

Top 10 tips for employers (physician medical practices)

These are excellent tips to employers provided by the Texas Workforce Commission; I think these practical tips apply to any physician medical practice no matter what state you practice in:

1. Hire for fit - train for skills - promote, transfer, discipline, or fire for documented cause.
2. Do yourself a favor - do not try to avoid payroll taxes, new hire paperwork, or unemployment claims by classifying temporary workers as "contract labor". That will only be a tax audit waiting to happen. Instead, consider hiring such workers through temporary staffing firms - that way, those firms get the unemployment claims.
3. Get as many company documents and required forms signed by employees at the time of hire as you can (it only gets harder after that), and report all new hires and rehires to the Attorney General's New Hire Reporting office within 20 days of hiring.
4. Maintain a safe and healthy workplace in compliance with OSHA rules, and whether hiring, evaluating, promoting, transferring, disciplining, or discharging an employee, keep everything as job-related and consistent as possible, and never retaliate against an employee for reporting safety hazards, workplace discrimination, or other potential employment law compliance issues.
5. Have specific, written wage agreements with each employee, and get specific written authorization for any wage deductions that are not ordered by a court or required or specifically authorized by a law.
6. Unless an employee is clearly, absolutely, and undoubtedly in an overtime exemption category, do not pay on a salary basis, but rather pay an hourly or performance-based rate.
7. Never loan or advance money to an employee without getting a signed, written receipt and repayment agreement from the employee.
8. Give as much advance written notice as possible of pay and benefit changes.
9. In order to minimize the shock and disappointment factor that so often leads to unnecessary claims and lawsuits, treat employees fairly and consistently according to known, job-related rules and standards, follow

stated policies as closely as possible, and avoid exceptions whenever possible.

10. In handling unemployment claims, file timely claim responses and appeals, present testimony from firsthand witnesses, and present clear documentation of warnings, policies, and other relevant facts.