

Hiring your First Employee *in British Columbia*

A practical starting point for new businesses | Columbia Valley HR

Hiring your first team member is an exciting milestone but it also comes with new responsibilities as an employer. While every business is different, there are some key areas that new employers in British Columbia should be aware of when bringing someone onto their team.

This overview is designed as a general starting point to help first-time business owners understand what to think about next. It is informational only as requirements can vary depending on your industry, business size, and employment setup.



1

Getting Set Up as an Employer

- Registering for a CRA payroll account
- Setting up payroll software or working with a bookkeeper
- Understanding employer deductions (CPP, EI, income tax)
- Determining whether the worker is an employee or contractor
- Confirming applicable provincial registrations if required

Before your new hire starts, make sure your business is registered and ready to legally employ staff. Building a strong foundation from the start is crucial for long-term success and compliance

2

Employment Agreements & Key Documents

- Written employment agreement or offer letter
- Job description outlining expectations
- Workplace policies (basic conduct, scheduling, time off, etc.)
- Confidentiality or workplace standards where relevant

Clear documentation helps protect both you and your employees from misunderstandings. In BC, employment agreements should align with the Employment Standards Act and Human Rights legislation. Templates found online are often incomplete or risky if not reviewed.

3**Workplace
Health & Safety
(OHS) Basics**

- Identifying Hazards
- Employee Orientation
- Incident Reporting Process
- Health & Safety Representative (if required)

Even small teams have responsibilities under WorkSafeBC. Safety expectations vary widely by industry, so what applies to a retail shop may look very different from construction or hospitality.

4**Payroll, Records
& Onboarding**

- Tax Forms (TD1, TD1-BC)
- Payroll Setup
- Pay Structure
- Onboarding and Orientation

Good record keeping protects your business and helps avoid compliance issues later. Having even a light structure early on can save significant time and stress as your team grows.

5**Common Pitfalls
for First Time
Employers**

- Using Generic Templates
- Employee/Contractor Misclassification
- Lack of Documentation
- Missing Safety Planning
- Waiting Too Long for HR Support

Starting simple, but thoughtfully, can help avoid costly adjustments later.

Need Support Setting Things Up?

If you're unsure where to start, a short intake or document review can help identify what applies specifically to your business. Please don't hesitate to contact us at Columbia Valley HR if you have any questions or would like to set up a no obligation, free 30 minute consultation.

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