

**SS-8 Determination—Determination for Public Inspection**

Occupation 03MIS Miscellaneous Laborers	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 submitted a request for a determination of worker status in regard to services performed for the payer from June 2019 to September 2019. The services performed included framing storage sheds as directed by the payer. The payer issued the worker Form 1099-MISC for 2019. The worker filed Form SS-8 as he believes he received Form 1099-MISC in error.

The payer's response states its business is organic hay and blueberries. The worker was engaged to construct a new onsite building. The worker was classified as an independent contractor as construction is outside of the payer's scope of business. It advertised for construction workers, they signed Form W-9, and were made aware they were contractors. A written agreement was not applicable.

The payer stated it did not provide the worker specific training or instruction. The worker determined the methods by which assignments were performed. If problems or complaints arose, the payer's farm manager was contacted and assumed responsibility for problem resolution. Reports and meetings were not required. The worker's routine consisted of doing construction at the payer's premises. The payer did not require the worker to personally perform services. The worker was responsible for hiring and paying substitutes or helpers. The worker stated the payer's job foreman provided instruction and work assignments. The payer determined the methods by which assignments were performed. Time clock reports were required. His routine consisted of four, ten-hour days each week. The payer required he personally perform services.

The payer stated it provided all building materials and some tools. The worker also provided tools. The worker did not lease equipment, space, or a facility. The worker did not incur expenses in the performance of services for the payer. Customer payment was not applicable. The payer paid the worker an hourly rate of pay; a drawing account for advances was not allowed. The payer did not carry workers' compensation insurance on the worker. The worker did not incur economic loss or financial risk. The worker did not establish the level of payment for the services provided. The worker stated the payer provided all materials and tools. The payer established the level of payment for the services provided.

The payer stated benefits were not made available to the worker. The work relationship could be terminated by either party without incurring liability or penalty. The worker did not perform similar services for others during the period in question. There was no agreement prohibiting competition between the parties. It is unknown if the worker advertised. The work relationship ended when the job was completed. The worker stated he did not advertise.

The payer's contractor application states, in part, the payer was paying the worker as a contractor. It would issue Form 1099-MISC at year-end. If the worker wanted taxes withheld, he was to inform the office manager and she would provide the needed forms to withhold taxes and make payment to the IRS on the worker's behalf. The worker's unsigned Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification, documents his Social Security number; the individual/sole proprietor or single-member LLC box is checked. There is no employer identification number or business name reported.

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## Analysis

Generally, the relationship of employer and employee exists when the person for whom the services are performed has the right to control and direct the individual who performs the services, not only as to what is to be done, but also how it is to be done. It is not necessary that the employer actually direct or control the individual, it is sufficient if he or she has the right to do so.

Section 31.3121(d)-1(a)(3) of the regulations provides that if the relationship of an employer and employee exists, the designation or description of the parties as anything other than that of employer and employee is immaterial. Thus, if an employer-employee relationship exists, any contractual designation of the employee as a partner, coadventurer, agent, or independent contractor must be disregarded.

Therefore, the payer's statement that the worker was an independent contractor pursuant to a verbal agreement is without merit. For federal employment tax purposes, it is the actual working relationship that is controlling and not the terms of the contract (oral or written) between the parties. Furthermore, whether there is an employment relationship is a question of fact and not subject to negotiation between the parties.

Integration of the worker's services generally shows that the worker is subject to direction and control. In this case, the construction services performed by the worker were integral to the payer's business construction needs. The payer provided the work assignment and its farm manager was contacted and assumed responsibility for problem resolution. These facts evidence the payer retained the right to direct and control the worker to the extent necessary to ensure satisfactory job performance in a manner acceptable to the payer. Based on the worker's past work experience and work ethic the payer may not have needed to frequently exercise its right to direct and control the worker; however, the facts evidence the payer retained the right to do so if needed.

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 payer 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 payer 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. In this case, the worker did not invest capital or assume business risks. The term "significant investment" does not include tools, instruments, and clothing commonly provided by employees in their trade; nor does it include education, experience, or training. As acknowledged by the payer, the worker did not incur economic loss or financial risk. Based on the hourly rate of pay arrangement the worker could not realize a profit or incur a loss.

Factors that illustrate how the parties perceive their relationship include the intent of the parties as expressed in written contracts; the provision of, or lack of employee benefits; the right of the parties to terminate the relationship; the permanency of the relationship; and whether the services performed are part of the service recipient's regular business activities. 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 payer's construction needs. Both parties retained the right to terminate the work relationship at any time without incurring a liability. There is no evidence to suggest the worker performed similar services for others as an independent contractor or advertised business services to the general public during the term of this work relationship. The classification of a worker as an independent contractor should not be based primarily on the fact that a worker's services may be used on a temporary, part-time, or as-needed basis. As noted above, common law factors are considered when examining the worker classification issue.

Based on the above analysis, we conclude that the payer 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.

The payer can obtain additional information related to worker classification online at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov); Publication 4341.