

Contents in Personnel Files / Checklist for New & Current Employees

Reasons why proper record keeping is a requirement for employers:

- Accessibility to accurate information on employee performance and work history
- Some employee records are required by federal or state governments and must be retained. Organizing them by employee name makes retrieval easy.

State of Iowa law permits employees the right to examine their personal employment records. This allows individuals the opportunity to confirm information in the file and identify any specific information which is believed to be incorrect. An employer may charge a reasonable fee for copies of all file contents. The employer usually have the right to control the time and location of reasonable requests for examination. The employer has the right to require the request be in writing and a stated number of working days to comply with the request. The ownership of the personnel file and its contents rests with the employer who maintains it. An employee does not have the right to have access to employment references or background checks.

Access to information about employees should be strictly limited to staff with the need to use the information in their jobs. Unauthorized access to personnel files can result in severe penalties. Make sure that personnel files are stored in a secure location and are not left unattended even during business hours. When outside requests are received to provide verification of certain employment information , confirm only the information the employee has authorized for release.

Job applicants may not have decisions about their applications made based on protected categories such as race, color, sex, religion, national origin, etc. Therefore having any information on the application which identifies these categories is inappropriate and may be considered illegal.

It is necessary to have information in the personnel file which would be considered illegal to gather prior to the job offer being made. For example, a birth date is needed to enroll employees in health insurance and life insurance programs.

Completion of the I-9 form is mandated for every employee hired after November 6, 1986. Employers are required to log document numbers which prove the employee's identify and right to work in the United States. Normally a social security card and driver's license meet these requirements. I-9 forms should be kept in a separate file from personnel files since many government agencies are authorized to inspect I-9 forms.

The federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires employers and health care providers to protect medical records as confidential, separate and apart from other business records. Therefore, medical information should not be retained in a personnel file. The following examples of information should be extracted from personnel files and placed in separately protected files as medical information:

- Health insurance application form
- Life insurance application form
- Request for medical leave of absence regardless of reason
- Personal accident reports
- Workers' compensation report of injury or illness
- OSHA injury and illness reports
- Physical examination and Tuberculosis check by a licensed medical personnel (post conditional offer of employment)
- Annual exposure control education verification (Blood Borne Pathogens and Right-to-Know)
- Any other form or document which contains private medical information for a specific employee
- Hepatitis records

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RECOMMENDED CONTENTS OF PERSONNEL FILES

Employment

- Request for application
- Employee's original employment application/resume
- Prescreening application notes
- Employment interview report form
- Education verification
- Employment verification
- Other background verification
- Rejection letter
- Employment offer letter
- Employment agency agreement if hired through an agency
- Staff Handbook acknowledgment form showing receipt of Handbook
- Checklist from new employee orientation showing subjects covered
- Copies of all official transcripts
- Copy of the current contract
- Copies of Professional Certifications
 - Educator's current Iowa certificate
 - Completion of Ministry Formation Program
 - Certificate in Youth Ministry Studies
 - Ongoing record of catechist certification and formation activities
- Employee acknowledgement of human resources policy form
- Employee acknowledgement of Policies Relating to Sexuality and Personal Behavior

Payroll

- W-4 Form
- IA W-4
- Weekly time sheets
- Individual attendance record
- Pay advance request record
- Garnishment orders and records
- Authorization for release of private information/conduct background check
- Authorization for all other payroll actions

Performance Evaluations

- New employee progress reports
- Performance evaluation forms
- Performance improvement program records
- Evaluations and professional development

Training and Development

- Training history records
- Protecting God's Children certificate
- Mandatory reporter of child abuse verification
- Training program applications/requests
- Training evaluation forms
- Training expense reimbursement records

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Employee Separations

- Emergency Contact Form
- Medical/Dental/Vision coverage waiver/drop form
- Vacation accrual/taken form
- Request for non-medical leave of absence
- Payroll deduction authorizations
- COBRA notification/election
- Safety training/meeting attendance/summary forms

Wage/Salary Administration

- Job description form – up to date
- Payroll authorization form
- Compensation history record
- Compensation recommendations
- Notification of wage and/or salary increase/decrease

Employee Relations

- Employee written warning notice
- Completed employee suggestion forms
- Suggestion status reports

Medical Records

- Physician records of examination
- Drug screening records
- Any other medical records with personally identifiable information about individual employees

Investigation Records

- Discrimination complaint investigation information
- Accusations of policy/legal violations

Security Clearance Investigation Records

- Background investigation information
- Personal credit history
- Personal criminal conviction history
- Arrest records

Insupportable Opinions

- Marginal notes on any document indicating management bias or discrimination

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Faculty/Staff Name

Date

Administrator

Date

Year: _____

PERSONNEL RECORDS CHECK LIST FOR CURRENT EMPLOYEES

- TEMPORARY PERMIT TO TEACH FROM THE STATE OF IOWA IF THEY DON'T HAVE LICENSE YET
- TEACHING CERTIFICATE – EVERY 5 YEARS
- CURRENT CONTRACT (VERIFY IT IS CURRENT BY GOING TO STATE WEBSITE)
- APPLICATION
- TRANSCRIPTS FROM INSTITUTION
- CHILD ABUSE CERTIFICATE SIGN-OFF
- BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN SIGN-OFF
- HAZARDOUS CHEMICAL SIGN-OFF – NEW STAFF
- DRIVERS INFORMATION FORM – EVERY YEAR OR IF INFORMATION CHANGES