

Creating workplaces that work...for everyone

Welcome Your New Employees into Your Company Culture

The first day at a new job is filled with emotion for any new hire. Most employees want to do a good job; they want to impress you. But they can't impress you unless they know what you expect.

This is *your* company. You have the right to insist that your employees behave in a certain manner while on your premises or working on your behalf. But you can't expect new hires to fit into your company culture until they know what it is.

So be prepared on the very first day of work to explain your company's rules and regulations to new hires—preferably in writing (for example, in an employee handbook) but at least verbally.

In either case, you must document everything you tell an employee. You need proof that policies and procedures were explained and that employees received the training mandated by the state and federal government.

HR Compliance 101 gives clients a "New Hire Training Checklist" that both the employee and the trainer must sign. It ensures that every new hire receives identical and complete orientation into policies and procedures, including MSDS training, a job description, an explanation of temporary/alternative duty and training in the use of personal protective equipment.

The first day's paperwork includes an I-9 form, W4 form and, in New Hampshire, the state-mandated New Hire Report Form.

Equally important is a post-hire job identification form that defines the essential functions of the job and the motor skills required. You aren't allowed to

question applicants about their medical history during job interviews, so this form will let you and your employee know if they can't handle the job or need some reasonable accommodation. HR Compliance can advise you on the definition of "reasonable." Some companies use the form to explain expected behavior: for example, attentiveness, a helpful attitude to fellow employees and compliance with safety requirements. The new hire should sign off on the post-hire job identification form.

A technical skills assessment is also valuable to determine what type of training the new hire needs.

Assign a training and/or break buddy to the new hire as a teacher, role model and social contact for the first week. There's nothing sadder than a new employee sitting alone at lunch or coffee break with no one to speak to. If you pull new hires into the company's social life from the start, they'll quickly feel part of the team.

You want your new hires to head home that first day ready and eager to play their part in your company and its culture.

FROM OUR CUSTOMERS

"Paula is great at interviewing new hires. She has such a feel about questions that can be asked and should be asked, and she's very diligent about following up references. Before we would never prequalify applicants. We never had the time."

TRISHA HILL, Office Manager,
MicroSpec Corporation,
Peterborough, NH

This newsletter refers to some of the regulations that may currently apply to small businesses.

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Paula Mathews
HR Compliance 101, LLC

P.O. Box 713

Fitzwilliam, NH 03447

E-mail: paula@hrcompliance101.com

Phone/Fax: 603-585-3139

www.HRcompliance101.com

Compliance Alert

It's time to post your OSHA 300A Summary Form—the summary of work-related accidents and illnesses at your work site in the previous year.

Unless you're a municipality or other government entity, OSHA requires you to post the completed form from at least February 1 through April 30. Even if you had no work-related accidents or illnesses in 2006, you must still post the form. Please contact HR Compliance 101 if you need help completing the form.



Workplace and Training Solutions

Q. I run a small retail store. My employees are issued shirts with my company name when they start working for me. If they quit without giving me notice or if I fire them, can I take the cost of the shirts out of their last paycheck if they don't return the shirts?

A. No, you cannot deduct the cost of the shirts from their last paycheck. That deduction is not legal in New Hampshire. Read RSA 275:48 Payment of Wages (at www.labor.state.nh.us) to learn what deductions are legal or check with HR Compliance 101. We'll answer your questions about deductions and much more in the realms of compliance, safety and human resources.

FOR OUR CUSTOMERS

Are you posting your quarterly JLMC (Safety Committee) minutes? Are you holding quarterly meetings? Let HR Compliance 101 assist you and train your employees to meet this state requirement.