



PERSONNEL FILES: RECOMMENDED CONTENTS

Keeping thorough and accurate employee files is important for three reasons:

- It's good business practice ó it keeps you organized and makes your job easier knowing where to find information when you need it.
- Most employers are required at some time by some authority to produce employment documents.
- Some employee records are required by federal or state authorities to be kept on file, and it makes sense to keep them filed under the employee's name.

As the employer, you control access to the personnel files. They are *your* records. But employees may review (but not necessarily copy) their own personnel file. Access to personnel file information should be limited to those in your organization who need to review the file for business purposes.

The following are items that may, if applicable to your organization, be kept in the personnel file.

Employment

- ✓ Resume and/or letter of application
- ✓ Employment Application
- ✓ Education/Employment History verifications
- ✓ Background Check report
- ✓ Employment Offer Letter
- ✓ Employment Agency Agreement, if hired through an agency
- ✓ Employee Handbook Acknowledgement
- ✓ Signed Keys/Security Access form

Payroll

- ✓ W-4 Form (Federal Income Tax)
- ✓ K-4 Form (Kansas Income Tax)
- ✓ Garnishment Orders and Records
- ✓ Authorization from employee to release private information
- ✓ Authorization for all other payroll actions

Wage/Salary Administration

- ✓ Job Description
- ✓ Payroll Authorization (wage/salary approval)
- ✓ Compensation History

Job Performance

- ✓ New Employee Feedback Reports
- ✓ Performance Appraisals
- ✓ Performance Improvement Plan documents

Training and Development

- ✓ Training program attendance verification
- ✓ Certification of completed training

Benefits

- ✓ Emergency Contact Form
- ✓ Benefit Enrollment/Waiver Forms
- ✓ Change of Benefit Forms
- ✓ Leave Request Forms
- ✓ Retirement Application
- ✓ Tuition Reimbursement Forms
- ✓ Retirement forms

Employee Relations

- ✓ Report of coaching/counseling session
- ✓ Commendations
- ✓ Employee written warning notice
- ✓ Written communications from employee

WHAT SHOULD NOT BE IN THE PERSONNEL FILE

MEDICAL RECORDS, including

- ✓ **Physician's record of examination**
- ✓ **Diagnostic records**
- ✓ **Lab Test results**
- ✓ **Drug screening records**
- ✓ **Any records listed above, even if release signed by employee giving permission to discuss**
- ✓ **Any medical records with personally identifiable information about the employee or a family member**
- ✓ **Family medical leave forms**
- ✓ **Short-term and Long-term disability claim forms and related information**
- ✓ **Workers Compensation forms and reports**

ALL MEDICAL RECORDS SHOULD BE KEPT IN A SEPARATE MEDICAL INFORMATION FILE FOR THE EMPLOYEE

Investigation Records

A separate file should be kept for:

- ✓ **Discrimination complaint investigation information**
- ✓ **Legal case data**
- ✓ **Accusations of policy/legal violations and responses to such accusations**

Unsupported Opinions

Any notes or documentation that imply bias or discrimination on the part of the employer have no place in the personnel file or, for that matter, in the overall treatment of an employee. Any concerns should be factually and objectively documented.