

Top 3 HR Tasks to Complete Before the New Year

With the New Year approaching, HR Directors are working hard to get things in order for 2017. With that in mind, what are the three most important tasks an HR Director should accomplish before January 1st?

- A. Prepare W-2s, audit 2016 timecards, and update the employee handbook.
- B. Conduct sexual harassment training for all managers, audit employee vacation and/or sick leave usage, and update the employee handbook.
- C. Update workplace posters, verify minimum wage in all places your company operates, and update the employee handbook.
- D. Conduct training on completing the new Form I9, prepare W-2s, and update the employee handbook.



The correct answer is C:

Explanation

While all of the tasks listed are important to having a smooth transition into 2017, these three tasks (updating workplace posters, verifying minimum wage in all places your company operates, and updating the employee handbook) are the most important to complete before January 1st.

Updating Workplace Posters

State and federal employment laws require all employers to post at each of their locations, in an area frequented by all employees, all applicable, current, required federal and state employment law notices. An employer's failure to keep these notices up-to-date can result in fines or employee lawsuits.

While not all required posters are updated on an annual basis, some (like state/city minimum wage notices) are. Therefore, it is a good HR practice for a company to conduct an annual (if not more frequent) audit of its workplace notices to verify that all workplace notices are up-to-date.

Verifying Minimum Wage

The minimum wage in several states (along with many cities) is increasing on January 1st. Not only does this potentially impact the hourly rate of your minimum wage workforce, but it may also affect the minimum salary requirement for your exempt employees depending on your state. An employer's failure to acknowledge these increases can expose a company to an array of wage claims.

Updating Employee Handbooks

The close of the year is a good time to review handbooks to determine if updates may be needed.

This is because January 1st is the effective date of the majority of new laws passed in the previous year. Therefore, it is important for employers to familiarize themselves with the new laws affecting employment in the areas where they operate and make any modifications/additions to the employee handbook.