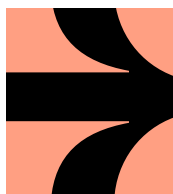


Starter Guide to Creating an Employee


Starter Guide to Creating an Employee Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Creating an Employee Handbook

It's important for a growing business to proactively build essential employment policies. It's equally important to communicate those policies to employees in an easily understandable manner.

Your policies can be a great recruiting tool for showing candidates how competitive you are, and can help avoid situations where you may need to build a policy last minute. Because of this, company's employment policies should be accessible and represent what is actually done in the organization. While policies are subject to change from time to time, creating an employee handbook that features policies, procedures, and practices that are consistently followed is a great way to do just that.

Primary Purpose of Employee Handbooks

An employee handbook serves many purposes, but most importantly, it's a central resource for your team to find relevant employment policies and answers to common questions.

Handbooks often come with a corporate stigma, leading startups and small businesses to be hesitant to create one. However, the reality is that your company's employee handbook is what you make it. This type of document can be a useful resource that becomes a great representation of your [organization's culture](#).

Discover an outline of common sections to include in an employee handbook, along with some key considerations for how to draft various policies if you don't



already have them in place. Some sections may speak to procedures or processes already in effect for your business that you may want to consider noting in your handbook, so they're available for everyone to reference.



*** A strong employee handbook sets the standards to which you hold your company and its employees.**

Some sections may be totally new to you and your business, while others might help provide guidance on updating existing policies. It's also important to note that certain policies are required or recommended for all employers, such as an anti-harassment policy. Other policies are optional.

Key Considerations for Employee Handbooks

The policies you publish in an employee handbook should be an accurate reflection of the current procedures and processes you have in place, or establish new protocol that will be consistently followed moving forward. Furthermore, a

strong employee handbook doesn't just delineate policies but also sets the standards to which you hold your company and its employees.

It's important to be aware that, in addition to federal law, employees are covered under the laws of the state in which they are performing work for your organization. This is of particular relevance to multi-state employers and companies of all sizes that employ remote workers who may be working in a state other than where the business has a physical location.

Note that this ebook is meant to be a starter guide, and is not legal advice. This starter guide focuses on key employee handbook considerations for private, non-unionized employers according to federal law. Additional issues need to be considered if a handbook will be distributed to public sector or unionized employees.

Policies and procedures should reflect all applicable federal, state, or local laws in the areas where your business operates or has remote employees. Prior to finalizing, distributing, or implementing an employee handbook or any employee policies, you should consult with counsel to ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.



Tips on Building an Employee Handbook

What an Employee Handbook Should Be

- Consider your handbook a reflection of your culture and business ethics. It should be a place where employees can understand both what to expect from the company, as well as what the company expects of them. It should demonstrate that you care about your team and the future of the company by taking things like federal, state, and local laws seriously, but also that you want to create a helpful resource for your employees that covers frequently asked questions and communicates your unique policies and benefits.

What an Employee Handbook Doesn't Need to Be

- Just because you have a handbook doesn't mean that your small business or startup needs to function or operate like a large or corporate entity. It doesn't need to be a complex book of rules that creates an impersonal environment or that could become a point of contention between management and employees. It also does not need to be the place where you outline all the operating procedures that show how every policy works in practice. For some policies this may be required legally, or is generally a good idea in order to be more explicit about certain matters. For others, such as understanding how to request time off or getting more details about benefits, you can keep the language rather high level and host the tactical information elsewhere, like a company wiki or intranet.



Introductory Language and Policies

About the Company + Mission Statement + Values

Employee handbooks are a keystone document for any organization, including small businesses and startups. Employee handbooks both outline policies as well as convey the mission, vision, and values of the company.

an organization



Company Background

This opening section provides an opportunity to share a bit about the founding of the organization, how the product or services were developed, the company's commitment to social and environmental responsibility, and any other language that speaks to the company's unique stature in the industry. Here you can specify the mission statement, share the vision for the company's future, and convey company values that give unique insights into the culture your organization strives to maintain.

About this Handbook

Handbooks should include a statement indicating that employees are employed at-will and that nothing in the handbook is to be construed as creating a contract of employment. If some employees have employment agreements with something other than at-will employment specified, you can include language that the employment agreement governs to the extent there's a conflict between the policies in the handbook and the employment agreement.

There should be a provision stating that the employer has the right to modify or delete policies in the handbook without notice to employees. You may change or update your policies as needed, but for the sake of consistency and the employee experience, it's common to review a handbook annually to introduce any new internal changes and capture any new legal requirements.

The handbook should also state that nothing in the handbook should be interpreted or intended to prevent employee communications regarding wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment or interfere with employees' rights to engage in protected concerted activity under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act.



It's a good idea to include a blanket statement indicating that the company will comply with all applicable employment laws. This is important because new laws can be passed, existing laws can be amended, or regulations can be updated. It's of particular importance for companies that employ remote workers as legal requirements can vary significantly from one state, or even local jurisdiction, to another.

Contact information should be included regarding who employees should contact if they have any questions about the policies stated in the handbook. If you have a general inbox, like an HR or operations email group, you may want to use that rather than a specific person so you don't have to think about updating it if there are personnel changes.



General Policies

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Employers should implement and maintain an equal employment opportunity (EEO) policy to demonstrate the organization's commitment to providing equal employment opportunities and compliance with applicable federal, state, and local anti-discrimination laws and to assure employees that unlawful discrimination is not tolerated by the employer. The policy should outline the procedure for employees to report complaints of unlawful discrimination. This policy should identify protected classes under applicable federal, state, and local laws.



**Reasonable Accommodations**

It's a best practice for employers covered by the [Americans With Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) to implement a disability accommodations policy, and employers covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to implement a religious accommodations policy. These laws apply to U.S. employers with 15 or more employees. Many states and municipalities have similar laws that may apply to companies with even fewer employees and have more stringent requirements than federal law.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Every U.S. employer should have an anti-harassment policy. Many states now require this with very specific requirements as to what needs to be included in the policy itself. At a minimum, this type of policy should include the following information:

- an explanation of physical, verbal, and sexual harassment and specific examples of inappropriate conduct
- a procedure for the timely investigation of complaints that ensures due process for all parties
- information concerning federal, state and local laws and the remedies available to victims of harassment
- an explanation of employees' external rights of redress
- a statement that retaliation against individuals who complain of harassment or who testify or assist in any investigation or proceeding involving harassment is unlawful

Employers should check applicable state/local laws which may have specific requirements as to what needs to be included in their anti-harassment policy.

Internal Complaint Procedure

This policy ensures that employees know how they should report complaints or concerns. The complaint procedure should include at least two alternative points of contact to report complaints/concerns so that employees have options for reporting issues that don't require them to go to their boss or

**Internal
Complaint
Procedure Cont'd**

otherwise stay in their chain of command. This policy should reinforce that the company will not tolerate retaliation against employees for bringing forward a complaint.

**Non-Retaliation
Policy**

Most employment laws have a non-retaliation provision, so the handbook should include a general non-retaliation policy that applies across the board. This policy should state that the company prohibits any adverse action or retaliation against an employee for reporting concerns or complaints in good faith or for participating in an investigation of any alleged wrongdoing in the workplace. Such a policy seeks to quell employees' fear of bringing improper behavior to the attention of the company.

Code of Conduct

A code of conduct should spell out a company's expectations with regard to personal conduct in the workplace. This crucial statement should help promote and protect a culture of respect, inclusion, and personal responsibility for one's actions and behavior.

Code of Ethics

A company's code of ethics should convey the organization's values and commitment to integrity. A code of ethics should address ethics issues that employees might reasonably encounter in their jobs, procedures for reporting and whistleblowing, potential repercussions of violations, and information on where employees can seek additional guidance for matters related to ethics and integrity, both within and outside of their chain of command.

An organization's code of ethics should convey the commitment of leadership and senior management to the organization's ethics standards, along with expectations for employees at all levels to commit to the same values and approach to doing business. Managers at every level must diligently serve as exemplars of standards of conduct.



On the Job: Workplace Policies

Facilities

Assuming your company has a physical workspace, consider including an overview or map of the office's workspaces, community spaces (lounge, kitchen, etc.), conference room, as well as entrances and regular and emergency exits.

This section could also provide a contact list with emails and phone numbers for various resources such as reception, security, or technical support. Be sure to include departmental contact details rather than specific details for particular individuals, so your handbook won't become obsolete as staff changes are made.





Remote/Hybrid Work

If your organization allows telecommuting or [hybrid work](#), or hires employees specifically for remote positions, your handbook will need to include some information specific to those ways of working. Parameters for occasional telecommuting or hybrid work will need to be defined, as will expectations and procedures for employees who are fully remote. In organizations that are remote, you might want to consider including an approved list of states or locations where remote work is allowable. If you have location based compensation, you may also want to include a relocation policy and how that impacts compensation.

Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when an employee's financial, political or social interests interfere (or appear to interfere) with their ability to do their job. It's a good idea to implement a policy that specifies prohibited actions and that obligates employees to disclose any potential conflicts of interest that arise related to their role with the organization, so that a decision can be made about how to best proceed.

Include some common examples of conflict of interest so employees will understand the types of scenarios that need to be reported. Common conflicts of interest include:

- Use of non-public company information or personal gain
- Outside employment or consulting that interferes with an employees job responsibilities or competes with the company
- Dating someone in your management chain
- Participating in the hiring or managing of a family member
- Accepting a gifts of significant value from the company's customers or vendors



**Employer
Sponsored
Social Events**

If your company sponsors social events, it can be a good idea to outline behavioral expectations for these scenarios. This section could specify that the company's anti-harassment policy and code of conduct remain in effect for all such events. You may also want to mention the prohibition of the use of illegal substances, weapons, or otherwise engaging in unlawful or unprofessional behavior.

**IT Resources and
Communication
Systems Policy**

This section should address proper use of the employer's information technology (IT) resources and communications systems and related rules/prohibitions. This section should also state the company's right to monitor employees' use of communications, documents and IT systems to the extent permitted by law.

When drafting statements regarding employees' rights to privacy, employers should make sure they have a business justification for their practice of reviewing personal communications and ensure such practices/statements comply with applicable laws.

**Off-Duty Use
of Employer
Equipment**

In some organizations, employees may be permitted to use company equipment away from the office and/or for personal reasons. This will usually mean a laptop or mobile device, but may also include other digital and non-digital tools.

For the safety and security of the employee as well as the company's property, it's a good idea to have a policy that specifically indicates the conditions under which an employee may use company property off-premises and/or for personal reasons.

For wage and hour controls and compliance with employment laws, such as overtime requirements, explicitly outline the conditions under which employees may use company property



**Off-Duty Use
of Employer
Equipment Cont'd**

off-premises for business purposes and requirements for the reporting of hours worked.

It is generally advisable to specify that personal use of company equipment or property must not involve unprofessional or inappropriate conduct, nor should it interfere with employees' employment responsibilities or productivity.

**Off-Duty Use
of Company
Premises**

Many organizations have policies that prohibit employees from being present on company premises when they are off-duty. This is partially because use of the company's facilities or property could result in workers' compensation claims and other liability exposures, even if employees are not performing work while on-site. This type of policy can also be relevant for productivity and security purposes.

**Dress Code and
Grooming Policy**

It's common that employers will hold employees to a certain standard of dress and hygiene standards, especially those with significant customer interaction. This policy should outline expectations without curtailing individual expression.

Keep in mind potential implications under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act when drafting such a policy. Make sure you don't establish or enforce a dress code or grooming standard in a manner that discriminates on the basis of protected characteristics. There should be a legitimate business justification for your policy.

**Personal
Data Changes**

It's a good idea to have a policy that makes it clear that employees are responsible for providing accurate personal data and making sure the company has their current contact details on file at all times.



Personal Data
Changes Cont'd

Necessary personal data includes information relevant to payroll, tax filings, and the company's benefits programs should be kept up to date all all times. This includes things like name, home address, social security number, phone number, and emergency contact information.

This policy should outline the required steps for alerting the company when an employee has a change in personal data that may affect pay, tax filings, or employee benefits.



Wage and Hour Policies

Employment Classification

Describe or define each of the employment categories relevant to your organization. Common classifications are listed below, though what you include should be specific to your organization.





Employment
Classifications
Cont'd

Full-time

- Typically employees who work, on average, 30 hours or more per week.

Part-time

- Typically employees who work, on average, fewer than thirty (30) hours per week.

Exempt Employees

- Exempt employees are employees whose positions meet specific tests established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and any applicable state law. Positions that meet the requirements to be classified as exempt are not subject to minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA or state wage and hour laws.

Non-Exempt Employees

- Non-exempt employees are employees who are subject to federal or state minimum wage and overtime laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to be paid at least the applicable minimum wage per hour and a premium for overtime.

* Tip: Do not use the word “permanent” in the name of any category.

Attendance Policy

Your handbook should include a section that clearly communicates the organization’s policies concerning regular working hours, attendance, tardiness, absenteeism, and how to seek approval for time off requests. The attendance policy should also communicate the procedures employees should follow if they are going to be absent from work, arrive late, or leave early, and the consequences employees may face for unexcused absences.

**Attendance
Policy Cont'd**

Be sure your attendance policy differentiates between excused and unexcused absences. Excused absences include things like leaves required by federal, state, or local law (such as family or medical leave), time off granted as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, modified schedules, leaves of absence, or other pre-approved absences.

**No-Call,
No Show Policy**

You may also want to adopt a no-call, no show policy for your organization. This policy can state that, with the exception of unusual circumstances, any employee who is absent from work for [x] number of days without notifying the company will be deemed to have voluntarily abandoned their job and their employment will be terminated. In most states, three days is considered reasonable.

**Payroll
Practices and
Compensation
Policy**

This policy should address the organization's payroll practices, including when and how employees are paid, payroll deductions, overtime, meal and rest breaks, and timekeeping requirements.

Your payroll policy should also include an employee complaint mechanism for reporting any [errors in pay](#), including (but not limited to) overpayments and underpayments, improper deductions, or pay not accurately reflecting all hours worked. Include a statement indicating that any errors will be corrected as soon as it is practical to do so.

**Travel and
Business Expense
Reimbursement
Policy**

These policies should outline guidelines for travel and other business expenses, including limits, the approval process, and procedures for reimbursement.



**Use of
Company Credit
Credit Card**

If employees in certain jobs are issued a company credit card, develop a policy for appropriate usage that is briefly referenced in the employee handbook. Develop a detailed credit card agreement that employees who are issued a credit card will need to sign at the time they receive the card. In the handbook, mention that such an agreement will be required prior to issuing a company card to any employee.



Performance, Discipline, Layoff, and Termination

Performance Review Policy

It's a good idea to include a brief description of the company's performance review practices in the employee handbook. Include information about your overall performance review policy (if you have one), including the method, frequency, and general procedures. This helps ensure that employees know what to expect and helps to hold managers accountable for following through with performance appraisals.

**Performance Improvement**

This policy should outline the company's approach to performance improvement, including setting expectations for performance feedback. It should convey accountability for appropriate performance, indicating that failure to meet performance requirements can lead to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Termination Procedures

Offboarding:

- While an employee does not have to comply, you can request that your employees give the company at least 2 weeks notice before resignation. Some companies will request a longer notice period for more senior positions. If your organization conducts exit interviews with employees who resign, you can also let them know about this process in the employee handbook.

Return of Company Equipment:

- Regardless of the type of termination, this policy should clearly establish the expectation that company equipment is to be returned no later than the end of the employee's last day with the organization. Equipment might include the employee's work-issued computer, mobile phone, security pass, 2-factor authentication token, or headset. Note whether company equipment is available for the employee to purchase to the employee, and/or whether it might be possible to port a company mobile phone number to a personal device post-termination.



Security and Reputation

Information and Physical Security

It's essential that employers be concerned with employee and guest security, as well as the security of company premises, property, and trade secrets. Information and physical security are both essential to this task. Your organization's policies should outline information about security threats, such as processes and procedures for responding to them, any security training that is required, employee responsibilities regarding security, and disciplinary actions for security breaches.

**Social Media Policy**

Outline expectations for employees posting information about the company or its activities on social media, taking care to ensure that your policy would not be considered overreaching by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The NLRB emphasizes that an organization's social media policies don't conflict with an employee's right to engage in "protected concerted activities" under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to discuss terms and conditions of their employment with other employees and third parties.

Remind employees that their obligations to protect confidential company information apply to all forms of communication, including social media. It's also advisable to encourage good judgment in their social media interactions and to remind them that they are responsible for their own statements and actions. Further, social media policies often clarify that an employee is never to promote the appearance of acting as an official representative of the company.

Workplace Privacy and Right to Inspect

In this policy, you can communicate that to the extent permitted by law, your company reserves the right to monitor employees' use of communication, documents and IT systems. You can also include that emails, as well as other electronic communications such as voicemail, are the company's property and as such, may be accessed by the company at any time without notice.

A company's workplace privacy and right to inspect policy can also extend to reserving the right to search or inspect whatever employees bring with them or store at the company location or at any site at which they perform work on behalf of the company or its clients.

Employees' right to privacy in the workplace is limited. In matters of workplace privacy, the courts will balance the



**Workplace
Privacy and Right
to Inspect Cont'd**

employer's need to know versus the employee's reasonable expectation of privacy. Workplace privacy policies generally specifically state that employees should have no reasonable expectation of privacy with regards to company equipment, systems or work locations.



Benefits

Time Off and Leaves of Absence

It's important to clearly communicate your company's [leave policies](#) to employees, keeping in mind that requirements vary significantly from state to state.



Vacation/PTO

While employers in most states are not legally obligated to provide vacation to their employees, many opt to do so. Be sure to check if you have employees in a state where paid leave for ‘any reason’ is required. Vacation or personal time off (PTO) policies and procedures should be clearly communicated to employees. Whether your company provides a specific number of days or hours or offers [unlimited PTO](#), convey the parameters to employees via your handbook.

If you do choose to offer time off for vacation, there may be some specific state or local requirements that apply to how carryover of unused accrued time should be treated, as well as whether and how unused vacation time should be paid out upon termination.

Sick Leave

While there is no federal requirement for U.S. employers to provide sick leave, there are many sick leave laws at the state and local level throughout the country. These requirements vary greatly, with some areas requiring paid sick leave, some requiring unpaid sick leave, and some with no requirement. Some sick leave laws include specific requirements on accrual and carryover. Most allow for the use of a PTO bucket as an alternative to designated sick leave if minimum requirements are met.

If you have remote employees, the sick leave laws in the location where they are performing work for your company apply to them. So, even if your company is based in a location that does not require sick leave, you would be required to provide this type of leave to any employees who live in an area that is protected under such a law.

Work closely with legal counsel in order to craft a sick leave policy that is compliant with all jurisdictions in which you have employees.



Personal Days

A company might draw a distinction between personal days and vacation days to differentiate appropriate qualifying reasons for usage and notification requirements for each. Personal day usage might include the observance of religious observances or time off to attend to a sudden non-medical personal situation.

Holidays

Private employers aren't required to provide employees with paid holidays, but many employers do so. Employers are free to recognize whatever holidays they wish, whether federal, religious, or otherwise. Organizations focused on building an inclusive culture often provide [floating holidays](#) that employees can choose to use as they see fit.

Parental Leave

By law, employers may be required to offer job-protected time off and other benefits to employees who meet certain criteria under applicable federal, state, and local family medical leave laws or paid family leave laws. Some states require the participation in a leave insurance plan that provides paid leave and some states require the entitlement to time off that may be unpaid. At this point, a handful of states have statutory paid parental leave. However, none of those programs provide employees with 100% salary continuation, and eligibility is sometimes based in part on an employee's length of tenure.

Employers, both in states with and without paid family leave laws, can choose to be more generous than these laws and continue their employees' wages for a defined period. Your company may offer a period of paid leave to new parents following the arrival of a new child, at full or partial pay. Detail the leave benefits, namely the percentage of salary that will be continued and for how long, and whether health insurance benefits will remain active and that your employer contribution to premiums will continue for the employee and enrolled dependents.

**Parental
Leave Cont'd**

Federal, state, and local laws exist that may require you to reinstate the employee upon their return from work to their former or a similar position at their prior compensation.

Bereavement

A few states now require certain employers to provide bereavement leave to employees. Beyond that, many companies will offer bereavement leave to employees following the death of a family member. If you have this type of policy, be sure to define which familial relationships qualify the employee for bereavement leave.

Jury Duty

Employers are required to allow their employees to take leave for federal jury duty service. State and local laws may require employers to provide leave for state or local jury service and, depending on the jurisdiction, paid jury duty leave may be required. Work with legal counsel to ascertain your statutory obligations for employees serving jury duty, keeping in mind that you're obligated to follow the laws specific to where the employee who has been summoned to jury duty lives.

Military Leave

Detail the company's policy on military leave, as it complies with the requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). This law serves to ensure that people are not in any way disadvantaged in their civilian careers on the basis of past, present, or future military service or obligations. State law may impose additional requirements beyond those specified under federal law.

**FMLA
(if applicable)**

Employers covered by the [Family Medical Leave Act](#) (FMLA) must include a general notice explaining the FMLA's provisions in their employee handbook. Private sector U.S. employers that employ 50 or more employees in 20 or more work weeks in the

**FMLA Cont'd**

current or previous calendar year are covered under the FMLA, whether or not any of their employees are eligible for family medical leave (FML) under the law.

The FMLA provides job-protection to employees for certain medical, family related, and military leaves of absence. An employee is eligible for FMLA who has worked for the same employer for at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months and is employed at a worksite with at least 50 employees within a 75 mile radius.

Other State-Law Protected Leave Policies

State and local laws may impose different or additional requirements on employers, including requiring employers to provide additional types of leave. For example, some states have their own versions of family or medical leave that apply to smaller companies or apply in different situations than federal FML.

Some states or localities require additional types of leave, such as leave for victims of domestic violence or crime or voting leave. Employers should maintain a written policy that addresses eligibility and the procedures for each type of leave required under state/local laws that apply to the company or in jurisdictions where the employer has employees.

Health Benefits

Provide a brief overview of [health benefits](#) that focuses on who is eligible and when employees become eligible to participate in available plans. Refer employees to the benefit plan documents for specific details such as plan availability and pricing. Specify where these documents can be accessed and indicate that current benefit plan documents are controlling



with regards to accurate information about available programs and coverage.

Ancillary Benefits

If applicable, briefly touch on non-health benefits you provide access to, along with who is eligible to participate. This includes voluntary benefits like disability insurance, accidental death and dismemberment coverage, and pet insurance. It also includes [fringe benefits](#) such as commuter or transportation allowances and reimbursement for fitness club membership.

Rather than listing specifics in the handbook, refer employees to external documentation for specifics about what is available and how much each option costs. This is important, because benefits availability and pricing may change annually, or even more frequently with some programs.



Safety and Loss Prevention

Policy Against Workplace Violence

Every organization needs to develop a workplace violence policy that addresses both prevention and what to do if faced with a situation that is or seems likely to become a workplace violence incident. Include detailed procedures for responding to a situation in the workplace where employees' immediate physical





**Policy Against
Workplace
Violence Cont'd**

safety is threatened, as well as how to report situations that may indicate that an act of workplace violence is imminent.

**Emergency
Preparedness**

Every organization should have a detailed emergency preparedness plan and a business continuity plan, with a brief overview included in the employee handbook. Include things like the company's approach to things like safety drills and procedures (such as fire evacuation plans), weather closures, and procedures for attempting contact following a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other emergency. Procedures should prioritize the safety of employees and customers above all else.

**Substance
Abuse in the
Workplace Policy**

Substance abuse policies generally state that the organization is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive work environment. Outline the types of activities and substances that are prohibited while employees are performing services for the company or on the company's premises (e.g., the unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of any illegal drug). If you plan to drug test, be sure to be aware of how to respond to certain results such as [legal marijuana usage](#).

Be sure to check state and local laws as there may be specific requirements for prohibiting the use of illegal drugs and alcohol in the workplace, as well as limits on how a company's substance abuse policy can be applied to workers in non-safety sensitive jobs if they have a prescription for medical marijuana. If your company is a federal contractor or grant recipient with contracts totaling \$100,000 or more in a year, you'll need to make sure your policy complies with the [Drug Free Workplace Act](#) (DFWA).

**Confidential Information**

The purpose of a confidentiality policy is to protect the company's confidential information, including intellectual property, trade secrets, proprietary information, and commercially-sensitive information. This policy should state the importance of maintaining confidentiality for certain business information and remind employees of their obligations to keep this information confidential. It should define confidential information and specify how employees are expected to handle this information, as well as advise employees of the consequences they may face for improperly using or disclosing confidential information.

Acknowledgment of Receipt and Review

As a best practice, employers should include an acknowledgment form for employees to sign and return to the employer. The acknowledgment should state that the employee received the handbook, reviewed it and agrees to comply with its provisions. The acknowledgment should also state that the employee is employed on an at-will basis (see "About this Handbook" section for language that can be added if some employees have employment contracts with something other than at-will employment specified) and the employer has the right to modify or delete policies without notice.

A new signature should be obtained anytime an updated version is distributed.



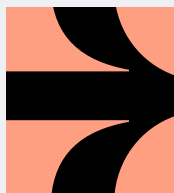
Justworks Can Help

This is just a brief overview of some of the must-have and recommended policies that companies should have. Your employee handbook will likely need to include several additional policies specific to your organization and its needs.

Keeping up with the myriad of policies a company needs to have in place and communicate to team members via a current employee handbook is a big task that can be very time-consuming, especially with new laws, amendments and regulatory updates coming out on what seems like a nonstop basis. That's where Justworks can help!

Justworks takes the busyness out of growing a business and alleviates the unknown.

We've combined a simple platform and exceptional 24/7 customer service with the power of a PEO, so all teams have more time to focus on what matters. Get access to corporate-level benefits, seamless payroll, HR tools, and compliance support—all in one place. Contact us today to find out how Justworks can let you get back to the business of running your business.



Want To Get Started?

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