



PRO SE / SELF-REPRESENTED GUIDE

Wage Claim Exhibit Guide

Owed unpaid wages, overtime, or final paycheck? Organize your employment records to recover the money you earned.

Workers have the right to be paid for all hours worked, including overtime. Whether you're filing with your state labor board or going to court, documented evidence of your work and pay is essential. This guide helps you organize records to prove what you're owed.

Employment Documentation

- Offer letter or employment contract**
Shows agreed wage rate and terms
- Employee handbook**
Company policies on pay, overtime, time off
- Job description**
Your official duties and classification
- Termination letter**
If you were fired, the written notice

Time & Attendance Records

- Time cards or time sheets**
Records showing hours you worked
- Work schedule**
Posted schedules or schedule messages
- Personal time log**
Your own record of hours worked (if employer records are wrong)
- Clock-in/clock-out records**
Electronic time system records if available

Pay Documentation

- Pay stubs**
All pay stubs showing wages, hours, deductions
- Bank deposit records**
Direct deposit statements showing actual pay received
- W-2 or 1099 forms**
Tax documents showing annual earnings
- Promised bonus documentation**
Emails or documents showing bonus promises

Communications

- Emails about pay or hours**
Any discussions about your wages or schedule
- Text messages from supervisor**
Work instructions, overtime requests
- Written complaints about pay**
Any complaints you made to HR or management
- Responses from employer**
How employer responded to your concerns

Calculation Support

- Wage calculation worksheet**
Your calculation of unpaid wages owed
- Minimum wage rate documentation**
State and local minimum wage rates when you worked
- Overtime rate documentation**
Proof of correct overtime rate (usually 1.5x regular)

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. Not keeping your own records of hours worked
2. Waiting too long to file (wage claims have short deadlines)
3. Not calculating exactly how much you are owed
4. Forgetting to include all types of unpaid compensation (tips, commissions, bonuses)
5. Not filing with the labor board first (often required before lawsuit)

ORGANIZATION TIPS

- Keep copies of every pay stub and employment document
- Take photos of posted schedules and time records
- Create a spreadsheet calculating exact amounts owed by pay period
- Document the date you first complained about the pay issue
- Save all work-related text messages and emails

COURTROOM PREPARATION

- File with your state labor board - they investigate for free
- Calculate your claim precisely: regular wages + overtime + penalties
- Know if your state has waiting time penalties or interest
- Bring evidence of your regular rate of pay
- Be prepared to explain your job duties (for overtime exemption issues)
- Consider whether coworkers were also affected (potential class action)

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