

FINNISH LABOR LEGISLATION



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Finnish labor legislation

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Preface

The idea of writing a book on labor legislation in English arose from a practical need. We have previously published textbooks on labor legislation in Finnish and these books have become popular in teaching. However, we noticed that there is also a great need for sharing information in English, especially in the education of immigrants and exchange students. This book is an introduction to Finnish labor legislation and we have made the book as easy to understand as possible, especially from the point of view of the target group.

This book provides an excellent opportunity to learn about Finnish labor legislation and its application in the workplace. It provides the reader with basic information on the main issues of labor legislation and thus how to cope with the Finnish labor market. The Association of Finnish Nonfiction Writers has supported the writing of the book with a grant. We wish you an inspiring time of reading!

Joensuu 11.11.2023

Mikko Hyttinen & Atte Korte

CONTENTS

1	BASICS OF LABOR LEGISLATION	9
1.1	Introduction to Labor Law	9
1.2	The Employee and Employer	10
1.3	Legal Sources of Labor Legislation	10
1.4	Characteristics of an Employment Relationship	13
1.5	Courts and Authorities	16
1.6	Temporary Agency Work	17
2	EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT	19
2.1	Employee Selection	19
2.2	Drawing up an Employment Contract.....	20
2.3	Trial Period	24
2.4	Changing the Employment Contract.....	26
3	OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHTS OF THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP	27
3.1	Employer's Obligations and Rights	27
3.2	Employees' Obligations and Rights	33
3.3	Other Employees Rights	37
3.4	Liability	38
4	FAMILY LEAVE	39
5	PROTECTION OF PRIVACY IN WORKING LIFE	44
5.1	Processing Personal Data	44
5.2	Necessity Requirement	45
5.3	Processing Health Information.....	46
5.4	Processing Information on Drug Use	47
5.5	Processing of Personal Credit Data	48
5.6	Personality and Aptitude Assessments.....	49
5.7	Camera Surveillance in the Workplace.....	50
5.8	Retrieving and Opening E-mail Belonging to the Employer	51
5.9	Security Clearance and Criminal Background Check.....	52
6	WORKING TIME	54
6.1	Concepts of Working Time.....	54
6.2	Overtime and Additional Work.....	58
6.3	Emergency Work	60
6.4	Sunday Work	60
6.5	Rest Periods	61
7	ANNUAL HOLIDAYS	63
7.1	Earning Annual Holiday	63
7.2	Timing of Annual Holiday	64
7.3	Holiday Pay.....	65
7.4	Holiday Compensation.....	66
7.5	Holiday Bonus	67

8	GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUALITY IN WORKING LIFE	68
8.1	Improving Gender Equality and Equality	69
8.2	Discrimination Under the Gender Equality Act	70
8.3	Discrimination under the Equality Act	72
8.4	Harassment	74
8.5	Resolving Cases of Discrimination	76
9	SAFETY AT WORK	79
9.1	The Employer's Duty of Care	79
9.2	Hazard Elimination and Risk Assessment	80
9.3	Other Obligations of the Employer	81
9.4	Employee Responsibilities	82
9.5	Mental Well-being and Workplace Bullying	83
9.6	The Employer's Obligation to Act	85
9.7	Workplace Health and Safety Organization	85
10	COOPERATION IN ENTERPRISES	87
10.1	Dialogue to Improve Operations and the Work Community	87
10.2	Change Negotiations	91
10.3	Employee Representation in Company Management	96
10.4	Compensation	96
11	LAYOFFS OF EMPLOYEES	98
11.1	Lay-off and its Grounds	98
11.2	Procedure in the Event of a Lay-off	99
12	TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT	101
12.1	Termination on Economic and Production Grounds	102
12.2	Termination on Personal Grounds	106
12.3	Notice Period	110
12.4	Cancellation of Employment Contract	111
12.5	Compensation for Unjustified Termination	112
12.6	Certificate of Employment	113

1 BASICS OF LABOR LEGISLATION

1.1 Introduction to Labor Law

Labor law refers to all rules and regulations defining the legal aspects of work. Typically, work is performed in an employment relationship where the employee is in an employment relationship with the employer. In Finland, there are two types of service relationships: employment relationships and civil service relationships. Employment relationships are a type of service relationship in the private sector. Work in an employment relationship is based on a contractual agreement between the employee and the employer. The employment contract defines, among other things, the parties obligations, job duties, and salary. A civil service relationship is a service relationship under public law, which is used, for example, for tasks that involve the exercise of public authority by the state and municipalities. This book deals with the employment relationship, which affects most employees in Finland.

The Employment Contracts Act (55/2001) is the primary labor act that governs the legal relationship between employers and employees in the workplace. The Act contains provisions on the duration and form of employment contracts, the rights and obligations of employers and employees, and the termination of employment relationships.

The principle of employee protection

The guiding principle behind the employment law is to protect employees (the principle of employee protection). As the weaker party in the employment relationship, employees require protection against their employers. Therefore, the most important provisions of the Employment Contracts Act are mandatory and cannot be agreed otherwise to the detriment of employees. The Act also stipulates the characteristics of an employment relationship. If all of these characteristics are present in work, it is classified as an employment relationship, and all labor laws

apply (the basic relationship theory). Labor law generally applies from when an employee begins working until the employee's employment is terminated.

1.2 The Employee and Employer

Permanent employment can be conducted with a 15-year-old person who has completed compulsory education. The employer can be a natural person or a legal entity such as a corporation or an association. The Youth Employment Act (998/1993) applies to young workers under 18. A fifteen-year-old can make and terminate an employment contract on their own. Also, the guardians (parents) have the right to terminate the young worker's employment contract if necessary for their upbringing, development, or health.

Before hiring a young worker, the employer must ascertain their age and whether they are subject to compulsory education. The guardian may sign the employment contract on behalf of a person under 15, or the young person may do so with the guardian's permission. A person who is 14 years old or will turn 14 during the same year may be employed in light work that does not harm their health or development or interfere with their education. A person under 14 may work under a permit with conditions set by the regional state administrative agency.

1.3 Legal Sources of Labor Legislation

Labor legislation includes a wide range of applicable legal sources that define the terms and conditions of employment. In addition to laws, attention must be paid to collective agreements, employment contracts, local agreements, and the employer's instructions.



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The Finnish labor legislation book provides readers with fundamental insights into the intricacies of Finnish labor law. The book offers a systematic presentation of its subject matter, starting with employment commencement and culminating in the termination of employment contracts. The key issues covered include employment terms and conditions, rights and obligations, privacy considerations, principles of equality, cooperation in enterprises, regulation of working hours, workplace safety, and the nuances of employment contract termination.

