

Ending Employment

How you end employment can send a powerful message to your remaining employees, therefore it is important to proceed legally and ethically, and keep termination as a last resort. However, there may come a time when the wellbeing of your business and other employees depends on termination of an employee. Below are some guidelines and considerations when you have an employee who is not meeting your expectations.

* Will vs. Skill

Understand the reason an employee is not meeting expectations. If it is due to skill, can they be trained?

* Does the employee know there is a problem?

If an employee is not meeting your expectations, it needs to be addressed directly to the employee. Allow them an opportunity to correct the behavior, mistake, etc.

* Document

Document events as they occur, date all notes, describe event in factual terms.

* Remain consistent in discipline

Be sure all employees are treated equally.

* Termination should not be a surprise

Using progressive discipline lets an employee know that termination is the result if improvement is not made. For egregious situations, immediate termination may be warranted. In either case this should be a thoughtful, rational, business decision.

* During the termination meeting
  + Two managers should be present if possible (not a coworker)
  + Give brief reason for termination – be sure they understand the decision is final
  + Give final paycheck, explain benefits due
  + Don’t counsel, apologize or argue with the employee.
* Retain employee’s privacy

Privacy is an important consideration in Montana. Do not share information regarding the termination with coworkers or customers.

The Billings Job Service can help you with any step in this process. Call 655-6047 or email [tbennert@mt.gov](mailto:tbennert@mt.gov) for one on one assistance.

