

For both legal and operational purposes, growers and FLCs are wise to put their agreements in writing, to help avoid misunderstandings and to manifest the independence of the two entities. One example of a fairly extensive written agreement is online at *AgHelpWanted.org*.



Personnel Records

Accurate personnel records can inform day-to-day administration, as well as longer term planning decisions. Contents of a full file for each employee would document pre-employment and on-the-job events. A file could include all of the following:

- Completed application or new employee information form
- Report of selection interview and/or test results
- Reference check findings
- Documentation of job offer, with terms, conditions, and acceptance
- History of jobs performed and salary adjustments in this business
- Job description of current position
- Tax exemptions and deductions
- Performance evaluations
- Record of education and training (certificates, independent study, etc.)
- Disciplinary actions
- Suggestions and grievances filed
- Notice of resignation
- Dismissal notice
- Exit interview report
- Other confidential information

Good payroll management is vital to maintaining good relationships with both employees and government agencies. Payroll service firms are equipped to efficiently generate checks, stubs detailing deductions, and records and to keep up with any changes in reporting and withholding rules. Most agricultural employers find it worthwhile to use such services. Computer programs are available to simplify payroll preparation for those who prefer to keep the function in-house.

Most laws that require creation of employee records also set minimum periods of time to retain them on file. A summary of federal requirements for retention of various documents can be found at *AgHelpWanted.org*.

