

Do We Follow Sound Employment Practices?

A 12-question checklist to find out.

by the Editors

Use the following checklist to gauge how your church is doing at complying with employment laws and using best practices.

HOW ARE WE DOING	YES	NO	WORKING ON THIS
Do we have up-to-date knowledge of the employment laws in our state, city, and county?			
Are we in compliance with wage and hour laws?			
Do we keep the time records required by wage and hour laws?			
Do we consult with an attorney regarding employment-related issues that arise?			
Do we have an employee handbook that outlines our policies and procedures?			
Do we have written job descriptions for all of our employees?			
Do we obtain permission before doing background checks of prospective employees?			
Do we keep detailed records of employee performance, including annual reviews?			
Do we keep good records of all changes in employee status? (e.g., promotions, leaves of absence, pay rates, etc.)			
Do we store personnel information in a secure area that is separate from medical records?			
Do we provide regular training on employees' rights and responsibilities?			
Do we have a sexual harassment policy that provides clear guidelines for reporting?			

The federal government oversees a complex array of laws designed to protect employees from being taken advantage of by employers. These regulations affect about 10 million employers, including many churches.

Whether your ministry employs one person or one hundred, it may need to comply with many of the federal, state, or common law provisions that apply to employers.

Here are just some of the areas that labor laws regulate:

- Wages and hours
- Wage garnishment
- Workplace safety and health
- Workers' compensation
- Employee benefits
- Family and medical leave
- Veterans' employment rights
- Discrimination (age, race, gender, genetic information, disability, national origin, religion)
- Sexual Harassment
- Accommodation for employees with disabilities
- Wrongful termination
- Invasion of privacy

That is why it's important for you to be aware of current labor laws and create policies and procedures that help your ministry to abide by them.