

The Employer Group, Inc. ❖ www.TheEmployerGroup.com ❖ 800-406-9675 or 608-258-4800 ❖ 608-258-4802 (fax)

## New Federal Minimum Wage

Effective July 24, 2007, the federal minimum wage was increased to \$5.85 per hour. The minimum wage is scheduled to increase again to \$6.55 per hour effective July 24, 2008; and \$7.25 per hour effective July 24, 2009.

A new Federal Minimum Wage poster was mailed out to each client with the July 13, 2007 and July 20, 2007 invoices. Please check these invoices for your updated poster. There is also a link to the updated poster on our website.

The new minimum wage poster must be posted in a conspicuous place at your worksite with the rest of your mandatory federal and state posters. These posters must be available for all employees to view.

Some of you may have a state minimum wage that is higher than the federal minimum wage. Note that this does not eliminate the need for you to post that new federal poster for your employees. Please contact The Employer Group if you have any questions about your new poster. ↪

## What is Reasonable Termination?

While it's important that you run your business the way you see fit, it is also important to keep in mind the ramifications of your decisions. This includes when and why you decide to terminate an employee.



It is very important that employees know what is expected of them. It should be communicated both verbally as well as in writing. A great way to do that is to have a job description and your policies written up for your employee when (s)he first starts, and then both of you sit down together and go over your expectations. This way you are sure that your employee really understands what is expected of them. Most employees want to do their best, but they need to know what it is you want. No one is a mind reader.

A signed document in the employee's file should indicate that (s)he is aware of company policies and job expectations. When that document is signed, it demonstrates that the employee was made aware of the expectations of the job and that they could be terminated if the policies and expectations are not followed.

For information on employee discipline and termination, please read the article on the back about employee discipline. ↪



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## What Information Is Available On The Web?

Do you find yourself at a loss when you need an HR form but you aren't sure where to start? If so, maybe we can help!

Following is a non-exhaustive list of some of the forms most frequently downloaded that are available on our web page at no additional cost to you:

- ◆ Acceptance of Resignation
- ◆ Employee Disciplinary Report
- ◆ Employee Transfer Form
- ◆ Employment Application
- ◆ Job Description Template
- ◆ Performance Review
- ◆ Termination Form
- ◆ Training Reimbursement Agreement

At The Employer Group, we are always looking out for you and new ways to make your life easier so that you are able to focus more on the actual running of your business.

We are adding new forms to the web page as soon as they become available.

We not only provide forms on our web page, but we also provide valuable resources and information for you, whether federal and state mandatory postings or you have an employee who is required to have a license in order to have their position you want a form for them to complete to acknowledge that it is an essential part of the job.

Don't see a form or information that you need to better manage your Human Resources needs? Call or email us today! ↪



## Change in Time Sheet Forms

Employees have always been paid based on quarter-hour increments of time worked; however, to make sure that we are all "on the same page," a note has been added to the time sheet form indicating to employees that (s)he will be eligible to receive pay based on the 7-8 minute rule. What does that mean? It means that if only 7 minutes of the quarter-hour are worked, the employee will not receive pay for those 7 minutes. If, however, the employee works 8 or more minutes in that quarter hour, (s)he will be paid for the full quarter-hour. ☞

## Did I Do Enough? Let's Talk Discipline...

Except for severe offenses, a progressive discipline system works best. Please visit our website to find an Employee Disciplinary Report which walks you through the documentation steps of discipline. The usual sequence is verbal warning (with documentation after the fact), written warning, suspension, and then termination.

Please keep in mind that it is against the law to terminate someone's employment based on discriminatory reasons such as their religion, race, gender, national origin, military status, or because of a medical condition. Of course, if someone has violated a policy and you have followed the disciplinary process, then termination may be in order.

When you have made the decision to terminate an employee remember to keep things as private as possible. Public humiliation in front of co-workers is rude and could contribute to negative feelings in the work place. Don't apologize to the individual you are terminating. Just let the individual know you are letting them go in a very matter-of-fact way. There isn't any reason to go over the individual issues as you have already done that during the disciplinary process. Individuals react differently. Some may cry, some may try and argue the case, but with the facts in front of you, there isn't going to be much to argue about.

The disciplinary process is an important one. Not only does it allow your employees to understand what problems there are and how they can correct them, but it is also your support when you have to decide to let someone go.

Please be sure to contact the Human Resources professionals at The Employer Group for any assistance you may need when having disciplinary problems with an employee. Remember, the more documentation you have the better supported your decision. ☞



## Quote of the Month:

If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.  
-Milton Berle, (1908-2002)  
U.S. Television Actor & Comedian ☞

## Answers To Your Questions

This column features questions that we get from you, our clients. If you have a question that you need to have answered, please contact us as the issue arrives. This column just addresses some of our most frequently asked questions. You may also visit us online ([www.TheEmployerGroup.com](http://www.TheEmployerGroup.com)), and submit your questions there or view our most Frequently Asked Questions document for more information!

QUESTION: I have an employee who is working overtime without asking me first. What can I do?

ANSWER: When an employee works additional hours without requesting approval in advance (and getting it), that is a performance issue that you should address with him/her right away.



You are unable to just not pay them for the extra time worked as all hours worked for an employer are to be paid to the employee, as required by law. However, because working that time without prior approval is considered insubordination, you should address it immediately before it becomes an even bigger issue for you.

This type of insubordination should be treated the same as any other performance issue—the employee should receive a verbal warning and then proceed to the next step, the written warning, so that (s)he understand the seriousness of the situation.



QUESTION: I typically pay my staff for holiday days when the office is closed; however, I have an employee who is not full-time and is not scheduled to work the day we are closed for the holiday. Do I

need to pay that employee for that day, just because I paid the rest of my staff for it?

ANSWER: No. Holiday pay, unless your employee handbook specifically states otherwise, is only paid to employees where, if they were to follow their normal work schedule, they would be scheduled to work on that day. ☞