



NAA RESOURCE

Avoid Hiring a Potential Activist

The National Aquaculture Association (NAA) provides the following guidance to assist U.S. aquaculture in avoiding the hiring of an animal rights activist. This guidance may not fit every farm or business and interested readers are advised to adapt these suggestions to fit their situation or need. Employment laws vary by state, and farm and business owners or managers should evaluate state laws to inform employment practice decisions.

Efforts to avoid employing an activist begin in the application process. Employers should carefully screen resumes, including verifying previous employment, addresses, and references. Warning signs may include: out-of-state driver's license, telephone number, addresses, references or banks for check deposit without an indication of permanent relocation plan and clearly over-educated and /or over-qualified application. Always photocopy any forms of identification and driver's license. Application forms should include a statement from the applicant certifying the accuracy of the information provided on the application and require the applicant's signature. Once hired, conditions of continued employment provide additional tools to minimize the negative effect activists could have on an employer. Examples of such conditions may include a confidentiality agreement, a pledge not to film or photograph while at work, signed consent to monitoring, and, where applicable, signed preservation of employment-at-will status.

Another key component of minimizing risk of activist activity is appropriately monitoring employees. Surveillance with employee consent is important. Additionally, producers and processors should consider securing certain portions of their operations and taking note of employees that are outside areas related to their specific job duties. Training other employees to be alert for signs of activists, such as people taking pictures or asking odd questions, is another way producers and aquaculture businesses can protect themselves.

Hiring Tips:

- It is vital to thoroughly screen applicants and check all references.
- Your hiring process should start with a written application form for all employees that requires a signature.
- NEVER take an application at face value. ALWAYS check an applicant's references!
- Never call a cell phone for a company reference, always dial the company directly and ask to be transferred to the referenced employee.
- Be cautious of individuals who try to use a college ID instead of state issued ID or have out of state license plates.
- Search for all applicants online to see if they have public social media profiles (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.) or websites/blogs. Look for any questionable content or connections to activist organizations.
- Require all employees to sign your animal care policy. Provide proper animal handling training and updates. Require employees to report any mishandling to management immediately.
- Coming to work unusually early or staying late and going into areas of the farm not required for their job are red flags to watch out for.
- Be vigilant! If something does not seem right, explore it further.

When conducting a job interview ask the applicant if they are:

- Truly interested in the position and helping your business, or working on behalf of an activist organization to gain employment.
- Working for an organization that is paying/asking them to collect information related to your company's proprietary procedures or processes.
- Comfortable knowing that we monitor employees very closely, sometimes even with video surveillance.
- Willing to sign and abide by an employment agreement that includes animal care standards, company privacy issues, and use of technology on the farm.

[Download the Employee Acknowledgement template](#)



Please keep in mind this information is provided for informational purposes only. Seek individualized, professional legal advice prior to implementing these practices to ensure compliance with legal standards and contact local law enforcement if you anticipate protests. Learn your rights and protections under local, state or federal law.

Document created in proud partnership with the [Animal Agriculture Alliance](#).



Do not hesitate to contact the NAA with questions or comments at (251) 504-6995 or naa@nationalaquaculture.org