

CALIFORNIA HR GENERAL CHECKLIST

For Small to Mid-Sized Businesses

Hiring & Onboarding

- Offer letter
- Wage Theft Prevention Notice (Labor Code 2810.5)
- I-9 Form completed within 3 business days
- W-4 and DE-4 (CA tax form)
- New Hire Reporting within 20 days (EDD)
- Signed employee handbook acknowledgment
- Anti-Harassment Training (required if 5+ employees)
- Sick leave policy compliant with CA Paid Sick Leave
- Provide notice of Workers' Compensation carrier
- Post required notices (can be digital or physical if remote)

Wages & Payroll

- Comply with CA minimum wage & local ordinances
- Provide wage statements with all required details (Labor Code 226)
- Overtime paid properly (1.5x after 8 hrs/day or 40 hrs/week)
- Meal & rest break policies followed and documented
- Keep accurate time records for non-exempt employees
- Pay final wages immediately (terminated) or within 72 hours (voluntary quit)

Termination

- Final paycheck includes all wages, vacation, and bonuses
- Provide "Notice to Employee as to Change in Relationship"
- COBRA or Cal-COBRA notices if benefits were offered
- Exit interview (optional, but helpful)
- Keep termination documentation on file

Record keeping

- Personnel files retained for at least 4 years
- I-9 forms stored separately and retained for 3 years
- Payroll records kept for 3+ years
- Wage statements & timecards kept for 3+ years
- Injury/illness logs (if required) maintained for 5 years