

Leaving a job the right way

Easy · 1 hour over two weeks · Free

Tell your manager first, in person or on a call, then follow up with a short written resignation. Two weeks' notice is the custom. Before your last day, ask about your final paycheck and unused vacation, line up health insurance, and save your own files.

YOU'LL NEED

- ☐ Your new start date, if you have one
- ☐ Your employee handbook (notice, vacation payout, equipment)
- ☐ Your benefits details: health insurance end date and any retirement account

WHAT TO KNOW

- 1 **Line up the next thing first if you can.** Quitting usually means no unemployment, since benefits are for people who lose a job through no fault of their own.
- 2 **Check your handbook for how much notice it asks for and whether unused vacation is paid out.** Federal law doesn't require vacation payout; it depends on your employer's policy and state law.
- 3 **Tell your manager first, before coworkers, in person or on a call.** Keep it short and thankful. You don't owe a long reason.
- 4 **Send a short written resignation the same day, with your last day.** Copy below.
- 5 **Make a handoff list: what you're working on, where files live, who to call.** Offer to train your replacement.
- 6 **Sort out money and health: when your final paycheck comes, when your health coverage ends and whether COBRA is offered, and your 401(k).** Losing job coverage lets you enroll in a Marketplace plan within 60 days.
- 7 **On your way out, return equipment, save your own pay stubs and W-2 address details, and connect with coworkers on LinkedIn.**

Watch out Don't trash the old job, in the exit interview or online. Keep feedback calm and specific. The person you complain about may be your reference or your new boss someday. Rules vary by state, and some cities add their own. Check your state labor department, or call the DOL's Wage and Hour Division at 1-866-487-9243.

DAD NOTE *Leave like you might want to come back. People remember how you left more than how you started.*

Full lesson: aptkeys.com/work/raises-promotions-and-networking/leaving-a-job-the-right-way/

Checked October 3, 2026. Sources: U.S. Department of Labor; USAGov; HealthCare.gov.