

The Small Business HR Compliance Checklist

A practical quarterly checklist covering hiring, pay, policies, safety, and recordkeeping — plus where HR software actually earns its keep.

Hiring & onboarding

- Written offer letter with pay, classification, and at-will language.
- I-9 completed on time; W-4 and state withholding on file.
- New-hire reporting filed with the state.
- Handbook acknowledgment signed and stored.
- Required workplace posters displayed (and remote-worker equivalents sent).

Pay & time

- Exempt/non-exempt classification reviewed for every role in the last 12 months.
- Overtime paid at the higher of federal or state rules.
- Meal and rest break rules met where required.
- Timekeeping records complete for the retention window your state requires.
- Final-pay timing procedure documented for terminations.

Policies & training

- Handbook reviewed within the last 12 months and reflects current law.
- Anti-harassment training current for all jurisdictions where you employ people.
- Safety training tied to actual workplace hazards, with completion records.
- Data handling and privacy policy in place if you touch regulated data.

Recordkeeping & audits

- Personnel and medical files stored separately, access controlled.
- Payroll, timekeeping, I-9, and benefits records retained for the required periods.
- Termination decisions supported by documented performance history.
- Annual self-audit run and remediation items tracked to closure.

Where software actually helps

- HRIS / payroll: automates classification prompts, pay calculations, and retention windows.

- [] Applicant tracking: standardizes hiring paperwork and captures required disclosures.
 - [] Learning management: assigns, tracks, and stores training completions per employee.
 - [] Compliance monitoring: flags posting, notice, and law changes so you don't have to watch every state.
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Run the interactive audit at charleshackney.com. Informational only — not legal advice. Consult employment counsel for your specific situation.