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CHECKLIST

Payroll Process Readiness Checklist

A practical checklist for Australian small businesses to review the information, approvals and records needed for a dependable payroll process.

BEFORE YOU START

Payroll obligations depend on employment arrangements and circumstances. This checklist reviews process readiness only and does not replace workplace relations, tax or legal advice.

Process readiness, not award interpretation

Most payroll problems are process problems. Information arrives late, changes are not authorised, or nobody is clear about who approves the final pay run.

The prompts below focus on the process around payroll. Questions about rates, awards and entitlements belong with the Fair Work Ombudsman or an appropriate workplace adviser.

1. People and authorised information

- [ ] Confirm employee setup and approved changes are supplied through the agreed process.
- [ ] Confirm who in the business is authorised to supply and approve that information.

WHAT TO CHECK

The employer remains responsible for employment decisions and for the accuracy of the information supplied for processing.

2. Payroll timetable

- [ ] Confirm payroll frequency, the information cut-off and the approval timing.
- [ ] Identify who supplies changes and who approves the final payroll.

3. Employee records

- [ ] Check the required payroll records and pay-slip information are maintained as part of the payroll process.
- [ ] Check the official Fair Work guidance below for what records and pay-slip information apply to your situation.

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4. Leave and payroll changes

- [ ] Check approved leave, new starters, terminations and other authorised changes are captured before processing.
- [ ] Confirm how those changes are communicated and recorded.

> WATCH FOR
>
> Employment-law or award interpretation questions should go to the Fair Work Ombudsman or an appropriate workplace adviser.

5. Single Touch Payroll process

- [ ] Confirm the business has a documented process for STP reporting through its payroll software.
- [ ] Confirm who is responsible for checking submissions and correcting issues where needed.

6. Super process

- [ ] Confirm who prepares, approves, funds and checks super contributions.
- [ ] Confirm who follows up rejected or returned payments.

7. Payroll reconciliation

- [ ] Reconcile payroll totals and payroll liabilities to the accounting records.
- [ ] Investigate differences rather than carrying them forward unexplained.

8. Access and approvals

- [ ] Review payroll access, permissions and approval responsibilities.
- [ ] Use multifactor authentication where it is supported.
- [ ] Remove access promptly when people leave or change roles.

9. What sits outside the payroll processor

- Complex award interpretation, employment law and workplace relations advice may require specialist advice.
- Tax matters outside BAS-agent scope go to the appropriate registered tax agent.

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10. Final readiness question

NEXT STEP

Does the person processing payroll have complete, authorised information and a clear approval before the pay run is finalised?

Useful official links

Fair Work Ombudsman: Pay slips
https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-wages/paying-wages/pay-slips

Fair Work Ombudsman: Record-keeping
https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay-and-wages/paying-wages/record-keeping

Australian Taxation Office: Single Touch Payroll
https://www.ato.gov.au/businesses-and-organisations/hiring-and-paying-your-workers/single-touch-payroll

These links go to the official Australian sources. What applies depends on your circumstances, so confirm the detail with the relevant authority or an appropriate adviser.

WHAT NEXT?

If the payroll process needs steadying, or the setup and workflow behind it need a rethink, these are the natural next steps. If you would like help working through this, we can talk through where your numbers are now and what would help most. Book a free introductory call at www.loveyournumbers.com.au/contact.

This resource is general information only and is not advice about your specific situation. Confirm anything involving tax, GST, payroll, super or employment obligations with the appropriate registered adviser or authority. © 2026 Love Your Numbers Pty Ltd.

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