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Unemployment Update – Does Documentation Really Matter?

Importance of Documentation - In today's litigious environment, documentation of employee performance and progressive disciplinary action has never been more important to employers. It is the most effective tool available for managing sensitive personnel issues. Maintaining current and detailed documentation of employee activities helps discourage the filing of unwarranted unemployment claims and also protects your organization against various types of employee litigation. Documentation may seem like a very time consuming process, but if you stay organized and follow a few important steps, it can be kept straightforward and actually save time and dollars in the long run.

Benefits of Timely and Concise Documentation - The following are just a few of the benefits you can expect to generate through effective and timely documentation of employee performance:

- ✓ The creation of ongoing objective records of proof regarding an employee's performance.
- ✓ Maintaining a stable and consistent accounting of events that transpire. Information documented in employee records will not fade or change with time.
- ✓ Guaranteeing availability and permanency of records. Documents remain with your organization even when the managers who created them do not.
- ✓ Documentation helps facilitate consistent employee performance management processes and procedures.

Providing a Framework - The first step necessary for creating and maintaining effective documentation involves the training of your staff. Few managers and supervisors understand how their day-to-day activities regarding proper or improper maintenance of personnel files can impact an employer's overall costs. A personnel file not only tells the ongoing story of events regarding an employee's behavior, but also reveals the quality of an organization's management skills.

Not all training programs are equal. Make sure you truly take the time to evaluate the design of the program and compare the learning objectives to ensure your organization is receiving the maximum benefits of training. Some important learning objectives include:

- ✓ Identify and include the top elements essential for creating an effective disciplinary form
- ✓ Ensure employee performance and progressive discipline steps are consistently followed and documented
- ✓ Ability to validate the details gathered and included in documentation
- ✓ Develop a process and culture regarding the importance and benefits of effective documentation

Remember, producing effective documentation of employee performance and progressive discipline, will positively impact unemployment costs and assert better control over other legal matters.

Experience & Expertise - TALX's experience, expertise, and proven results help employers navigate the uncertainty of the unemployment insurance system. For additional information regarding this article or other proactive unemployment cost management techniques, please contact Pete Krieshok at 314-214-7325, or by e-mail at pkrieshok@talx.com or visit our corporate blog at <http://blog.talx.com>.