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**HR and managers should be sure the following are included in written warnings, says Keerthi Sugumaran, an attorney with Jackson Lewis in Boston:**

1. The name of the person who is writing the warning, the date, the name of the person receiving the warning and anyone else who gets a copy of it (e.g., HR), and where it is located (e.g., the personnel file).
2. A description of the performance issue or conduct that warranted the warning, with specific examples.
3. A summary of prior discussions regarding the issue, with specific dates if available.
4. A summary of prior related disciplinary or performance issues.
5. An explanation of why the issue is important.
6. A description of the policies that were violated.
7. An outline of the employer’s expectations.
8. A description of potential consequences for failing to meet those expectations (e.g., a statement that “sustained performance improvement is critical and a failure to improve may result in further action, up to and including termination of employment”).
9. A place for signatures acknowledging that the employee received the warning.
10. A notation that the warning will be included in the employee’s personnel file.