

Are employer's verbal promises binding?

Q. Can I rely on verbal promises made by my employer during my interview, or during my employment as forming part of my contract of employment?

A. Unless you have a written contract, the answer is generally no. In some very limited circumstances, an employer could create a contract by an employee's reasonable reliance on promises made during an employment interview or during employment.

Therefore, all employees who interview candidates on behalf of an employer should be careful to refrain from making any promises regarding the employment relationship. In particular, they should not say anything that could be interpreted as promising that an individual will be employed for a certain length of time or that is otherwise inconsistent with the concept of at-will employment.