

## Before You Sign Your Severance: An Ohio Checklist

*A plain-English guide for anyone handed a severance or separation agreement. General information, not legal advice.*

A severance agreement trades money for your legal rights, often on a deadline. Work through this before you sign, and do not sign on the spot.

### Understand what you are giving up

- Which legal claims the agreement asks you to release, and against whom.
- Whether it releases age discrimination (ADEA) claims, which have special rules.
- Confidentiality, non-disparagement, and cooperation clauses and what they require of you.
- Any non-compete or non-solicitation restriction on your next job.

### If you are 40 or older (the OWBPA)

- You must get at least 21 days to consider it, or 45 days in a group layoff.
- You must get 7 days to revoke after you sign.
- The agreement must specifically reference the ADEA.
- In a group layoff, you must receive a disclosure list of the ages and job titles of who was and was not selected.

### Check the money and the terms

- Whether the amount is negotiable (it usually is).
- Wages, unused PTO, commissions, and bonuses you are owed separately from severance.
- Health benefits and COBRA continuation.
- Whether the agreement preserves your unemployment eligibility.

### Do not

- Do not sign on the spot or under pressure.
- Do not miss the revocation window if you change your mind.
- Do not release a claim you have not had evaluated.
- Do not badmouth the employer before the agreement is final.

**Not sure where you stand? A free, confidential consultation can tell you.**  
**Sobel Law Solutions, LLC | (216) 282-9776 | [sobellawsolutions.com/schedule](https://sobellawsolutions.com/schedule)**

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