Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

issues, there's a lot that a payroll coordinator or specialist needs to know. To make sure your workers have the proficiency necessary to process payroll efficiently and ...

Apr. 18, 2018

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

Modern payroll is complicated. From cloud-based systems to tax and regulatory issues, there's a lot that a payroll coordinator or specialist needs to know. To make sure your workers have the proficiency necessary to process payroll efficiently and accurately, there is something company leaders like you can do: You can help them attain their payroll certifications.

Supporting your payroll staff is a smart move for your organization. Here are four ways payroll certifications can lead to a return on your investment:

1. Improved work quality

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

2. A standardized approach

Your payroll team includes people from diverse backgrounds. They may range from junior clerks to senior administrators, including those who've worked in other industries, larger or smaller companies, and multiple states. All of them have their own set of knowledge and best practices — some of which may be outdated or just plain wrong. After everyone goes through the same payroll certification program, they should all be on the same page about how the department works.

Looking for professionals who have their payroll certifications? Work with a specialized staffing agency to access temporary payroll specialists.

3. Loyalty and staff retention

Top performers want employers to invest in their professional development. Industry qualifications are major milestones in that development, providing a tangible reward after a long period of hard work. When you support employees during the certification process, allowing them to study on company time and paying for coursework and exam fees, they will feel that you value their contributions and professionalism. The results? Loyal, highly trained staff members and employee retention.

4. Greater commitment to payroll

With their attention to detail and compliance knowledge, good payroll professionals are frequently poached by other finance teams within the organization. But if your team members work toward and attain their certifications, they are, in essence, declaring their intention to make payroll a lifelong career.

Helping your team get certified

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

- Allowing them to study and take the exam on during work hours, cultivating your company culture.
- Sending them to American Payroll Association (APA) seminars and classes so they can accrue enough recertification credit hours (RCHs) to keep their payroll certifications up to date.

In the United States, the gold standards are the two issued by the APA. Some Canadian companies, especially those that also do business in the U.S., also value these credentials.

Fundamental Payroll Certification

The FPC is aimed at entry-level payroll workers with little or no experience in the field. The exam consists of 150 multiple-choice questions, and test takers must answer 80 percent of them correctly to receive this certification. FPC candidates normally study for six to 12 weeks before taking the exam, which is offered every quarter.

The exam covers a broad range of key topics, including core payroll concepts, compliance, calculating paychecks, payroll processes, payroll systems, payroll management, auditing and accounting. After attaining the FPC, employees should have a solid grasp of all the main concepts of the field.

The FPC exam fee is $320 for APA members and $395 for non-members.

Certified Payroll Professional

The CPP is aimed at more experienced payroll workers. Candidates for this payroll certification are required to meet one of three criteria before sitting for the exam:

- Criteria 1 — Must have practiced payroll for at least three of the past five years

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

for the FPC, but the subjects are covered in much more depth than the fundamental certification. There is the addition of a section on leadership and management. CPP holders are experts in their field and are ready for senior roles within a payroll team.

The CPP exam fee is $380 for APA members and $550 for non-members.

Professionals have long understood the value of payroll certifications: greater job satisfaction, more opportunities and a higher salary. Now it's time for company leaders to realize the many benefits of helping their payroll specialists attain and maintain their credentials.

———-

This article first appeared on the Robert Half blog.

Payroll

CPA Practice Advisor is registered with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) as a sponsor of continuing professional education on the National Registry of CPE Sponsors.

© 2024 Firmworks, LLC. All rights reserved