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Personnel Files – What Should They Include?

Since the personnel file fulfills such important needs, it should be a complete record of matters pertaining to an employee. This would include, but is not limited to, the following items:

1. Emergency numbers.
2. Social security number.
3. Completed Immigration and Naturalization Service I-9 Form.
4. Copy of completed W-2 withholding form.
 - Number of dependants.
5. Completed position application and, if required, a copy of an employee's resume.
6. Interview report or rating or completed test result – whatever was used to assist management in making an employment decision.
7. Record of earnings and deductions.
8. Medical benefits, if provided.
9. Life insurance, information and level of coverage, if provided.
10. Performance reviews and counseling comments signed by both the employee and the appropriate supervisor.
11. Signed document indicating the employee fully understands and accepts company policies on any items you have deemed important and included in your terms of employment. Examples could include policies on absenteeism, drugs, and theft.
12. If a medical exam was required, a copy of the notice from the doctor that the exam was given and passed. (The original exam report stays with the doctor.)
13. Education – school transcripts, if necessary, or level of education completed, if that information is required for the position filled.
14. Copy of discharge from military, if applicable.
15. Any other items pertaining to employment status specific to your company.

To ensure confidentiality, you need to make certain only designated personnel can have access to the files. In certain circumstances, separate files – one for compensation and performance matters and another for benefits for general information – may be needed with only appropriate, authorized people having access to each.