

## Win-Win: How a Call to an Employee Complaint Hotline Benefitted Both Employee AND Employer



### Overview

Employees are not always comfortable addressing their job-related concerns with supervisors or managers. As a result, employers are often blindsided by problems in the workplace. To combat this problem, employers are forced to think of creative ways to keep the lines of communication open with employees. One simple solution — consider implementing an employee complaint hotline! Read ahead to learn how an employee complaint hotline helped one employer.

### The Situation

Recently, Dylan, the owner of Big D's Donuts, installed a new employee time keeping system.

Since that time, several employees noticed that their paychecks were smaller than normal. Upon reviewing their paycheck stubs, many employees realized that they were not getting paid for the overtime they were working. While this was a problem, the employees were afraid to say anything because they were afraid of losing their jobs.

One day, while in the employee breakroom, Sally noticed a poster for an Employee Complaint Hotline. The poster said that the hotline could be used to report any HR concerns to a third party. Hoping to resolve the issue without jeopardizing her job, Sally called the Hotline and reported her complaint to Terry, the HR Professional who handled the call.

Following her conversation with Sally, Terry called Dylan to advise him of Sally's complaint. Dylan was alarmed and had no idea that there might be a problem with his new timekeeping system. Terry advised Dylan to review Sally's time records and those of other employees to determine if Sally's complaint was correct.

Dylan reviewed the time cards of all of his employees and he discovered that the new time keeping system was not accounting for overtime correctly. After this discovery, Dylan called Terry back for guidance on how to proceed.

Terry recommended that Dylan take the following action:

- Call the company that installed the time clock system and request that they program the timeclock to capture overtime correctly.
- Audit all time cards since the time clock was installed to determine all overtime hours owed to the employees.
- Notify all employees of the time keeping error and reassure them that the matter is being addressed and they would be paid all compensation they are due as soon as the audit is complete.

Dylan followed Terry's recommendations and within the week paid his employees all of the overtime they were owed. In the end, Dylan was glad he decided to post the Employee Complaint Hotline information for his employees. Without this information being readily available, Sally may not have addressed the paycheck issue so quickly and it might have been months (or even years) before Dylan realized that there was a problem. In essence, Sally's use of the Employee Complaint Hotline likely saved Big D's Donuts from facing a much larger wage and hour claim down the road.

This story is one of many examples of how an Employee Complaint Hotline saved an employer from a potentially devastating claim.