMENTS	YES	NO	N/A
Request for an application or resume and cover letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Original employment application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prescreening interview notes/college recruiting interview notes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment interview notes and form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education verification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment verification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Background verification and reference checks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment offer letter or rejection letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional employment agency agreement (if hired by an agency)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee handbook acknowledgement form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orientation checklist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Veterans/disabled identification form filled out by employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transfer requests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relocation offers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Security clearance status	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

HR insights

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS	YES	NO	N/A
Probationary employee progress reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appraisal forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance improvement records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PAYROLL FORMS	YES	NO	N/A
W-4 form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weekly/bi-weekly time sheets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance record	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pay advance requests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Garnishment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Release of private information authorization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authorization for other payroll actions and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	YES	NO	N/A
Training schedule records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training applications and requests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skill questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training notification letters (in-house and off-site)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Training expense reimbursement receipts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SEPARATIONS/TERMINATIONS/LAYOFFS	YES	NO	N/A
Exit interview form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee's final performance review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exit interview notation form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copies of documents given with final compensation check	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	YES	NO	N/A
Emergency contact information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Medical/dental/vision coverage waiver or drop form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vacation accrual form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-medical leave requests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retirement application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Payroll deduction authorizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COBRA notification and/or election	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous substance notification/reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tuition reimbursement requests and payment records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Annual benefit statement acknowledgement form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety training forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

WAGES/SALARY DOCUMENTS	YES	NO	N/A
Job description	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Payroll authorization form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fair Labor Standards Act exemption test	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compensation history records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compensation recommendations by management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wage/salary increase/decrease notifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DOCUMENTS	YES	NO	N/A
Coaching or counseling forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee Assistance Program consent forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Warning notices to employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee suggestions forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suggestion status reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

There are several documents that employers should not put in an employee's personnel file. Here is a list of items that should be filed separately from an employee's personnel file (predominantly for legal reasons):

MEDICAL RECORDS - <i>Employers have a legal obligation to keep medical records confidential as outlined by the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Under this law, health care providers and employers must keep</i>	YES	NO	N/A
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<i>medical records separate and private from business records.</i>			
Examination records provided by a physician	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diagnostic records and laboratory test results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug screening results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other medical records containing personally identifiable information about the employee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

INVESTIGATION DOCUMENTS	YES	NO	N/A
Discrimination complaints and investigation forms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal case data	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy and/or legal violation accusation documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECURITY CLEARANCE RECORDS	YES	NO	N/A
Background investigation documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal credit history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal criminal conviction history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrest records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CITIZENSHIP FORMS	YES	NO	N/A
I-9 forms (Employers must complete an I-9 form for all employees certifying that they are legally able to work in the U.S. All employee I-9 forms should be placed in a separate folder in the event that the government audits your records).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

UNSUPPORTED OPINIONS	YES	NO	N/A
Notations of discrimination or bias. (References to an employee's personal life, political beliefs, race, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion do not relate to his/her job performance or qualifications. These items do not belong in a personnel file or any employment file.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>