

01.11.09

ASK THE EXPERTS

A weekly Q&A where CareerBuilder experts offer advancement strategies.

I am a company owner. My employee left work after working his scheduled shift, but he abandoned his job and never returned. The employee also left behind personal property. What are my responsibilities regarding the employee's last paycheck and the personal property he left behind?

John Flynn
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An Arizona employer must pay wages earned to the employee up to and through the termination date no later



John Flynn

than the next regular pay period, unless the wages are undetermined at the time of termination, such as bonuses or commissions. I recommend you send a letter with the final paycheck to the former employee (preferably via certified mail) confirming the job abandonment, the wages paid, and include your company's normal termination documentation. That letter should also confirm the personal property left behind and instruct the former employee to contact an identified representative to arrange for retrieval before a reasonable date certain, after which the employer will dispose of the property. If the property hasn't been retrieved or a retrieval date/time scheduled, the employer doesn't have an obligation to indefinitely store the property or incur any shipping expense. Finally, always make certain you have a solid paper trail in your file.