

New employee at work

Your new employee is about to arrive for their first day on the job and you need to know both your and their rights and obligations to make the arrangement work smoothly.

If your employee is to start as an apprentice or trainee for a declared vocation then you will have to sign a Contract of Training before they start. If any special licences or permits are required you should have obtained these.

What do you do first?

Putting the person at ease comes first. Whether this is their first of latest job, they will still have things to work through with you to make for a good relationship. If you have worked out a formal induction program then use this – if not, there are some essential things to cover before they can get down to work. After you have introduced them and shown them around you need to get some formal paperwork completed. Have you shown them the location of such essentials as toilets and fire extinguishers? Have you advised them of arrangements for lunch and other breaks?

Paperwork for new employees

If they do not have a Tax File Number then you should give them the appropriate form together with the Tax Declaration form. These may be obtained from your local Post Office as well as from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

You must provide each employee with a time book or time card which is filled in daily and signed off weekly, so that you and the employee can verify the amount of money due, and so that you can calculate the amount of tax to be deducted.

It will also help if you can keep a general record of the employee in a confidential file to help you locate details like contact telephone numbers and record any personal information your employee might provide in the course of employment. Employees have a right to see their personal file.

What arrangements should you make for taxation and other payments withheld?

The ATO will help you with all enquiries and send out the necessary forms and information on deductions, tax credits, income statements and reports required.

What payroll systems should be in place?

You should find out in advance about the correct award rate for the job and qualification of the employee. Award rates can be obtained through the Department for Administrative and Information Services – (DIAS) SafeWork SA Division or Business SA. You should set the same pay day each week or fortnight as in the Award and your employee a pay envelope or payslip that records the gross and net pay and details of all deductions made.

If the employee is a member of a union you may be requested to make deductions for this. Ask the relevant union for their advice. Talk to the United Trades and Labour Council if you want more information about how union membership will work for you and your employee.

You should make insure that the employee signs for each pay in the time book and record sheet. Make sure that all absences are properly accounted for in the records and that any leave loading and overtime are calculated and set out as required.

Good stationers can supply you with ready printed materials and can show you accounting systems to help you maintain good payroll records. Computer software is available.

What are your other obligations?

You must insure your employee against industrial accidents and injury through Workcover. Payment of this is by premium according to the gross salary paid to an employee. You should contact the WorkCover Corporation for information as to your obligations and they will send you relevant information and forms on request. You should do this as soon as the employee starts, or before if possible.

What must you do about the Superannuation Guarantee?

You are required to make payments to an approved superannuation fund at the legislated rate. The ATO has a Superannuation Guarantee Help Line (13 10 20) for enquiries about Superannuation Guarantee.

What if your employee has to be signed off?

What you do to sign off an employee depends upon the circumstances under which the employment is terminated and any legal contracts that might be involved.

If it is a dismissal you must have given the employee the required warnings in the correct form. There are some circumstances where you might feel an instant dismissal is warranted on safety, ethical or other grounds. You should ask the SafeWork SA Division of DAIS, Business SA or the Office of Employee Ombudsman for advice on this before you approach the employee. You may have the right to suspend the employee from work pending an investigation of the matter if serious breach has occurred. The conditions of termination will be advised to you, and pay in lieu of notice, plus any holiday or other pay accrued, may be required.

If you have to make an employee redundant for any reason you should ask for advice on the manner and length of notice required and any obligations for special payments that this might incur.

If you have an employee who is due to retire or who resigns, then you and the employee should seek advice about the notice required, any special pay that might be due and forms for transfer or rollover of superannuation funding.

If you want to cancel indentures (Contracts of Training) then you should apply to the Traineeship and Apprenticeship Services for detail of the procedure to be followed.

Full statements of entitlements to leave and other benefits must be supplied together with a Separation Certificate for Centrelink.



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How do performance appraisals work?

If you and your employee are to make the business work well, and work towards a worthwhile working relationship, then you should consider making regular performance appraisals part of your routine.

Ideally these should be done every six months and set out in a form so that both you and the employee can both make comment about how they see their work performance, your expectations and requests for further training that might be required. In a way, this is conducted much like a job interview, but this time the employee also has the opportunity to make comments about things that make their job satisfying or difficult. Both you and your employee should see this as an opportunity to share suggestions about improving work processes, customer relations, identify training needs and talk about their future career opportunities. It can also provide you with a chance to praise the employee formally for good work done and to give constructive criticism that can assist him or her to improve skills and performance in areas where they need help.

What makes a good manager?

Managing a business means that you need to take as much care over your investment in people as much as you do over your money investment or your customers. A good manager models the kind of work performance, manners, customer service and courtesy that they expect of their employees. Courtesy, fairness, consistency and managers who give good, well thought out reasons for saying yes or no, will gain respect.

Managers will have more time to manage and expand the business if they train the employees well. To help you become a better manager and trainer there are several organisations that offer short courses that you might find interesting and the Department of Trade and Economic Development (DTED) can offer you advice on this.



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