

Form W-2 availability email template

Tell employees and former employees when and where their W-2 is available, with tips to avoid tax season problems.

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

When to use this template

Employers must furnish Form W-2 to employees by January 31 each year. This email tells current and recent former employees that their W-2 is ready, where to find it, and what to do if something looks wrong. It also cuts down on the flood of where is my W-2 questions every February.

Send it to former employees who left during the year too, using their personal email and mailing address on file. Include a short phishing warning, since W-2 scams that impersonate HR or payroll are common at tax time. Our payroll guide covers year-end steps, and most payroll platforms publish W-2s to an employee portal.

Version 1: W-2 ready online

SUBJECT Your [Year] Form W-2 is ready

Hi [Employee first name],

Your [Tax year] Form W-2 is now available.

Online: log in to [Payroll portal] at [Link] and go to [Tax documents]. [If you consented to electronic delivery, this is your official copy.]

By mail: [If you didn't consent to electronic delivery, a paper copy was mailed on Date to the address we have on file.]

Please check your name, Social Security number, and address. If anything is wrong, contact [Payroll contact] by [Date] so we can issue a corrected form.

Need to update your withholding for this year? You can submit a new Form W-4 in [Portal].

A reminder: [Company] will never email you asking for your Social Security number or a copy of your W-2. If you receive a message like that, don't reply, and forward it to [Security contact].

[Payroll team]

Version 2: Former employee

SUBJECT Your [Year] Form W-2 from [Company]

Hi [First name],

Your [Tax year] Form W-2 from [Company] was mailed on [Date] to [the address on file / masked address]. [You can also access it online at Link until Date.]

If you have moved, or haven't received it by [Date], contact [Payroll contact] at [Email or phone] and we will help.

[Payroll team]

Subject lines to try

- Your [Year] Form W-2 is ready
- Your [Year] Form W-2 from [Company]
- Tax documents: your W-2 is available
- Check your W-2 for errors by [Date]
- W-2s mailed on [Date]

How to personalize it

- Tell employees exactly where to click in the portal.
- Ask them to check personal details and give a deadline for corrections.
- Include a phishing warning every year.
- Remind employees to update Form W-4 if their situation changed.

Mistakes to avoid

- Attaching W-2s to email.
- Assuming every employee has consented to electronic delivery.
- Forgetting employees who left mid-year.
- Ignoring returned mail.

Legal and compliance notes

Form W-2 must be furnished to employees by January 31, and filed with the Social Security Administration by the same date. Electronic delivery is allowed only if the employee affirmatively consented, after receiving

the required disclosures, under IRS rules. Without consent, mail a paper copy. Corrections go on Form W-2c.

| When to send it

Send the moment W-2s are published, usually in the last two weeks of January. Send a reminder in mid-February for anyone who hasn't logged in.

| 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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