

What Every Employer Should Ask

Choosing the Right Earned Wage Access Partner

Selecting an Earned Wage Access (EWA) provider is similar to choosing your 401(k) or healthcare partner. With regulations evolving quickly, employers need to ensure their vendor is compliant, transparent, and employee-focused. This checklist highlights the essential questions to ask so you can confidently evaluate providers and choose the right partner.

EWA Provider Compliance Checklist

Provider Registration & Compliance

- ☐ Is the provider registered or in the process of registering in states with existing EWA legislation?
- ☐ Do they have a dedicated compliance team monitoring legal changes?
- ☐ Can they demonstrate expertise in adapting to regulatory updates?

Fee Structure & Transparency

- ☐ Does the provider offer a transparent and fair fee structure with clear disclosure?
- ☐ Is there a free option available to employees before paid services?
- ☐ Have you reviewed the actual fee disclosures that employees receive?
- ☐ Are fees for expedited transfers clearly displayed to employees before selection?
- ☐ How do the provider's fees compare to industry alternatives?

Operational Flexibility

- ☐ Does the provider's recovery model align with your payroll processes?
- ☐ Can you work within your current systems, or must you adapt to their model?
- ☐ Does the provider offer multiple payment options (direct to bank, paycard, digital solutions)?
- ☐ Is the provider single-service, or a 'one-stop shop' offering EWA, paycards, and digital tips?

Financial Wellness & Additional Services

- ☐ What financial wellness tools does the provider offer beyond EWA services?
- ☐ Does the provider offer financial literacy tools or resources for employees?

Employee Protection & Best Practices

- ☐ Does the provider protect both employer and employee interests?
- ☐ Are multiple payment options available, ensuring EWA is not mandatory?
- ☐ Does the provider support best practices by offering both paycard and ACH methods?
- ☐ Is the provider's approach aligned with consumer protection principles?

Due Diligence Requirements

- ☐ Have you done thorough due diligence on the provider's compliance procedures?
- ☐ Does the provider follow industry-leading practices comparable to your other key benefit providers?



Key Considerations

- **Regulatory Focus:** Regulations target providers, not employers. Choose a provider who can manage compliance and adapt to changes.
- **Vendor Partnership:** Select an EWA provider with the same rigor you apply to 401(k) or healthcare vendors. Best-in-class providers should adapt and integrate with your processes and systems.
- **Due Diligence:** Work with legal counsel to review agreements and compliance protocols.
- **Employee Choice:** Offering EWA is an additional benefit for your employees and should enhance—not replace—traditional pay methods.
- **Transparency:** Prioritize clear, fair fees with full employee disclosures and fee-free options.
- **Total Value:** Evaluate regulatory expertise, fee transparency, flexibility, and long-term partnership potential.

Why Instant

Instant Financial was built on the foundation of serving hourly employees with instant access to earned wages, helping improve financial stability for working Americans. Our platform extends beyond EWA services, offering a full suite of financial wellness solutions.

Instant's dedicated compliance team, led by **Heather Heebner**, SVP Compliance and former payroll executive, combines deep industry experience with regulatory expertise, ensuring clients can navigate the evolving EWA landscape with confidence.

Our mission-driven, compliance-focused approach makes us a trusted partner for payroll teams seeking reliable and comprehensive EWA solutions.

Contact Us



Schedule a call
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This checklist serves as a general guide for EWA provider evaluation. Always consult with qualified legal counsel for specific compliance requirements in your jurisdiction and industry.

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