How to Use Mobile Location Management and Geofencing for a Distributed Workforce

This eBook is for employers who are looking for the best mobile technology to manage modern workforces. This includes employees working at home, those in the office, and those who travel to various locations throughout the day. Mobile tech with geofencing is also helpful for contractors, freelancers, seasonal employees, flexible work schedules and global teams. In short, mobile systems are essential for running any business with a distributed workforce in 2020.

What is Mobile Location Management?

Mobile Location Management is a feature of employee time and attendance systems. Since these apps are accessed in the cloud from any browser, they are also called mobile timekeeping apps. Mobile Location Management requires integrated software and hardware. There are three essential components:

1. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) capability

2. A cloud-based employee time and attendance system

3. A Wi-Fi connected device with location tracking enabled

Let's talk about how Mobile Location Management works for employees and managers.

First off, employees clock in and out for shifts with a connected device in the timekeeping app. The system identifies and records their location when they punch in and out. Administrators import employee hours into the payroll system. Supervisors can organize employee groups based on work locations, schedules or job types.

Those are the basics. They may sound simple, but they transform the way you manage mobile and remote employees.

Geofencing

Geofencing makes mobile timekeeping apps even more powerful. To illustrate, we'll describe how to use it with Workforce Timekeeping. Workforce Timekeeping is the time and attendance module in WorkforceHUB Human Resources Management System (HRMS).

To create geofences in Workforce Timekeeping, identify where your employees will do their work. For example, you may have a central office, a warehouse or production facility, and job sites that change over time. You might also have employees working from home.

In the Workforce Timekeeping admin dashboard, choose a name for the fence, then type in the address. Google Maps will suggest locations as you type. Choose a radius with the slider below the map. It can be between 328 feet (100 meters) and 1 mile.

Select the employees to which the fence applies. A fence can be applied to all employees or one or more.

When employees clock in with their mobile device, their location is recorded in relation to the fence. If an employee clocks in outside of the fence, the system can flag their punch as out of bounds. You can set an alert, so the employee's supervisor is notified when a punch falls outside the fence.

That's it! Since it only takes a few clicks, you can create geofences for multiple work locations or teams even if they continually change–as with construction, event management, or field service.

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How does Mobile Location Management work for specific types of businesses?

Now that we've described how it works, let's discuss how employers in various industries use it for their personnel.

HOME HEALTH: A home health aide can punch in for a shift when they leave their house in the morning. They can use job codes to track time with each patient. The software also helps with mileage tracking and shift planning.

FOOD TRUCKS AND CATERING: The owner of a food truck business can see where each truck is throughout the day without distracting employees with a call or a text. Employees who float between locations can confirm shifts and addresses. Job coding lets food truck owners track time per account. Suppose one truck is at a private event and another is serving the lunch crowd at an office building. Easily separate clients and employee hours.

CONSTRUCTION: Construction managers can set a geofence for each work site. The system alerts them when an employee punches in outside of the fence. It also records shift times and creates online timecards. Managers approve timecards in bulk and import into the payroll system without any manual data entry.

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How to implement Mobile Location Management

If you haven't used a mobile time tracking system, follow a formal plan for introducing the system to your team. This guide may help:

1. Inform employees

Inform employees that you are introducing Mobile Location Management. If you don't tell them and they find out later, they will feel like they are being spied on. Don't erode their trust. You don't want them to have the misperception that it will only be used to reprimand late or absent employees. Explain how it will help them do their jobs. It will also increase productivity. If the company does better, their job is more secure.

2. Review business cell phone plan

A mobile timekeeping app may use mobile data and can affect battery life. If your employees use their own mobile devices, take this into consideration. If you provide devices to your mobile employees, review your business cell phone plan. You might want to change your plan before the rollout.

3. Teach employees how to use the system

Mobile Location Management apps like Workforce Timekeeping are as intuitive as any good phone app. Though it may seem unnecessary to give formal training, you can't assume that every employee and manager understands exactly what to do. Train them thoroughly: how to punch in and out, how to view timecards, and how to request time off. If your system syncs with scheduling, show them how to view their schedule and request a shift trade. If you have an HR portal, include a link to the instructions.

4. Review time and attendance policies

You should have explained time and attendance policies to employees when they were hired. Remind employees of the policies before implementing geofencing. Include the policies in your employee handbook. Ensure that managers treat all team members equally when it comes to time and attendance.

How Mobile Location Management supports workplace compliance

Mobile Location Management is a valuable tool for compliance. For example, tracking employee hours incorrectly can cause you to violate minimum wage laws without even knowing it. If you inadvertently underpay an employee, their hourly wage drops below the mandated minimum and puts you at risk of a violation. (Of course, you want to pay your employees fairly because it's the right thing to do.) Overtime compliance requires to-the-minute timekeeping as well. Mobile timekeeping apps ensure accurate payroll records. This is the best defense in case of a labor dispute or audit.

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Do you have a problem with time theft?

Geofencing is one of the best defenses against employee time theft. For an additional layer of time theft prevention, pair geofencing with schedule enforcement. Schedule enforcement restricts early or late punches. You will have two safeguards;
1. Geofencing restricts out-of-bounds punches.
2. Schedule enforcement restricts out-of-schedule punches.

What problems can Mobile Location Management solve?

- Employees forgetting to track their hours

- Managers unaware of mobile employees who habitually arrive late or leave early

- Difficulty separating billable from non-billable time

- Limited insight into how profitable jobs are

- Unaware of where mobile employees are working

- Lack of employee accountability for job tasks performed offsite

- Difficulty planning shift schedules for mobile and remote employees

Use workforce data to increase your profit margin

All businesses–regardless of size–have labor KPIs. This data can be measured, analyzed, and optimized. When you see what's really going on, you can improve labor allocation and project planning. This translates directly to a higher profit margin.

"Technology needs to be a central part of the employee experience today. It will allow employers to keep pace with the new workforce's digitally driven expectations and be instrumental in keeping increasingly global and distributed teams more connected and on-task. "

"Technology's Impact On Employee Experience," Forbes Human Resourc-

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In conclusion

Mobile Location Management systems are affordable and scalable. They don't require a large upfront cost like on-premise software. Most vendors have a month-to-month pricing model based on number of employees. This makes them affordable for businesses of all sizes, even those with limited resources for business software.

To learn how Mobile Location Management can help your organization, contact **SwipeClock**.

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