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Issue Six

IN THIS ISSUE


Blog Corner: Bank Relationships & Alternative Financing

Benefits of Contracting with a PEO

Payroll Corner

Preparing a Workplace for an Influenza Pandemic

Tip of the Day

 Success endures and overcomes multiple failures. Learn from mistakes and grow. Don't dwell on them and fade.

New tips daily at
FourPointHR.com.



BLOG CORNER: Bank Relationships & Alternative Financing

Stay connected to
Four Point HR. Post a
response on this
issue and others on
our blog at
fourpointhr.com/peo.

Now that the power brokers among the Wall Street and D.C. elite seem to be working together to renew the flow of funds into the economy, we see the rampant fear and paranoia beginning to subside. The regulators have rightly toned down their headhunting business rhetoric and the financiers seem to understand that they have to tighten their belts, deal with their sins of the past and get onto the business of finance. Today, most businesses have felt the sting of our difficult times and have responded as quickly as possible to preserve their capital, their business health and their sanity. I can't help feeling like we are staged in the doctor's waiting room, unsure if we are about to get news or bad news about our business health. Most of the business owners I meet with regularly have had their external credit sources shrink drastically or disappear entirely. This leaves very little margin for error to attempt any future-oriented operations requiring capital.

That being said, do you have a bank relationship or alternative financing relationship that is extending credit to your business? If so, how did you go about finding this relationship and developing the terms that you have today?



BENEFITS OF CONTRACTING WITH A PEO

PROFESSIONAL
EMPLOYER
ORGANIZATION

Four Point HR offers businesses an important competitive advantage. We assume non-revenue producing and time consuming compliance activities including payroll, risk management, human resources and benefits administration for our clients and enable them to concentrate on their day-to-day operations without the challenge of keeping up with the frequently changing federal and state compliance issues.

For instance, in the last four months alone, there have been four major federal law changes: FACTA, COBRA Subsidy, ADA and FMLA regulations. A summary of these changes is listed below and has been detailed in prior issues of our newsletter:

FACTA - Provides rules on the handling and disposal of sensitive employee and employer information.

COBRA Subsidy – Enables an employee who has been involuntarily terminated to continue participation in the employer's group health plan at a reduction of 65% of the total premium. This temporary act is effective from 9/1/08 – 12/31/09 and applies to both small and large employer group health plans.

ADA – Changes the definition of a disability. For example, major life functions are now defined as sleeping, reading and concentrating. Bodily functions are characterized as cell growth and reproductive functions. In short, if the disability is in question, the employee is likely covered under the ADA. Possible litigation liability focuses on the employee's qualifications, essential job functions and accommodations needed for the employee.

FMLA – Rewrites the FMLA act, specifically changing the posting and filing time requirements. The law was effective 1/16/09 and the 50-employee minimum applies to the client location only.

Please contact Four Point HR for more information on the following human resources and benefits services:

- Access to HR expertise and materials
- Clear, easy to read state/federal compliant employee handbooks, policies, and procedures
- Benefit administration including claim advocacy for employees
- 401(k), flexible spending accounts and comprehensive insurance benefits
- Professional assistance with Human Resources issues
- Current information on state and federal labor regulations



Payroll Corner

We trust that you have been enjoying the additional money in your paychecks as a result of the new tax tables. The Stimulus package allowed for a tax credit of \$600.00 (single) or \$800.00 (married) to be issued throughout the year. This credit is reflected via a tax reduction of your earnings, rather than through distribution in a lump sum check. This credit is taxable and must be included when you file your taxes. It is important to note that the credit is given to all working individuals and is not limited to one per household if both partners in a marriage are employed. A dual-employed married couple will each receive \$800.00 for a total household credit of \$1,600.00. (This provides that both checked "married" on their withholding forms.)

Four Point HR cannot provide accounting guidance or advice, but we do suggest that you pass this information to your employees. They can check with their appropriate tax specialist regarding withholding guidelines for 2009 to avoid any potential tax issue when they file their taxes next year.

As a heads up, July 24th is the last installment of the minimum wage increase. Effective that day, the minimum wage will increase to \$7.25 per hour. You do not need to submit any new paperwork to Four Point HR and we will notify you if any of your employees will be affected by this increase. An employee due this increase must have all hours split on their payroll submission for that pay period to reflect the different pay rates.

For example -

- John Smith, prior to the minimum wage rate change, earned \$6.55 per hour
- He worked 37 hours for the pay period 7/19/09 – 7/25/09
- His workweek is Monday-Friday and he worked 7 hours on Friday, 7/24
- John must be paid \$6.55 (his previous rate) for the hours worked Monday through Thursday and \$7.25 (new rate) for the hours worked on Friday
- Submission would be 30 hours at \$6.55 and 7 hours at \$7.25

If you have questions regarding the new minimum wage rate or the submission of hours, please contact your Client Relationship Manger

It is not too early for your employees to verify the personal information on their checks. When distributing June paychecks, request that your staff check all information for accuracy including their address. Four Point HR added a note on this topic to paychecks last year. It was very successful and we will duplicate the effort later this year.



Preparing A Workplace for an Influenza Pandemic

What is an Influenza Pandemic?

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. An influenza pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity in the human population, begins to cause serious illness and spreads easily person-to-person worldwide.

What is Swine Influenza?

Swine Influenza (swine flu / H1N1 virus) is a respiratory disease caused by type A influenza virus that causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. This flu virus, first isolated from a pig in 1930, causes high levels of illness and low death rates in pigs. Swine influenza viruses may circulate among swine throughout the year, but most outbreaks occur during the late fall and winter months similar to outbreaks in humans.

Can humans catch swine flu?

Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans, however sporadic human infections with swine flu have occurred. Most commonly, these cases occur in persons with direct exposure to pigs (e.g. children near pigs at a fair or workers in the swine industry). In addition, there have been documented cases of one person spreading swine flu to others. For example, an outbreak of apparent swine flu infection in pigs in Wisconsin in 1988 resulted in multiple human infections, and, although no community outbreak resulted, there was antibody evidence of virus transmission from the patient to health care workers who had close contact with the patient.

What are the symptoms of swine flu in humans?

The symptoms of swine flu in people are expected to be similar to the symptoms of regular human seasonal influenza and include fever, lethargy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people with swine flu also have reported runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Precautions:

The main way that illness like colds and flu are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This happens when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air and land on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes germs also spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands. Some viruses and bacteria live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, phones, elevator buttons, and keyboards.

- Wash hands often with soap or an alcohol-based hand cleaner if soap and water is not available. Use a paper towel, after washing hands, to turn doorknobs to avoid the same infection.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid shaking hands when people are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Avoid licking fingers before picking up sheets of paper.
- Do not share pens, telephones, keyboards, eating utensils, drinking glasses and towels.
- Do not visit relatives or friends if they have symptoms of cold or flu.
- Tell employee's to stay at home if they are sick.

Planning for pandemic influenza by business and industry is essential to minimize a pandemic's impact. Companies have a special responsibility to plan for continued operation in a crisis and should plan accordingly. As with any catastrophe, having a contingency plan is essential.