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How to manage compliant employee files

HR compliance is critical to mastering modern work and improving operational experience.

Employee files must contain essential records and documents to:

Ensure compliance with regulations.

Improve HR operations, transparency and responsiveness.

Respond to audits or internal reviews.

Manage the employee lifecycle from hire to retire.

Use the steps and checklists below to kickstart HR transformation and improve employee document management.
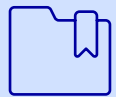
7 steps to achieve HR compliance

1 Review
the organization's HR processes, identifying all events, systems, tools and locations where records are created and stored.

2 Classify
records by type of information and level of risk.

3 Know
and understand the regulatory and legal requirements for jurisdictions where the organization operates.

4 Ensure
existence of all mandatory records and where possible, eliminate copies of any versions not identified as the official record.

5 Document
and implement retention schedules based on the company's retention policy or jurisdictional requirements.

6 Store
documents securely based on their classification. Personally identifiable information and personal health information should be limited to individuals who need to see this information. When in doubt, treat all records as sensitive.

7 Set up
a process to refresh, test, update and verify the records inventory regularly.

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Essential employee records and documents checklists

Compliance requirements vary across the different stages of the employee lifecycle, from hire to retire. It is critical that HR knows where all records are, whether they are maintained internally or with the vendor. Use these checklists to assess employee documents and records.

Application to hire

- ☐ Application/resume
- ☐ Job description
- ☐ Interview notes
- ☐ Signed offer letter
- ☐ Employment agreement
- ☐ Policy/handbook acknowledgement

Additional documents required, where applicable:

- ☐ Record of background check
- ☐ Watchlist screening
- ☐ New hire onboarding checklist
- ☐ Record of drug testing

Active employee

- ☐ Performance evaluations
- ☐ Compensation and awards
- ☐ Training record (internal and required)
- ☐ Attendance/leaves/vacation requests
- ☐ Pay records
- ☐ Job changes

Other records that may exist:

- ☐ Pension and benefits
- ☐ Equity
- ☐ Code of business conduct acknowledgement and/or
- ☐ Conflict of interest statements

Sensitive employee records

Sensitive or exceptionally private records should have limited access and extra security precautions:

- ☐ Disciplinary records
- ☐ Tax records
- ☐ Identification verification
- ☐ Evidence of Right to Work
- ☐ Required health records
- ☐ Employee diversity questionnaires
- ☐ Employee garnishee records

Termination records

- ☐ Letter of notice
- ☐ Exit interview
- ☐ Offboarding checklist
- ☐ NDA and termination agreements
- ☐ Unemployment documents (where required)

➡ Discover more ways to master compliant employee document management.

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