

WAC 415-02-110 Determination of employee status. (1) An employee of a retirement system employer, other than a teachers' retirement system plan I retiree, who otherwise meets the eligibility criteria to participate in a state-administered retirement system is required to establish or continue membership in that system. An independent contractor is not eligible for active membership in any state-administered retirement system.

(2) (a) The department will review the entire relationship between the worker and the retirement system employer in order to determine whether a worker is an independent contractor or an employee. Generally, a worker is an employee if the employing individual or entity has the right to control and direct the work of the worker, not only as to the result to be accomplished, but also as to the means or methods by which the result is accomplished.

(b) Generally, a worker is an independent contractor if the employing entity has the right to control or direct only the result of the labor or services and not the means and methods accomplishing the labor or services.

(c) Whether or not the parties intend to establish an employer-employee relationship, or whether the parties regard the worker as being an independent contractor is not controlling. When the elements of direction and control are present in determining the means and methods of performing the worker's labor or service, any disclaimers to the contrary are not binding on the department for the purpose of determining employer-employee status. The terms of the contract and the actual arrangement under which the labor or services are performed will determine whether a worker is an employee or independent contractor.

(d) In evaluating whether the retirement system employer has direction or control over the means and methods of performing the worker's labor or services, no one factor is determinative. The department will apply several factors, including but not limited to the following:

(i) Is the worker required to comply with detailed work instructions or procedures about when, where and how the worker must perform services? An employer has control if the employer requires or has the right to require the worker to comply with instructions about the manner in which services must be performed.

(ii) Does the employing individual or entity provide free training for the worker, or have the right to train the worker? Typically, an employer would have the right to train an employee but not an independent contractor.

(iii) Are the worker's services an integral part of the employing individual's or entity's business operation? Usually the regular administrative work of a business is performed by employees rather than independent contractors. Services outside the usual course of the employer's business may imply independent contractor status.

(iv) Is the worker required to perform the labor or services personally? While employees are typically required to personally perform labor or services, independent contractors are not necessarily required to perform personally, but may subcontract part or all of the required labor or services to another party.

(v) Does the employer hire, supervise or pay others to perform the same job as the worker? Usually a person who works the same job or performs the same function as performed by employees of the employer is an employee rather than an independent contractor.

(vi) Does the worker hire, supervise and pay others on the job under a contract to furnish labor and materials? Independent contrac-

tors may or may not be responsible for performing the contracted labor or services themselves, and usually have the right to hire and terminate their own employees who perform the contracted labor or services.

(vii) Does the worker perform continuing services for the retirement system employer? Independent contractors are typically hired for a job of relatively short-term or temporary duration and do not have a continuous relationship with or perform continuing services for the employing entity.

(viii) Are the worker's hours, routine or schedule set by the employing entity? The establishment of a set routine or schedule for the worker by the employer indicates employee status. Independent contractors are typically free to set their own hours of work.

(ix) Is the worker required to devote his or her full time to the business of a single employing individual or entity? A worker who is required to work full time for a single employer is likely to be an employee. Independent contractors are usually free to provide labor or services for two or more employing entities concurrently.

(x) Does the employing individual or entity require the worker to perform labor or services on the employer's premises? The employing entity is likely to have the right of control over the worker's method of work if the work is performed solely on the employer's premises, particularly if the worker could perform the required labor or services elsewhere.

(xi) Does the employing individual or entity require the worker to perform labor or services in a set sequence? A worker is likely to be an employee if the worker must perform work in an order or sequence set by the employer.

(xii) Is the worker required to provide regular, oral or written reports to the employer? Regular reports, for example weekly time sheets, are usually required of employees as opposed to independent contractors.

(xiii) Is the worker paid by unit of time (hour, week or month)? Employees are typically paid by unit of time while independent contractors are typically paid by the job (commission, bid, piecework or lump sum). Payment for labor or services upon completion of the performance of specific portions of a project or on the basis of an annual or periodic retainer usually indicates independent contractor status.

(xiv) Does the employing individual or entity reimburse the worker for the worker's job-related expenses? Independent contractors typically pay their own business or travel expenses; the regular expenses they incur as part of providing labor or services are generally included in the stipulated contract payment and are not reimbursed by the employing entity.

(xv) Does the worker providing labor or services furnish the tools and supplies necessary for the performance of the contracted labor or service? Generally, an employer furnishes tools and supplies for their employees while independent contractors furnish their own.

(xvi) Has the worker invested in the equipment or facilities used in performing the labor or services? A significant investment by the worker in the equipment or facilities used in performing the labor or services usually indicates independent contractor status.

(xvii) Does the worker have a right to realize a profit or have a significant risk of loss as a result of the worker's services? Having the right to a profit or the risk of loss arising from the worker's services implies independent contractor status. The worker may be presumed to have assumed the risk of loss if the worker assumes financial

responsibility for defective workmanship or for service not provided as evidenced by the ownership of a performance bond, warranties, errors, and omissions insurance or liability insurance relating to the labor or services provided.

(xviii) Does the worker perform services for several persons or firms concurrently? Performance of services for a number of different unrelated clients indicates independent contractor status.

(xix) Does the worker offer services to the general public on a regular or consistent basis? An individual actively advertising services to the general public and representing to the public that the labor and services are to be provided by an independently established business is typically an independent contractor. The following are evidence of "actively advertising":

(A) The worker uses commercial advertising or business cards as is customary in operating a similar business, or is a member of a trade association;

(B) The worker uses a telephone listing and service for the business that is separate from the worker's personal residence listing and service.

(xx) Does the employer have the right to discharge the worker at will? An employee is typically subject to discharge or layoff at the will of the employer.

(xxi) Does the worker have the right to terminate the employment relationship without incurring liability? The right to terminate the work relationship at will usually indicates employee status.

(3) Typically, an independent contractor works for an employing individual or entity as a specialist in an independently established occupation, profession, trade or business. While the right of control over the method or means of work is determinative, the department shall also consider the following factors in evaluating independent contractor status. The degree of importance of each factor varies depending on the labor or services to be performed and the context in which the labor or services are performed.

(a) Does the worker perform labor or services only pursuant to written contracts?

(b) Has the worker providing labor or services attained business registrations, professional occupation licenses or certificates required by state law or local government ordinances to perform the contracted labor or services?

(c) Has the worker providing labor or services:

(i) Purchased worker's compensation insurance and paid taxes required for an independent business;

(ii) Filed income tax returns in the name of an independent business; or

(iii) Filed a Schedule of Expenses for the type of business conducted or a Business Schedule C or Farm Schedule F as part of the personal income tax return for the previous year if the worker performed the labor or services as an independent contractor in previous years?

(d) Does the worker providing labor or services maintain a separate set of books or records that reflect all items of business income and expenses as an independently established business?

(e) Has the worker assumed financial responsibility for defective workmanship or for service not provided as evidenced by the ownership of a performance bond, warranties, errors and omissions insurance or liability insurance relating to the labor or services to be provided?

(4) The burden of persuasion in claiming that a worker is an independent contractor or an employee is on the worker or employer making the claim.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050. WSR 94-09-039, § 415-02-110, filed 4/19/94, effective 5/20/94.]