



# FACT SHEET

WYOMING LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE

## CONTENTS OF PERSONNEL FILES

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by

Danielle Creech, Associate Research Analyst

This fact sheet provides information on items commonly included in employee personnel files. A personnel file is defined as “the employment file containing personal information relevant to the employee’s employment which is maintained by the agency Human Resource Office.”<sup>1</sup> Human resources departments are often tasked with determining what to include within an employee’s personnel file. As such, the Wyoming Department of Administration and Information (A&I) maintains a *Personnel Records Policy* which details the purpose, definition, and required contents of State employee personnel files.<sup>2</sup> The policy also provides information on other personnel records such as medical files and other employee documents that are not required to be kept within a personnel file. A&I requires the employing agency to maintain medical files in a separate file.

The A&I Policy requires personnel files to contain, at minimum, the following “core” documents:

- Original and most current signed job application;
- Employment agreements, letters documenting job offers and job changes (promotions, transfers, demotions, and temporary assignments);
- Payroll/personnel information forms completed when an employee is initially hired;
- Payroll/personnel change forms completed during employment;
- Consent to payroll deductions;
- Signed acknowledgements of rules, policies, procedures and executive orders;
- W-4 and other tax withholding forms;
- Automatic payroll deposit authorization;
- Performance appraisal reports;
- All disciplinary actions;
- Termination records;
- Attendance and leave records;
- Positive/negative correspondence received on the employee;
- Employment status documentation such as at-will, probationary, and temporary;
- Awards and recognitions of employee; and
- Other documentation approved by the agency human resource manager or designated representative.

<sup>1</sup> Section 6, State of Wyoming Personnel Records Policy

<sup>2</sup> [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xdHaTxJtph56JAz3DuuOF8CjmN\\_O4WgF/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xdHaTxJtph56JAz3DuuOF8CjmN_O4WgF/view)

As a comparison, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) lists the most important documents to include within a personnel file, which includes the following:

- Application and/or resume;
- Offer of employment letter;
- Job description;
- Confidentiality, noncompete, or other employment agreements;
- New-hire checklist;
- Handbook acknowledgement;
- Drug testing policy acknowledgement and consent form;
- Background check consent form;
- Performance evaluations;
- Self-evaluations;
- Disciplinary warnings and performance improvement plans;
- Notes to file regarding verbal counseling/discipline;
- Awards or recognition for exemplary performance;
- Required training/certification;
- New-hire orientation checklist;
- New-hire safety training checklist;
- Job-specific training checklist;
- Harassment training acknowledgement;
- Resignation letter;
- Notes about reason for separation;
- Exit interview;
- Separation checklist;
- Unemployment documents;
- Separation agreement;
- Post-termination correspondence; and
- Reference release form and reference statements.

The Society for Human Resource Management also provides a list of documents that should not be stored within the personnel file, which includes:

- I-9 forms and copies of identification;
- Investigation notes and reports;
- Drug test and background check results;
- Payroll records containing social security numbers or other protected information, including W-4s and garnishment orders;
- Medical records including medical exams, disability benefits claim forms, notes from doctors, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave records, requests for ADA accommodations, worker's compensation claims and related documents, EAP referrals, results of drug/alcohol tests, reimbursement requests for medical expenses, health-related information about an employee's family members, and any documentation about past or present health, medical condition, or disabilities;
- Confidential records including anything that has protected or sensitive information such as a date of birth, marital status, religious beliefs, etc.;

- Consumer-related credit information, credit reports, and personal or financial data.

A&I Policy includes many of the same required documents as those recommended by the Society for Human Resource Management. Some of the SHRM-recommended documents not specifically included in A&I policy are employee self-evaluations, new-hire safety checklists, job-specific training checklists, drug policy acknowledgement and consent forms, background check consent forms, and harassment training acknowledgements.