



## Chapter 9

# Employment Practices, Workers Rights

Resources in this chapter are an aid to draft a handbook or personnel manual. A carefully crafted handbook provides an opportunity to communicate to an employee the philosophy of the library. When crafting a handbook check with your library lawyer to make sure it does not imply a contract and jeopardize Indiana's employment at will doctrine.

For specific guidance in drafting a policy handbook or personnel manual consult *Model Employee Policies for Indiana Employers with Legal Commentary 7<sup>th</sup>* edition published by Indiana Chamber in 2016 available for loan from Indiana State Library. To purchase the most recent edition go to <https://www.indianachamber.com/pubs/indiana-model-employee-policies/>

Contact the Indiana State Library if you want samples of other library's personnel manuals.

### **A. Addresses for Employment Practices, Workers Rights, Etc.**

#### **Indiana**

##### **Indiana Department of Labor**

402 West Washington Street, W-195

Indianapolis, IN 46204

(317) 232-2655

<https://www.in.gov/dol/>

##### **Department of Workforce Development**

For Employer Handbook of Unemployment Insurance go to:

[https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Employer\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Employer_Handbook.pdf)

##### **Unemployment Insurance Taxes**

General tax questions and employer assistance (800) 891-6499

8:00 AM to 4:30 PM ET Monday-Friday

To find WorkOne Center closest to your location visit online map at:

<https://www.in.gov/dwd/WorkOne/locations.html>

Employer Tax Hotline is 1-800-437-9136

### **Worker's Compensation Board of Indiana**

402 West Washington Street, W-196

Indianapolis, IN 46204

(800) 824-COMP

<https://www.in.gov/wcb/>

## **National**

**U.S. Department of Labor** -Main Office Frances Perkins Building 200 Constitution Ave., NW Room S-1032 Washington, DC 20210

(866) 4-USA-DOL

<https://www.dol.gov/>

**DOL Topics and Agency Offices:** On the <https://www.dol.gov/> web page, click on *Topics* (wages, health plans and benefits, unemployment insurance, etc). For a listing of offices, click on *Agencies*. This includes:

- **Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)**
- **Wage and Hour Division (WHD)**
- **Employment and Training Administration (ETA)**
- **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)**
- **Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)**
- **Women's Bureau (WB)**

## **B. Federal Laws Requiring Posting**

Included here are Federal laws required to be posted in the library -Department of Labor

<https://webapps.dol.gov/dolfaq/dolfaqbytopic.asp?topicID=17> .

You can request free posters for each of these. There are companies who will send you an order blank to order their version of the free posters. These posters are in color and all mandatory laws are shown on one poster. The free posters are individual posters that have to be posted independently. It's your choice whether you get the free ones or pay to have a colorful poster with all the laws in one place.

Posters can be downloaded and printed free of charge directly from elaws FirstStep Poster Advisor at <https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/posters.html> or you can consult the State of Indiana website at <https://www.in.gov/dwd/indiana-unemployment/employers/forms-downloads/required-employer-posters/> for Required Employer Posters: State Posters and Federal Posters.

## **C. Wage and Hour Division (WHD)**

Wage and Hour Division, part of the Department of Labor, webpage at

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd> contains links to minimum wage information, overtime pay, recordkeeping, youth employment and special employment, family and medical leave, migrant

workers, lie detector tests, worker protections in certain temporary worker programs, and the prevailing wages for government service and construction contracts.

### **Federal Minimum Wage Notice -(29 USC 206)**

<https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages/minimumwage>

Employers subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act must post a notice regarding the federal minimum wage in “conspicuous places in every establishment” where the affected employers can readily observe it on their way to or from work (29 CFR 516.4). Failure to post the required notice is a federal crime.

### **Minimum Wage and Overtime Pay**

“The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes standards for minimum wages, overtime pay, recordkeeping, and child labor. These standards affect more than 135 million workers, both full-time and part-time, in the private and public sectors.

The Act covers enterprises with employees who engage in interstate commerce, produce goods for interstate commerce, or handle, sell, or work on goods or materials that have been moved in or produced for interstate commerce. For most firms, a threshold of \$500,000 in annual dollar volume of business applies to be covered (i.e., the Act does not cover enterprises with less than this amount of business).

In addition, the Act does cover the following regardless of their dollar volume of business: hospitals; institutions primarily engaged in the care of the sick, aged, mentally ill, or disabled who reside on the premises; schools for children who are mentally or physically disabled or gifted; preschools, elementary and secondary schools, and institutions of higher education; and Federal, state, and local government agencies.”

For further information consult <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/wages/overtimepay> and <https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/elg/minwage.htm>

### **Employee Polygraph Protection Act -(29 USC 2001)**

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/posters/employee-polygraph-protection-act>

Each employer shall post and maintain such notice in conspicuous places on its premises where notices to employees are customarily posted” (29 USC 2003). Any employer who violates Polygraph Protection Act may be assessed a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 (29 USC 2005).

### **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission/Age Discrimination (29 CFR 1601.30)**

<https://www.eeoc.gov/>

“Every employer has an obligation to keep posted in conspicuous places upon its premises notices describing the applicable provisions of Titles VII and I (ADA). Section 711(b) of Title VII makes failure to comply with this section punishable by fine...” for each violation (29 CFR 1601.30).

### **Family and Medical Leave Act (updated 2023)-(U.S. Dept of Labor, Employment Standards Division)**

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla> This Act pertains to employers having at least 50 employees within 75 miles. FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12 month period to ‘eligible’ employees for certain family and medical reasons. Please consult the Fact Sheet #28: The Family and Medical Leave Act at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/28-fmla>. See also the FLSA protections for nursing mothers at work: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pump-at-work>.

## **State Laws Requiring Posting**

Some state laws required to be posted in the library through the Indiana Department of Labor. You can request free posters for each of these. There are companies who will send you an order blank to order their version of the free posters. These posters are in color and all mandatory laws are shown on one poster. The free posters are individual posters that have to be posted independently. It's your choice whether you get the free ones or pay to have a colorful poster with all the laws in one place. A number of posters have links on this page <https://www.in.gov/dol/publications/> to PDF versions.

### **Smoking Ban HEA 1149 (Effective July 1, 2012)**

Post sign that reads "Smoking is Prohibited by State Law." Legislation provides that smoking is prohibited within eight feet of a public entrance to a public place or place of employment. This law does not prohibit local authorities from enacting more restrictive smoking ordinances and this law does not supersede an existing more restrictive local smoking ordinance.

### **Minimum Wage Law -(Ind. Code Ann. 22-2-2-8)**

<http://iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/current/ic/titles/022#22-2-2-8>

"Every employer subject to the provisions of this chapter...shall keep a copy of them posted in a conspicuous place in the area where employees are employed." Violators of this statute may be guilty of an infraction.

The poster for Indiana Minimum Wage Law is found here

<https://www.in.gov/dol/files/Minimum-Wage-Law.pdf>

### **Worker's Compensation Notice -(Ind. Code Ann. 22-3-2-22)**

<https://www.in.gov/wcb/employers/posters/>

"Each employer subject to this code shall post a notice in the employer's place of business to inform the employees that their employment is covered by worker's compensation." "(c) An employer who fails to comply with this section is subject to a penalty..." (22-3-2-22).

### **Equal Opportunity is the Law -(Ind. Code Ann. 22-9-5-25)**

<http://iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/current/ic/titles/022#22-9-5-25>

Employers covered under this chapter "shall post notices in a format accessible to applicants, employees, and members describing the applicable provisions of this chapter..." Violators of this requirement may be subject to penalties under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. (42 USC SEC. 2000e-10 [Section 711]).

**Indiana Civil Rights Commission Office:** (317) 232-2600 **Toll Free:** (800) 628-2909 **Hearing Impaired:** (800) 743-3333 **Fax:** (317) 232-6580 **E-mail:** [icrc@crc.in.gov](mailto:icrc@crc.in.gov) **Website:**

<https://www.in.gov/icrc/> It is unlawful to discriminate against any person with regard to recruitment, hiring or firing, promotion, transfers, job training, wages or salaries, or any other term, condition, or benefit of employment. An employer must also accommodate employees with disabilities and those who have "sincerely held religious beliefs."

### **Workforce Development Act -(Ind. Code Ann. 22-4-17-1)**

<http://iga.in.gov/legislative/laws/current/ic/titles/022#22-4-17-1>

"(e) Each employer shall display and maintain in places readily accessible to all employees posters concerning its regulations..."

## **Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1974**

[https://www.in.gov/dol/files/English IOSHA Poster.pdf](https://www.in.gov/dol/files/English_IOSHA_Poster.pdf)

This poster must be displayed prominently in the workplace.

<https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/safety-health> Workplace safety and health

<https://www.in.gov/dol/files/osha3165.pdf>

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## **D. Important Employment Laws**

1 **New Hire Reporting** Pursuant to the federal Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, all employees must report “new hires” to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development; see their webpage at <https://www.in-newhire.com>. The report must be filed within twenty (20) days after the hire date and contain the employee’s name, address, and social security number. Per IC 22-2-18.1-26, employers who hire five or more minor (under age 18) employees per location must list those employees in the new Youth Employment System registry at <https://er.dol.in.gov/>

2 **Minimum Wage --federal and state** All library workers employed by the library, except for professional services, will fall under the federal minimum wage laws. Make sure that you are paying them at minimum wage or more. A computer professional who is paid an amount that is at least as high as the separate minimum wage for computer professionals is exempt from the overtime provisions of FLSA (see below).

3 **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) --federal** This includes the federal minimum wage, and it also lists requirements for overtime pay and compensatory (comp) time. It also prohibits covered employees from contributing volunteer hours to their place of employment. The Fair Labor Standards Act also includes child labor provisions, which set certain limitations on the use of juveniles as employees. If you use students under 18 years of age as pages, you should be aware of these restrictions. Please see the legislative updates, legal bulletins, and archived webinars at <https://www.in.gov/library/services-for-libraries/law/>.

4 **State and Federal Civil Rights Laws** These laws prohibit employers from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin in hiring, promotion, and other employment policies. The federal Title VII is one of the main civil rights laws.

5 **Age Discrimination Employment Act (ADEA) --federal** ADEA prohibits employers from discriminating on account of age. The protected age group is 40 years old and older.

6 **American with Disabilities Act (ADA) --federal** ADA strengthens prohibitions on discrimination against the disabled and requires employers to make their facilities accessible to the disabled and to make reasonable changes in their accommodations for the employment of disabled people.

7 **The Immigration Reform and Control Act --federal** This law requires that employees complete an I-9 form within three days of starting work, verifying their identity and authorization to work. Employers may condition an offer of employment on the successful applicant’s completing the form, but may not specify what documents must be used to complete the form. For more information consult the Indiana State Library e-Verify webpage at <https://www.in.gov/library/services-for-libraries/e-verify-for-libraries/>.

8 **The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) --federal** FMLA allows employees to take up to 12 work weeks of paid or unpaid leave for certain medical and family reasons. It requires that employees taking such leave be allowed to return to their original job or an equivalent job with equivalent pay,

benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

9 **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)** --federal HIPAA provides rights and protections for participants and beneficiaries in group health plans. HIPAA includes protections for coverage under group health plans that limit exclusions for preexisting conditions; prohibits discrimination against employees and dependents based on their health status; and allows a special opportunity to enroll in a new plan to individuals in certain circumstances. HIPAA may also give you a right to purchase individual coverage if you have no group health plan coverage available, and have exhausted COBRA or other continuation coverage.

10 **Criminal Background Checks** --state Senate Enrolled Act 410 – Public Law 88 requires libraries to adopt policy regarding conducting criminal background checks for individuals aged 18+ who are: employed or perform volunteer work, or who apply for employment or volunteer services.

## **E. Indiana's Employment At-Will**

Indiana is an at-will employment state. The general rule, which has been a longstanding principle of employment in America, is that an employment relationship for no specific duration (no contract has been signed for a set period of time) may be terminated at any time at the will of either the employer or the employee for any reason or for no reason at all. Under this rule, the reason for terminating an at-will employment relationship does not matter. Whether the reason was unfair or immoral is of no consequence.

Employment-related litigation stemming from employee discharges is an ever-increasing phenomenon in American business. To avoid the threat and liabilities associated with wrongful discharge, employers must review all their policies and procedures, as well as employee handbooks and other written personnel documents, to determine that no promises or statements are being made that could be construed as a binding employment contract. It is strongly recommended that all employers have written disclaimers that preserve the employment-at-will-relationships.

Finally, when terminating employees, an employer should always make sure that its action is uniform, consistent and fair and that whenever possible the employee has been given advance warning that particular behavior or conduct could result in termination.

## Personnel Policies Checklist

(Possible topics to cover)

For examples of policies and procedures see the Indiana State Personnel Department webpage <https://www.in.gov/spd/policies-and-procedures/standardized-policies/>.

1. **Employment-At-Will Disclaimer**
2. **Criminal Background Checks**
  - Required for individuals aged 18+ who are:
    - Employed or perform volunteer work, or
    - Who apply for employment or volunteer services
3. **Job Classifications**; full-time and part-time status
4. **Orientation/trial Period**
5. **Equal Employment Opportunity Statement**
6. **Sexual Harassment Policies**
7. **Work Rules and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures** — common items included may be:
  - excessive absences, tardiness, or early leaves
  - use, possession, actual or intended distribution or being under the influence of drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol
  - insubordination
  - refusal to cooperate with investigation
  - falsification of library records, including the employment application
  - negligent or unauthorized use of library equipment
  - harassment, physical abuse or verbal abuse of employees, patrons, or visitors
  - gambling during working hours
  - theft or unauthorized use or possession of library property or another person's property
  - soliciting or seeking support or contributions during working time for any cause or organization without management approval
  - violation of safety rules or common safety practices
  - failure to make a prompt report of any accident on library property
  - inattention to the job, or poor job performance
  - failure to observe library working hours and schedules, including scheduled overtime
  - disclosure of confidential information to unauthorized persons
  - possession of weapons on library property
8. **Hours of Work, Layoff/Recall**
9. **Military Leave**
10. **Jury Service**
11. **Bereavement Leave**
12. **Attendance Policy**
13. **Vacation**
14. **Holidays**
15. **Personal Days**

16. **Sick Days**
17. **Union-Free Workplace Statement**
18. **Open Door Statement** (do not restrict employees from communicating with members of management other than their immediate supervisors)
19. **Bulletin Boards** — fosters communication between employees
20. **Substance Abuse Policy**
21. **Family and Medical Leave Act Policies**
22. **Smoking** – can prohibit in facility
23. **Dress Code**
24. **References** — prevents employer from releasing references that will cause it to be held liable for defamation
25. **Promotion/Transfer/Job Openings**
26. **Timekeeping Requirements**
27. **Health Insurance, Health Savings Accounts, Disability Benefits Programs, Deferred Compensation, and PERF**
28. **Confidential Information**
29. **Personal Belongings**
30. **Employment of Relatives**
31. **Safety and Health**
32. **Inclement Weather/Emergencies**
33. **Telephone** (for customer satisfaction and for employee's personal calls)
34. **Internet/E-mail**
35. **Termination of Employment**

**Receipt/Acknowledgement** – helps to ensure that the employee has read the handbook.

**Employee Examination of Personnel Files** — employer may decide whether employees may review their files or not; documents should not be removed.

Adapted from a Barnes & Thornburg handout, 1998.

### **Taxable Fringe Benefits**

A good resource for taxable fringe benefits is the **Taxable Fringe Benefit Guide** at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15b.pdf>. This resource answers many of the questions library directors and staff ask.

Some cases require more research. For example, how is the purchase of staff polo shirts handled when the library board requires polo shirt to be worn during work hours? The work shirt is a taxable benefit because it can be worn for general use. The library could allocate an employee clothing allowance in their payroll check.