

Timesheet reminder email template

Remind hourly employees and managers to submit and approve time before the payroll cutoff.

Updated October 15, 2026. Written and reviewed by the HRTally Research Team.

When to use this template

Late or missing timesheets cause late or wrong paychecks. A short, predictable reminder before every payroll cutoff, to employees who haven't submitted and managers who haven't approved, keeps payroll on time. Most time and attendance systems send these automatically, but many small businesses still rely on email.

Keep it short and specific: the deadline, the link, and what happens if time isn't submitted. Never threaten to withhold pay. Hours worked must be paid, whether or not the timesheet is on time. The reminder is about getting pay right, not about penalties.

Version 1: Employee reminder

SUBJECT Reminder: submit your timesheet by [Day] at [Time]

Hi [Employee first name],

Your timesheet for the pay period [Start date] to [End date] is due by [Day] at [Time].

Submit it here: [Link]

Please check that your hours, breaks, and any overtime are correct before you submit. If you forgot to clock in or out, add a note so your manager can fix it.

If your timesheet isn't approved in time, your pay for any missing hours will be corrected on [the next paycheck or an off-cycle payment].

[Payroll contact]

Version 2: Manager approval reminder

SUBJECT Approve timesheets by [Day] at [Time]

Hi [Manager first name],

[Number] timesheets on your team still need approval for the pay period ending [Date]. Please approve them by [Day] at [Time] so payroll runs on time: [Link].

If you see missing punches or hours that don't look right, talk to the employee and correct them with a note. Please don't remove hours an employee actually worked.

[Payroll contact]

Subject lines to try

- Reminder: submit your timesheet by [Day] at [Time]
- Approve timesheets by [Day] at [Time]
- Timesheets due today
- Payroll cutoff: [Day] at [Time]
- Missing time punches to review

How to personalize it

- Send reminders on the same day and time each pay period.
- Target only people who haven't submitted.
- Remind managers to fix missed punches with the employee.
- Give the exact cutoff time and time zone.

Mistakes to avoid

- Saying employees won't be paid if they submit late.
- Asking managers to edit time without the employee's knowledge.
- Sending reminders after the cutoff.
- Encouraging employees to work off the clock to finish tasks.

Legal and compliance notes

Under the FLSA, employers must pay nonexempt employees for all hours worked, and they must keep accurate time records. Late timesheets don't change that. Editing time records to remove hours actually worked can lead to wage and hour claims, and many states require pay for every minute or for rounded time that is neutral over time. Our exempt vs nonexempt guide explains timekeeping rules.

When to send it

One reminder a day before the cutoff and one on the morning of the cutoff. For managers, a reminder a few hours before the approval deadline.

| Before you hit send

- Payroll has checked every number in the email against the system.
- The effective date leaves enough time before the payroll cutoff.
- State notice rules for pay changes were checked for each affected state.
- The email doesn't mention anyone else's pay.
- Tax treatment, such as supplemental withholding, is explained in plain words.

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