



Domestic Remote Work, Real Risk

A Self-Assessment for Employers Without an HR Department

Most companies with remote or hybrid employees didn't plan the setup; it accumulated. Somebody moved, somebody got hired over Zoom, somebody installed a time tracker, and nobody ever really owned the whole picture. If that sounds familiar, this checklist is the whole picture. Answer honestly: Yes, No, or Not Sure. For scoring purposes, Not Sure counts as No, because the point of the exercise is finding out.



Section A — Know Your Map

Where your people sit is where your obligations live. If the company has been lucky so far, this section is usually where the luck is running out quietly.

#	Statement — answer Yes, No, or Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Sure	Risk
A1	A current, dated list exists of every state where any employee physically works. <i>A remote employee is generally covered by the employment laws of the state where they sit, not where the company is based.</i>	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
A2	The company is registered, and payroll taxes and unemployment insurance are set up, in every state on that list.	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
A3	Workers' compensation coverage is confirmed for each state on the list.	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
A4	Employees are required to get approval before relocating to a new state, and the requirement is written down.	☐	☐	☐	MED
A5	Job postings for remote roles include a pay range that satisfies the strictest state where the role could be filled.	☐	☐	☐	MED
A6	The handbook has been reviewed against the laws of each state on the list within the past year.	☐	☐	☐	LOW



Section B — Remote Hiring You Can Verify

The résumé was great. The interview was great. The question is whether the person who shows up for work is the person you interviewed.

#	Statement — answer Yes, No, or Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Sure	Risk
B1	Every remote hire completes a live identity verification step that is applied consistently to candidates for the same role. Consistent procedures can reduce the risk of selective or discriminatory screening.	☐	☐	☐	HIGH

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B2	If I-9 documents are examined over video, the company is enrolled in E-Verify and follows the federal alternative procedure, including the required notation on the form. <i>Remote video examination without E-Verify enrollment does not comply, no matter how clear the webcam.</i>	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
B3	References are contacted through independently verified channels, not only through contact details the candidate supplied.	☐	☐	☐	MED
B4	New-hire system access is limited to what the role requires on day one, and a specific person approves increases.	☐	☐	☐	MED
B5	Recruiters and hiring managers have been briefed on what current hiring fraud looks like: interview stand-ins, deepfake video, and borrowed identities.	☐	☐	☐	LOW



Section C — Watching Responsibly

Monitoring isn't automatically illegal, and it isn't automatically wise. It is automatically evidence.

#	Statement — answer Yes, No, or Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Sure	Risk
C1	If any monitoring occurs (time tracking, screenshots, activity logs, or location tracking), employees receive written notice describing it before it starts. <i>Connecticut, Delaware, New York, and Maine require notice by statute; everywhere else, it is still the cheapest legal protection available.</i>	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
C2	Someone has checked the monitoring rules for every state on the Section A list, not just the company's home state.	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
C3	Monitoring data has a defined retention period and a defined owner, and access to it is limited.	☐	☐	☐	MED
C4	Hourly employees' recorded activity is reconciled against paid time. <i>If the tracker shows work the timesheet doesn't, the company owes the difference, and the tracker is discoverable.</i>	☐	☐	☐	MED
C5	Location tracking and off-hours tracking are either turned off or specifically justified in writing.	☐	☐	☐	LOW

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Section D — Data Where It Lives

Every remote employee is a branch office with one employee and no lock on the door.

#	Statement — answer Yes, No, or Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Sure	Risk
D1	Departing employees' access to systems, email, and files is cut off on their last day, following a documented checklist.	☐	☐	☐	HIGH
D2	A written policy states what company data may live on personal devices, and what happens to that data at separation.	☐	☐	☐	MED
D3	Contracts with monitoring, payroll, and HR software vendors address data ownership, retention, breach notification, and prohibit the vendor from reusing employee data.	☐	☐	☐	MED
D4	Company equipment issued to remote employees is inventoried, and recovering it at separation is a specific person's job.	☐	☐	☐	LOW



Scoring Guide

Count every No and every Not Sure together as one number.

0–3:

The setup is more deliberate than most. Verify the HIGH items annually and after any hire in a new state.

4–8:

Normal, and normal is exposed. Prioritize any HIGH item first; most can be closed within a quarter.

9 or more:

The luck is doing the compliance work. Start with Section A, because nothing else can be fixed until the map exists.

Regardless of total score, any HIGH item marked No or Not Sure belongs at the top of the to-do list.

