



Separation Classification Worksheet

Quit, discharge, layoff, or abandonment — classify every separation once, correctly, with the facts written down.

WHAT THIS HELPS YOU DO

Use this worksheet to classify every separation accurately at the moment it happens, because the classification drives final-pay deadlines, unemployment outcomes, and the story you will be held to later.

WHEN TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

- At every separation, before paperwork is filed
- When a resignation happens mid-discipline and someone says 'let's call it a quit'
- When an employee walks off the job mid-shift
- When a 'mutual agreement' separation is proposed
- Before responding to any unemployment claim

WHAT THIS DOCUMENT HELPS PREVENT

- Final-pay deadline violations from misclassified separations
- Unemployment responses that contradict the personnel file
- 'Resignations' that were really constructive discharges
- Job abandonment labels applied to protected absences
- Classification drift — the story changing between payroll, TWC, and the EEOC

Faulkner HR Solutions focuses on the system behind the people problem. This tool is designed to help employers slow down the decision, identify the risk, and create proof before the issue becomes a claim, complaint, turnover event, or credibility problem.

BEFORE YOU START: READINESS CHECKLIST

Gather the following before working through this document. Incomplete inputs are one of the most common reasons employer decisions fail under later scrutiny.

Have it	Input	Notes / location
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee name and role	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Date of incident, request, or separation	



Have it	Input	Notes / location
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supervisor involved	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy or handbook section that applies	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prior documentation on file	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pay records, if applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relevant emails, texts, notes, or complaints	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decision-maker name	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deadline, if applicable	



CLASSIFICATION WORKSHEET

One separation, one classification, chosen from the facts — not from what is cheapest for the unemployment account. Complete this before any separation paperwork goes out.

Part 1 — Separation Snapshot

Employee name and role	
Last day worked	
Who first communicated the separation, and how	
Exact words used (as close as possible)	
Witnesses to the separation conversation	

Part 2 — Classification Selector

Mark the one category the facts support. If two seem to fit, the facts section below must resolve it.

Classification	The facts must show...	Mark
Voluntary quit	Employee clearly communicated intent to end employment, by words or unambiguous conduct	
Discharge	Employer ended the relationship — for cause, performance, or any other reason	
Layoff / RIF	Position eliminated for business reasons unrelated to the individual's conduct	
Job abandonment	Unexplained absence meeting the written policy, after documented contact attempts (complete the Job Abandonment Checklist first)	
Mutual agreement	Genuinely negotiated exit — document who proposed it and what was exchanged	

Part 3 — Facts Supporting the Classification



Part 4 — Pressure Test

Answer honestly. A 'yes' does not change the paperwork by itself — it changes the risk.

Yes?	Pressure question	Details
<input type="checkbox"/>	Did the employee resign only after being told they would be fired?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Was the resignation in response to conditions a reasonable person would find intolerable?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is anyone proposing a classification different from what actually happened?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Would the employee describe this separation differently than the file does?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Was the employee mid-complaint, mid-leave, or mid-investigation at separation?	

Part 5 — Consequences of the Classification

Consequence	Quit	Discharge / layoff
Texas final pay deadline	Next regularly scheduled payday	Sixth calendar day after discharge
Unemployment benefits	Usually disqualified unless good cause connected to the work	Usually payable unless misconduct is proven
Burden at TWC	Employer shows the quit was voluntary	Employer proves misconduct, if contesting

Part 6 — Classification Record

Final classification	
Final pay deadline (calendar it)	
Documents attached (resignation letter, termination memo, abandonment file)	
Unemployment response owner, if a claim is expected	

Role	Name / signature	Date
Classified by		
Reviewed by		



STOP AND REVIEW BEFORE ACTING

If any statement below is true, pause. Get the decision reviewed by HR, counsel, or Faulkner HR Solutions before you act.

- The employee recently complained about pay, harassment, discrimination, safety, leave, or retaliation.
- The supervisor has no prior documentation.
- The decision is inconsistent with how similar cases were handled.
- The employee is on, or recently requested, protected leave.
- The issue involves pay, deductions, final wages, medical information, disability, pregnancy, injury, or protected activity.
- The decision will be visible to a board, council, funder, auditor, plaintiff attorney, or agency.

MINIMUM DOCUMENTATION STANDARD

Before this file is closed, the employer should be able to answer every question below and point to where the proof lives.

Question	Your answer / where the proof is stored
What happened?	
When did it happen?	
Who observed or reported it?	
What policy, standard, deadline, or expectation applies?	
What decision was made?	
Who had authority to make the decision?	
What alternatives were considered?	
What risk was reviewed?	
What follow-up is required?	
Where is the proof stored?	

COMMON MISTAKES

1. Letting the unemployment chargeback, not the facts, pick the classification.
2. Recording 'quit' when the employee resigned one sentence ahead of being fired — and then contesting their benefits.
3. Using 'mutual agreement' as a euphemism for a discharge nobody wants to own.
4. Missing the six-day final-pay deadline because the separation was misfiled as a quit.



5. Writing 'position eliminated' while immediately posting the same job.
6. Never writing down the exact words used at separation, then losing the classification dispute a year later.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

File the completed worksheet with the separation record, process final pay on the deadline the classification requires, and hand this file to whoever answers the unemployment claim — the response should quote it, not contradict it.

Before you terminate, deduct, discipline, classify, or respond, get the decision reviewed.

Call 210.446.8730 or email thomas@faulknerhrsolutions.info.



Before you process payroll, terminate, classify, deduct, or respond to a claim, get the decision reviewed.

Need help applying this to a real workplace decision?

Faulkner HR Solutions helps Texas employers, nonprofits, municipalities, and growing businesses fix the people systems behind recurring workplace problems.

If this document raised a risk flag, do not guess your way through the next step.

Call: 210.446.8730

Email: thomas@faulknerhrsolutions.info

Website: faulknerhrsolutions.info

DISCLAIMER

This resource is provided for general employer education and planning purposes. It is not legal advice and does not create an attorney-client relationship. Employment laws, agency guidance, and local requirements may change. Employers should review the facts of each situation before acting and consult appropriate HR or legal counsel when needed.