

YOUR SMALL BUSINESS PAYROLL CHECKLIST

Use this checklist as a living reference. Revisit it every quarter, when you hire someone new, when you expand to a new province and at year-end.



Initial setup

- ☐ Register a CRA payroll account before your first payroll run
- ☐ Register with Revenu Québec if you operate in Québec
- ☐ Collect a federal TD1, any required provincial or territorial tax form, the employee's SIN and banking information for direct deposit
- ☐ Document your pay frequency, overtime policy, vacation pay structure and statutory holiday policy
- ☐ Build an annual payroll calendar with all remittance due dates

Ongoing payroll management

- ☐ Establish your pay schedule and share it with all employees
- ☐ Calculate and remit CPP, EI and income tax on schedule, every time
- ☐ Track vacation pay for every employee, every pay period
- ☐ Apply the correct statutory holiday pay rules for your province
- ☐ File ROEs by the required deadline (generally within five calendar days; timing varies by pay frequency and filing method)

Compliance and recordkeeping

- ☐ Stay current on changes to employment standards in every province where you have employees
- ☐ Keep payroll records for six years from the end of the tax year to which they relate
- ☐ Review contractor classifications regularly, at least every year
- ☐ Audit payroll math every quarter to catch gaps early

Year-end duties

- ☐ Check all remittances before you prepare T4s
- ☐ Distribute T4s to employees and file with the CRA by Feb. 28
- ☐ File Relevé 1 with Revenu Québec if applicable
- ☐ Review your payroll technology before the new year begins
- ☐ Confirm that key business supports, such as accounting, banking and payroll partners, are in place

Your payroll strategy starts here

For deeper guidance and insights, download [From Spark to Strategy: The Payroll Toolkit](#)

