

Probationary Period Policy



A period of probation:

- Allows for the process of conducting reviews and assessing employee performance prior to granting full employee status
- Can help avoid future problems by finding out early on if the person and the job aren't a good fit
- Is for a specific amount of time (it may include guidelines around possible extensions)

The probationary period as outlined in your organization's policies should be stated in the letter of offer. The policy on probation may address performance reviews, details of communication, eligibility for benefits, the possibility of extending the probationary period, and termination including provisions for notice/severance if employment is terminated during the probationary period. Termination during or at the end of the probationary period should be in compliance with employment legislation.

All jurisdictions allow for a period of time at the beginning of employment when no notice of termination is required. However, if an organization has a probationary period that exceeds this period of time, notice or payment in lieu of notice is required. For example, in British Columbia, notice of termination is required after three months. Therefore an employer who decides to terminate an employee at the end of a six-month probationary period will have to give notice or payment in lieu in accordance with British Columbia employment standards.

It is important to sit down with the new hire to explain the details of the probationary period and to discuss expectations.