

SS-8 Determination—Determination for Public Inspection

Occupation 02OFF Receptionist	Determination: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor
UILC	Third Party Communication: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

I have read Notice 441 and am requesting:

- Additional redactions based on categories listed in section entitled "Deletions We May Have Made to Your Original Determination Letter"
- Delay based on an on-going transaction
- 90 day delay

For IRS Use Only:

Facts of Case

The worker initiated the request for a determination of her work status as a receptionist in tax year 2017, for which she received Form 1099-MISC. The firm's business is described as an accounting and tax service.

The firm's response was signed by the owner. The firm's business is seasonal income tax preparation. The worker, a college student, provided secretarial, clerical, housekeeping, running errands, etc. services, as seasonal temporary work.

The firm and worker concur that the firm provided instructions as to scheduling of appointments and approaching clients. The firm provided a list of tasks each day. The firm stated the worker determined the methods by which she performed her services; the worker disagreed. Any problems or complaints encountered by the worker were directed to the firm for resolution. The worker's services were rendered 3 days a week and an occasional Saturday on the firm's premises. The worker was not required to perform the services personally; any additional personnel were hired and paid by the firm.

Both parties acknowledged that the firm provided a desk, phone, appointment book. The worker indicated she provided nothing; the firm stated she furnished a car, computer, supplies. The worker did not lease equipment, space, or a facility. The worker was paid a daily rate plus reimbursement for mileage and any other expenses deemed relevant. The customers paid the firm. The worker was not covered under the firm's workers' compensation insurance policy. The worker was not at risk for a financial loss in this work relationship. The firm stated the worker established the level of payment for services provided; the worker disagreed.

The firm and worker agree that there were no benefits extended to the worker and either party could terminate the work relationship without incurring a liability or penalty. The firm stated the worker was performing same or similar services for others during the same time frame; the worker disagreed. The worker was referred to as the receptionist/clerical helper. The work relationship ceased because worker was not available due to her college schedule.

Analysis

A worker who is required to comply with another person's instructions about when, where, and how he or she is to work is ordinarily an employee. This control factor is present if the person or persons for whom the services are performed have the right to require compliance with instructions. Some employees may work without receiving instructions because they are highly proficient and conscientious workers or because the duties are so simple or familiar to them. Furthermore, the instructions, that show how to reach the desired results, may have been oral and given only once at the beginning of the relationship.

Payment by the hour, week, or month generally points to an employer-employee relationship, provided that this method of payment is not just a convenient way of paying a lump sum agreed upon as the cost of a job. In such instances, the firm assumes the hazard that the services of the worker will be proportionate to the regular payments. This action warrants the assumption that, to protect its investment, the firm has the right to direct and control the performance of the workers. Also, workers are assumed to be employees if they are guaranteed a minimum salary or are given a drawing account of a specified amount that need not be repaid when it exceeds earnings.

A person who can realize a profit or suffer a loss as a result of his or her services is generally an independent contractor, while the person who cannot is an employee. "Profit or loss" implies the use of capital by a person in an independent business of his or her own. The risk that a worker will not receive payment for his or her services, however, is common to both independent contractors and employees and, thus, does not constitute a sufficient economic risk to support treatment as an independent contractor. If a worker loses payment from the firm's customer for poor work, the firm shares the risk of such loss. Control of the firm over the worker would be necessary in order to reduce the risk of financial loss to the firm. The opportunity for higher earnings or of gain or loss from a commission arrangement is not considered profit or loss.

We have considered the information provided by both parties to this work relationship. In this case, the firm retained the right to change the worker's methods and to direct the worker to the extent necessary to protect its financial investment and business reputation and to ensure its customers' satisfaction. The worker was not operating a separate and distinct business; the worker did not invest capital or assume business risks, and therefore, did not have the opportunity to realize a profit or incur a loss as a result of the services provided. Integration of the worker's services into the business operations generally shows that the worker is subject to direction and control. When the success or continuation of a business depends to an appreciable degree upon the performance of certain services, the workers who perform those services must necessarily be subject to a certain amount of control by the owner of the business. In this case, the worker was not engaged in an independent enterprise, but rather the services performed by the worker were a necessary and integral part of the firm's business.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis, we conclude that the firm had the right to exercise direction and control over the worker to the degree necessary to establish that the worker was a common law employee, and not an independent contractor operating a trade or business. For federal income tax withholding and social security, Medicare, and federal unemployment (FUTA) tax purposes, there are no differences among full-time employees, part-time employees, and employees hired for short periods.