

Payroll Records – Overview

The term ‘payroll records’ refers to any information about the compensations paid to employees of your organization, and any deductions from their pay¹. Examples of the type of information that is typically included in a payroll record include:

- Employee Identification (Name, Social Security, Employee ID, etc.)
- Salary Rates
- Hours Worked
- Gross Wages Earned
- Net Wages Paid
- Vacation and/or Sick Pay
- Deductions to pay (i.e. pension/401K contributions, benefits, charitable contributions, garnishments, etc.)

You may also want to include the following information in your payroll records, as applicable:

- Manual check payemnts
- Bereavement pay
- Bonuses
- Commissions
- Direct Deposit Authorization Forms
- Position type (exempt vs. non-exempt)

Payroll records can be kept electronically or as paper files. Traditionally, they are kept as part of an employee’s HR personnel file, however, it’s likely that this informatio is also stored in your payroll processesing system and may be downloadable as an aggregate report.

¹ <https://www.accountingtools.com/articles/what-are-payroll-records.html>

What Goes Into A Payroll Record?

You should keep many documents in an employee's payroll file. What is a payroll record supposed to include, exactly? In general, if something helps you run payroll, put it in the payroll file.

The following is a checklist of things you might keep in each employee's individual payroll record:

General Info

- Employee's full name
- Social Security number
- Complete address
- Birth date (if younger than 19)
- Sex
- Occupation
- Offer letter (signed by you and employee)

Time Related

- Time and day when workweek begins
- Time and attendance records
- Total hours worked each day
- Total hours worked each workweek

Pay Related

- Rate you pay the employee
- Regular pay rate
- Total daily straight-time earnings
- Total overtime earnings for workweek
- Additions to the wages (e.g., bonus pay)
- Expense reimbursement forms
- Raise documentation
- Payroll advance agreements
- Payroll deductions (e.g., employee benefits)
- Form W-4
- Income withholding orders
- Pay records
- Date wages are paid
- Time off history
- Remaining time off
- Direct deposit authorization
- Form W-2