

## Worksheet: Employment Termination Checklist

At some point, you may decide to let an employee go. In most cases, Missouri's employment-at-will doctrine enables employees and employers to sever employment relationships at any time for any reason. Use this worksheet to verify that you have the authority to end an employment arrangement and that you follow the appropriate steps to dismiss an employee.

Employee name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 1: Confirm that discharging the employee would be legal.

Because Missouri has adopted the employment-at-will doctrine, most employment relationships can be terminated at any time for any reason. Three exceptions apply. If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, then the dismissal would be unlawful. Consider seeking legal advice if you're unsure about how to answer these three questions or how to proceed with dismissing an employee.

- Does the employee have an employment contract that bars dismissal at this time?
- Did discrimination motivate the termination?
- Does a merit law or limited public policy exception apply?

*(Find more about these exceptions at [labor.mo.gov/media/pdf/lr-29-ai](http://labor.mo.gov/media/pdf/lr-29-ai).)*

### Step 2: Pay final wages.

You must pay final wages when you dismiss an employee. If you miss this deadline, then your farm could be responsible for paying additional wages or defending a legal case brought by the former employee to collect unpaid wages.

### Step 3: Report dismissal.

For any terminated employee who is subject to a wage withholding from the Missouri Department of Social Services' Family Support Division, you must alert the agency within 10 days of dismissing the employee.

### Step 4: Check insurance requirements.

Farms that offer group health plans may need to provide continued health insurance coverage to terminated employees. If you offer a group health plan, then verify whether you must comply with COBRA mandates.

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