



The Contractor's Life

Dear Prospective Member:

I understand that you are interested in joining our company. If you have already made the decision to become our next employee I would like to welcome you to our team. If you haven't made up your mind quite yet but are still considering employment with us I would like to take a minute and tell you a little more about how things work here.....

We work a lot of hours and you will get a lot of overtime pay. However, this is construction and it is a seasonal business. That means that you probably won't work much at all from about mid to late December until early or mid-March. As with most construction companies we also don't usually work when the weather is bad, it is raining or it is cold or wet out. During these times when you aren't working you can get paid time off (PTO), but it takes a little management or self-control on your part. Let me explain that a little bit:

There are basically three ways for you to collect the PTO

- First, we have a vacation, or PTO policy, for all people employed here. You are welcome to use whatever vacation you have accumulated during these periods when you are not working. This isn't the only time you can use it, but it is an option for you to use it this way if you so choose. You can review the vacation policy in the employee handbook if you have received one or our Human Resources Manager can explain it to you if you are still considering employment with us.
- Secondly, during long periods of time off, you will sign up with the government to collect unemployment benefits. This is very easy to do, but **you** are responsible for signing yourself up and following their rules. By doing this you will receive a check every week during the winter layoff period.

Currently (in 2018) the amounts are: Missouri = \$320 per week Arkansas = \$451 per week

Don't confuse unemployment benefits with welfare. They are very different. The company (you) send to the government well over \$100,000 every year by way of the Federal Unemployment Tax. It is insurance, that's why they call it unemployment insurance. You have every right to collect some of it back.



- The third option for you requires the most management and self-control on your part. To be in this business you must be a good money manager and you must be prepared for periods when you will not be working. This will require you to live within your means. **DON'T** set your lifestyle to match what you make in a 50 or 60 plus hour work week. Try and set your lifestyle to match your pay during a 40 hour week. Put the overtime you make during the good weeks into a savings account or cookie jar or your piggy bank, somewhere you won't spend it. Save it. That way you will have some money to use during winter or weeks when we don't work as much.

The unexpected days off I have mentioned, especially during the construction season, are a great time to take care of personal business. That way you won't have to miss a day later when you could have worked and made some money. And you can figure that any hours you miss during the construction season would have been overtime which gets paid at 1 1/2 times your regular hourly rate. Again, you have to be a good money manager. Use your time wisely, it's valuable.

I know this lifestyle isn't for everyone. We work long hours and have unexpected days off, but if you are the kind of person who likes to build things and look back at the end of the day to see what you created then this may be for you. You have to like to work outside and most importantly you must be able to handle a bit of independence, be self-reliant, and demonstrate self-control. If you're not looking for some boring 8-5 gig then this may be right up your alley. If this sounds a bit harsh to you or you don't think you have the discipline to survive in this business, then thank you for considering us but you should probably seek employment elsewhere.