Preparation Worksheet

Use this worksheet to organize one focused HR document and the context a thoughtful review needs.

01 START HERE

BUSINESS NAME _____

YOUR NAME AND ROLE _____

BEST EMAIL _____

DOCUMENT TITLE _____

02 CHOOSE THE DOCUMENT

Select one primary item for this review. If related documents matter, list them in the next section.

- ☐ Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
- ☐ Employee handbook or policy
- ☐ Investigation notes
- ☐ Job description
- ☐ Attendance policy
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Written warning or disciplinary write-up
- ☐ Termination letter
- ☐ Performance review
- ☐ Offer letter
- ☐ Employee communication
- ☐ Draft not yet shared with employee

03 GATHER THE SUPPORTING CONTEXT

- ☐ Short factual timeline
- ☐ Prior related documentation
- ☐ Notes from key conversations
- ☐ Relevant policy or procedure
- ☐ Past practice or comparable situation
- ☐ Names/roles needed to understand context

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Put the facts in order

Keep your answers concise and factual. Separate what you know from what you assume or still need to verify.

04 THE FACTUAL TIMELINE

What happened? Include key dates, who was involved, and what was said or documented.

05 THE DECISION IN FRONT OF YOU

What outcome or next step are you considering?

06 QUESTIONS FOR THE REVIEW

What are the two or three most important questions you want the review to answer?

07 TIMING AND FINAL CHECK

Is there a deadline or timing issue the reviewer should understand?

- ☐ I removed or redacted personal and sensitive information not needed for the review.
- ☐ I kept the original document and will share a copy.
- ☐ I included only information relevant to this focused review.
- ☐ I understand the review is HR process and documentation guidance, not legal advice.

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Check your readiness

Two short self-checks on paperwork small businesses get asked about most. If you can't check a box today, note it in Section 06 — that's what the review can help you organize.

08 CONTRACTOR CLASSIFICATION READINESS

Federal rules on who counts as an independent contractor are in final review. Whatever the final rule says, the businesses that fare best are the ones that can show their work. Check what you could document today:

- ☐ A written agreement for every contractor that describes the work and the relationship
- ☐ Notes on how much control you set over when, where, and how the work gets done
- ☐ Pay records showing the contractor is paid by the job or project — not like an employee on payroll
- ☐ Evidence the contractor works for other clients and can show a profit or a loss
- ☐ How long the arrangement has lasted, and whether it was meant to be temporary
- ☐ A short written record of why you classified the worker this way

09 PERSONNEL-FILE READINESS

New York's personnel-records law (Section 210-b) puts deadlines on employee file requests. Even outside New York, these are sound habits. Check what your business could do today:

- ☐ Produce a complete copy of an employee's personnel file within 5 business days of a written request
- ☐ Notify an employee within 10 business days when negative information goes into their file
- ☐ Attach the employee's written rebuttal to disputed information so it travels with the file
- ☐ Keep personnel records for at least 3 years after an employee leaves
- ☐ Know exactly where every personnel file is kept — and who can access it

BRING THIS PAGE If either check raised a question, bring this page with your worksheet.

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