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In This Issue

Recordkeeping

Pension Plan Limits

Contractor vs. Employee

Employee Discipline

Tax Calendar for Small Businesses and Self-Employed



The Tax Calendar for Small Businesses and Self-Employed, Publication 1518, [Catalog Number 12350Z](#), is now available for print. This 12-month wall calendar is filled with useful information on general business taxes, IRS and SSA customer assistance, electronic filing and paying options, retirement plans, business publications and forms, and common tax filing dates. Each page highlights different tax issues and tips that may be relevant to small business owners with room on each month to add notes, state tax dates, or business appointments.

[Print the 2009 Tax Calendar](#) (36 page, PDF version, of the 2009 Tax Calendar for Small Businesses and Self-Employed. One page per month, plus pages of practical information and tax tips)

DOL Fact Sheets

Recordkeeping - It's More Than Just Paperwork

Keeping good records is very important for your business. You need good records to monitor the progress of your business, keep track of deductible expenses, prepare tax returns and support the items you report on tax returns.

As we approach year-end many readers ask about recordkeeping requirements. The two questions that most employers often ask are:

1. What kinds of records should I keep?
2. How long should I keep the records?

What kinds of records should I keep?

You may choose any recordkeeping system suited to your business that clearly shows your income and expenses. Except in a few cases, the law does not require any special kind of records. However, the business you are in affects the type of records you need to keep for federal tax purposes. For more information, [click here](#).



How long should I keep records?

The length of time you should keep a document depends on the action, expense, or event the document records. You must keep your records as long as they may be needed to prove the income or deductions on a tax return. For more information, [click here](#).

Employment Tax Records

Among the various items that must be kept, are employment tax records. Keep all records of employment taxes for at least four years. These should be available for IRS review. Records should include:

- Your employer identification number.
- Amounts and dates of all wage, annuity, and pension payments.
- Amounts of tips reported.
- The fair market value of in-kind wages paid.
- Names, addresses, social security numbers, and occupations of employees and recipients.

Three new [fact sheets](#) are now available U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), in a new and easy to read format. They provide constructive disability employment information for parents, youth and employers.

View all of [ODEP's factsheets...](#)

- Any employee copies of Form W-2 that were returned to you as undeliverable.
- Dates of employment.
- Periods for which employees and recipients were paid while absent due to sickness or injury and the amount and weekly rate of payments you or third-party payers made to them.
- Copies of employees' and recipients' income tax withholding allowance certificates (Forms W-4, W-4P, W-4S, and W-4V).
- Dates and amounts of tax deposits you made.
- Copies of returns filed.
- Records of allocated tips.
- Records of fringe benefits provided, including substantiation.

For Additional Information, see:

- DOL's [FirstStep Recordkeeping, Reporting and Notices Advisor](#)
- www.irs.gov/businesses
- [Business With Employees](#)
- [Operating a Business](#)
- [Recordkeeping](#)

Also, be sure to refer to the [Human Resources](#) section in [HR & Benefits Essentials](#) for more information.

Pension Plan limitations and other COLA adjustments for 2009

[IRS Announces Pension Plan Limitations for 2009](#)

IR-2008-118, Oct. 16, 2008 — The IRS announced cost of living adjustments applicable to dollar limitations for pension plans and other items for tax year 2009.



[2009 Inflation Adjustments Widen Tax Brackets and Expand Tax Benefits](#)

IR-2008-117, Oct. 16, 2008 — The value of personal dependency exemptions, standard deductions and other tax items have been adjusted for inflation for tax year 2009.

[IRS Announces 2009 Standard Mileage Rates](#)

IR-2008-131, Nov. 24, 2008 — The IRS issued the 2009 optional standard mileage rates used for the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

[IRS Issues Fall 2008 Statistics of Income Bulletin](#)

IR-2008-132, Nov. 24, 2008 — IRS statistics for tax year 2006 are now available providing tax related details about sole proprietorships, partnerships, certain foreign corporations, tax exempt organizations and personal wealth.

Independent Contractor



(Self-Employed) Versus Employee

It is very important that employers correctly determine whether the individuals providing services are employees or independent contractors. Generally, an employer must withhold income taxes, withhold and pay Social Security and Medicare taxes, and pay unemployment tax on wages paid to an employee. Businesses do not generally have to withhold or pay any taxes on payments to independent contractors.

Before an employer can determine how to treat payments made for services, it is important to first fully analyze the business relationship that exists between the business and the person performing the services. Please [click here](#) to obtain vitally important information to help correctly determine the differences between an independent contractor and an employee.

Do you have specific guidelines for an effective employee disciplinary process?

There are specific guidelines and steps that should be taken to help prevent future issues and as a documented record of an employee's disciplinary problem. The following are some guidelines.



To download sample Written Warning Notices, Discipline Reports and Termination letters, please go to the log-in box on your broker site or www.HRandBenefits.com and enter the username and password provided by your benefits broker. The simplest way to access the forms is to go to the "Forms" section and click on "Employee Termination Forms" menu on the left.

- **Initial Notification:** Inform the employee that the job performance or conduct on the job does not meet company's standards. This initial communication is usually delivered verbally in a meeting between the manager and employee.
- **First Written Warning Notice:** If the employee's job performance fails to improve, another meeting should be held with the employee. A written memo that spells out job performance areas that need improvement should be provided to the employee. It's important at this stage in the process that the employee be made aware of how his or her behavior is affecting the business. The manager should try to work with the employee to come up with a plan of action that gives the employee an opportunity to improve.
- **Second Written Warning Notice:** This is a second written notice from a senior manager that informs the employee that if the job performance or workplace conduct problems continue, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- **Corrective action:** Document specific steps taken to help the employee improve performance and add to personnel file.
- **Termination:** Termination is, of course, the final step to be taken when all other corrective or disciplinary actions have failed to solve the problem.
- If termination is warranted, don't forget [COBRA](#) Termination Notice and [HIPAA](#) requirements.

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