



New US DOL Smartphone App Encourages Employees To Track Hours and Pay

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By Bill Pokorny

On May 9, 2011, the U.S. Department of Labor announced a free smartphone application designed to help employees independently track the hours they work and wages they are owed. The app allows users to enter their daily work hours manually or automatically using a timer, and to view and e-mail time reports. The DOL's press release makes it clear that the Department intends to use information employees record through this app in its enforcement efforts:

This new technology is significant because, instead of relying on their employers' records, workers now can keep their own records. This information could prove invaluable during a Wage and Hour Division investigation when an employer has failed to maintain accurate employment records.

In addition to recording work hours and calculating basic hourly wages, the app includes a prominent "contact us" button, with links that allow users to easily call or send an e-mail to the DOL's Wage & Hour Division.

The app is currently available in the app store for Apple iPhone and iPod Touch devices. The DOL says that it will "explore" versions for other platforms such as Android and Blackberry.

It will be interesting to see whether this app will play an important role in any wage and hour litigation or DOL enforcement activity. However, even if it turns out to be little more than a marketing gimmick, the fact that the DOL went to the effort to create its own app demonstrates the agency's new commitment to actively encouraging employees to file wage and hour complaints.

For employers, the message is clear: make sure you keep thorough, accurate records of your employees' hours and wages because, if you don't, someone else might.

More Information

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