

Make employment applications stronger with these 5 add-ons

No federal law dictates what information must be included on employment applications. However, there are certain statements you may want to include, not only to give applicants clear information about your company, but also to protect yourself legally.

1. **Employment-at-will statement.** Indicate that the applicant, if hired, will be subject to employment-at-will. In other words, the employee may leave at any time and you may terminate the employee at any time, with or without cause.
2. **Disclaimer statement.** Inform applicants that the employment application, as well as other hiring documents, do not create an employment contract.
3. **False information statement.** Advise applicants that employees who make false statements on their résumé or job application may be subject to termination. Such a statement will encourage a prospective employee to fill out the form accurately.
4. **Reference release.** Ask applicants to sign an information release form that gives you permission to check references. Keep the original in the applicant's file and distribute copies to people who request one before they provide a reference.
5. **Work authorization statement.** Indicate that applicants will be required to furnish proof of identity and eligibility to work in the United States upon their first day of work (or once a job offer has been made and accepted).

Include a waiver

Increase the likelihood that a court will agree that applicants knowingly and intelligently signed a waiver of their rights in an employment application by:

1. Making sure the waiver is clearly written and easy to understand. If you don't understand the waiver, applicants won't either. Courts take into consideration the individuals' experience, background and education. Break exceedingly long sentences into several shorter ones; replace legal jargon with plain speak; and define terms specific to waivers, such as "consideration" and "revocation rights."
2. Setting the waiver apart from other text within the application. Use boldface type, a different font, all caps, borders, shading, and/or a bigger point size.
3. Including with the application a stand-alone document detailing the type of process employees would receive in place of a judicial proceeding. Walk applicants through the process step-by-step. Tip: Require applicants to acknowledge receipt and understanding of this document, too, in addition to the application form waiver itself.