

What about independent contractors?

Under section 102.07(8)² of the Act, a person is required to meet a nine-part test before he or she is considered an independent contractor rather than an employee. To be considered an independent contractor and not an employee, an individual must meet and maintain all nine of the following requirements:

1. Maintain a separate business.
2. Obtain a Federal Employer Identification number from the Federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or have filed business or self-employment income tax returns with the IRS based on the work or service in the previous year. (See note below.)
3. Operate under specific contracts.
4. Be responsible for operating expenses under the contracts.
5. Be responsible for satisfactory performance of the work under the contracts.
6. Be paid per contract, per job, by commission or by competitive bid.
7. Be subject to profit or loss in performing the work under the contracts.
8. Have recurring business liabilities and obligations.
9. Be in a position to succeed or fail if business expense exceeds income.

Note: A social security number cannot be substituted for a FEIN and does not meet the legal burden of s. 102.07(8) of the Act.

² Except as provided in par. (b), every independent contractor is, for the purpose of this chapter, an employee of any employer under this chapter for whom he or she is performing service in the course of the trade, business, profession or occupation of such employer at the time of the injury.

(b) An independent contractor is not an employee of an employer for whom the independent contractor performs work or services if the independent contractor meets all of the following conditions:

1. Maintains a separate business with his or her own office, equipment, materials and other facilities.
2. Holds or has applied for a federal employer identification number with the federal internal revenue service or has filed business or self-employment income tax returns with the federal internal revenue service based on that work or service in the previous year.
3. Operates under contracts to perform specific services or work for specific amounts of money and under which the independent contractor controls the means of performing the services or work.
4. Incurs the main expenses related to the service or work that he or she performs under contract.
5. Is responsible for the satisfactory completion of work or services that he or she contracts to perform and is liable for a failure to complete the work or service.
6. Receives compensation for work or service performed under a contract on a commission or per job or competitive bid basis and not on any other basis.
7. May realize a profit or suffer a loss under contracts to perform work or service.
8. Has continuing or recurring business liabilities or obligations.
9. The success or failure of the independent contractor's business depends on the relationship of business receipts to expenditures.

(c) The department may not admit in evidence state or federal laws, regulations, documents granting operating authority or licenses when determining whether an independent contractor meets the conditions specified in par. (b) 1 or 3. [s. 102.07(8), Stats.]