

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 | WAGE & HOUR COMPLIANCE

DOL Wage and Hour Investigation Planning Checklist

The U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division continues to increase enforcement activity across industries, making proactive preparation essential for employers. In her [DOL Wage and Hour Investigation Planning Checklist](#) for LexisNexis Practical Guidance, [Kara Maciel](#), Chair of Conn Maciel Carey's [Labor & Employment Practice](#), outlines the key steps organizations should take to identify compliance gaps and prepare for potential on-site investigations.

As the Practical Guidance note explains, the checklist is designed to help employers *"understand their compliance and investigation responsibilities and take preventive measures to avoid or minimize violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and state wage and hour law."*

The checklist provides detailed guidance on establishing internal protocols for managing DOL inspections. Key components include:



- Conducting a focused wage and hour self-audit of classifications, contractor status, internships, wage payments, and recordkeeping.
- Reviewing key compliance issues such as exempt salary basis, off-the-clock work, safe harbor policies, and nursing mother break time.
- Confirming adherence to child labor rules, industry-specific requirements, required postings, and state wage and hour obligations.
- Establishing a streamlined wage and hour committee to manage compliance and coordinate investigation response.
- Training managers and employees on wage and hour rules and proper procedures during on-site DOL inspections.
- Preparing clear internal protocols for DOL investigations, including credential verification, representation, interviews, and document handling.
- Designating a response team with defined roles, essential materials, and an understanding of the DOL's investigative authority.

With DOL investigations becoming more frequent and more complex, employers benefit greatly from preparing in advance. A proactive plan not only minimizes legal risk, but it ensures employers can navigate investigations confidently and consistently.

- Practical Guidance subscribers may access the full [Practice Note on LexisNexis](#).
- Non-subscribers may sign up for a free trial to access the checklist.

