

# Employee Handbook

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## Welcome

Hello and welcome! Thank you for joining [*Company name*], where we strive to [*state mission statement or values*.] We can't wait to see what you will achieve with us.

This employee handbook defines who we are and how we work together. We will do everything possible to create a fair and productive workplace, but we need your help. We've created this handbook to guide you.

This handbook isn't a contract or a guarantee of employment. It's a collection of our expectations, commitments and responsibilities. Please read this employee handbook carefully and consult it whenever you need to.

## Getting to know our company

[Provide a brief history of your company here. If possible, use illustrations and charts to make this information memorable. Present your company's culture and vision. Avoid jargon and overused phrases (e.g. "competitive," "fast-paced environment," "core values" and "innovative.") Also, it'd be a good idea to include quotes and pictures of your company's founders, CEO or other executives to make this introduction more personable.]

## Employment basics

In this section, we explain our employee contract types and define our basic employment policies.

### Employment contract types

Full-time employees work at least [30 hours] per week or [130 hours] per month on average.

Part-time employees are those who work fewer than [30 hours] per week.

Full-time and part-time employees can have either temporary or indefinite duration contracts. Full-time employees under an indefinite duration contract are entitled to our company's full benefits package.

[Insert this if employees are in the U.S: We remind you that, in the U.S., employment is "at-will." This means that you or our company may terminate our employment relationship at any time and for any non-discriminatory reason(s).]

## Equal opportunity employment

[Company's name] is an equal opportunity employer. We don't tolerate discrimination against protected characteristics (gender, age, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status.) We want all employees (including executives and HR) to treat others with respect and professionalism. In practice, this means that we:

- [Hire and promote people based on skills, experience or potential and try to reduce bias in every process (e.g. through structured interviews.)]
- [Make accommodations to help people with disabilities move about safely on our premises and use our products, services and equipment.]
- [Use inclusive, diversity-sensitive language in all official documents, signs and job ads.]
- [Conduct diversity and communication training.]

Apart from those actions, we commit to penalizing every discriminatory, offensive or inappropriate behavior. To do this properly, we ask you to report any discriminatory action against yourself or your colleagues to HR. Our company will not retaliate against you if you file a complaint or discrimination lawsuit. Any employee who retaliates or discriminates will face disciplinary action.

## Recruitment and selection process

Our hiring steps might vary across roles, but we always aim for a process that is fair and effective in hiring great people. If you are hiring for an open role, you will likely go through these steps:

- i. Identify the need for a new job opening.
- ii. Decide whether to hire externally or internally.
- iii. Review job descriptions and write a job ad.
- iv. Get approval for your job ad.
- v. Select appropriate sources (external or internal) to post your job opening.
- vi. Decide on hiring stages and possible timeframes.
- vii. Review resumes in our company database/ATS.
- viii. Source passive candidates.
- ix. Shortlist applicants.

- x. Screen and interview candidates.
- xi. Run background checks and check references.
- xii. Select the most suitable candidate.
- xiii. Make an official offer.

Steps may overlap, so skip steps when appropriate. Each member of a hiring team might have different responsibilities (e.g. recruiters source and hiring managers interview candidates.)

Throughout this process, we aim to keep candidates informed, communicate well with each other and give everyone an equal opportunity to work with us. Ask our recruiters for help whenever you need to enhance candidate experience or write an inclusive job description.

## Background checks

If you want to run background checks on candidates, ask HR for guidance. This process is sensitive and we must always abide by laws and ensure candidates understand our intentions. As a general rule, commission a background check for finalists only. Use our contracted provider and ensure you have your candidates' permission.

## Referrals

If you know someone who you think would be a good fit for a position at our company, feel free to refer them. If we end up hiring your referred candidate, you are eligible for [[\\$3000](#)] referral bonus or [[a trip to a destination of your choice/ Amazon coupons](#).] Our employee referral rewards may be higher if we hire your referred candidate in a hard-to-fill role. For example, if we hire your referral for the position of [[Data Scientist](#)], you may receive [[\\$6000](#).]

### **Additional rules for rewards:**

- We guarantee that every reward will be paid out within [[a month](#)] of the date we hired a candidate.
- There is no cap on the number of referrals an employee can make. All rewards will be paid accordingly.
- If two or more employees refer the same candidate, only the first referrer will receive the referral incentives.

- Referrers are still eligible for rewards even if a candidate is hired at a later time or gets hired for another position.

## Who can be referred?

We have two conditions for candidates who can qualify you for our rewards. They should:

- Have not applied to our company for at least a year.
- Be hired as permanent full- or part-time employees (not as temporary employees or contractors.)

Our company may use an online form or a platform where employees may refer candidates. You can also reach out directly to our [[HR/recruiters/Talent Acquisition Manager](#)] with referrals.

Generally, we encourage you to check our open positions and consider your social networks and external networks as potential resources for referred candidates.

Keep in mind that rewards may be subject to taxation. Please contact HR or our referral program manager for more information.

## Attendance

We expect you to be present during your scheduled working hours. If you face an emergency that prevents you from coming to work one day, contact your manager as soon as possible. We will excuse unreported absences in cases of [[serious accidents, acute medical emergencies](#).] But, whenever possible, we should know when you won't be coming in.

## Workplace policies

This section describes policies that apply to everyone at our company: employees, contractors, volunteers, vendors and stakeholders alike. These policies help us build a productive, lawful and pleasant workplace.

### Confidentiality and data protection

We want to ensure that private information about clients, employees, partners and our company is well-protected. Examples of confidential information are:

- Employee records
- Unpublished financial information
- Data of customers/partners/vendors
- Customer lists (existing and prospective)
- Unpublished goals, forecasts and initiatives marked as confidential

As part of our hiring process, we may ask you to sign non-compete and non-disclosure agreements (NDAs.) We are also committed to:

- Restrict and monitor access to sensitive data.
- Develop transparent data collection procedures.
- Train employees in online privacy and security measures.
- Build secure networks to protect online data from cyberattacks.
- Establish data protection practices (e.g. secure locks, data encryption, frequent backups, access authorization.)

We also expect you to act responsibly when handling confidential information.

**You must:**

- Lock or secure confidential information at all times.
- Shred confidential documents when they're no longer needed.
- Make sure you view confidential information on secure devices only.
- Only disclose information to other employees when it's necessary and authorized.
- Keep confidential documents inside our company's premises unless it's absolutely necessary to move them.

**You must not:**

- Use confidential information for your personal benefit or profit.
- Disclose confidential information to anyone outside of our company.
- Replicate confidential documents and files and store them on insecure devices.

This policy is important for our company's legality and reputation. We will terminate any employee who breaches our confidentiality guidelines for personal profit.

We may also discipline any unintentional breach of this policy depending on its frequency and seriousness. We will terminate employees who repeatedly disregard this policy, even when they do so unintentionally.

## Harassment and violence

To build a happy and productive workplace, we need everyone to treat others well and help them feel safe. Each of us should do our part to prevent harassment and workplace violence.

### Workplace harassment

Harassment is a broad term and may include seemingly harmless actions, like gossip. We can't create an exhaustive list, but here are some instances that we consider harassment:

- [*Sabotaging someone's work on purpose.*]
- [*Engaging in frequent or unwanted advances of any nature.*]
- [*Commenting derogatorily on a person's ethnic heritage or religious beliefs.*]
- [*Starting or spreading rumors about a person's personal life.*]
- [*Ridiculing someone in front of others or singling them out to perform tasks unrelated to their job (e.g. bringing coffee) against their will.*]

Sexual harassment is illegal and we will seriously investigate relevant reports. If an employee is found guilty of sexual harassment, they will be terminated.

If you're being harassed, whether by a colleague, customer or vendor, you can choose to talk to any of these people:

- **Offenders.** If you suspect that an offender doesn't realize they are guilty of harassment, you could talk to them directly in an effort to resolve the harassment. This tactic is appropriate for cases of minor harassment (e.g. inappropriate jokes between colleagues.) Avoid using this approach with customers or stakeholders.
- **Your manager.** If customers, stakeholders or team members are involved in your claim, you may reach out to your manager. Your manager will assess your situation and may contact HR if appropriate.

- **HR.** Feel free to reach out to HR in any case of harassment no matter how minor it may seem. For your safety, contact HR as soon as possible in cases of serious harassment (e.g. sexual advances) or if your manager is involved in your claim. Anything you disclose will remain confidential.

## Workplace violence

Violence in our workplace is a serious form of harassment. It includes physical and sexual assault, destruction of property, threats to harm a person or property and verbal and psychological abuse. We want to avoid those incidents altogether, but we also want to be ready to respond if needed.

For this reason, we ask you to:

- [*Report to HR if you suspect or know that someone is being violent. Your report will be confidential and we will investigate the situation with discretion.*]
- [*Call our building's security if you witness incidents of severe physical violence (e.g. ones that involve a lethal weapon.) For your safety, avoid getting involved.*]

We will treat employees who verbally threaten others as high risk and they will receive an appropriate penalty. If HR finds that an employee commits an act of violence, we will terminate that employee and possibly press criminal charges. Employees who damage property deliberately will be solely responsible for paying for it.

## Supporting victims

To support victims of workplace violence, we may:

- [*Cover relevant medical bills.*]
- [*Pay for mental health treatment if needed.*]
- [*Provide victims with our lawyer's services to help them file lawsuits.*]

## Get help early on

Seek help from others early on to mitigate conflicts. For example:

- If you experience conflicts with a colleague, ask your manager for advice before tensions escalate. If these conflicts persist, ask HR whether you could attend conflict resolution seminars with your colleague.

- If you are experiencing personal or work troubles, ask for help from a [*mental health professional*.] Check with your insurance provider to determine whether they cover any mental health services or ask HR for information on our Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Your discussions will remain confidential.

Our workplace is founded on mutual respect and we won't allow anyone to compromise this foundation.

## Workplace safety and health

Our company is committed to creating a hazard-free workplace. To this end, we will ensure workplace safety through preventative action and emergency management.

### Preventative action

Preventative actions are any actions we take to avoid injuries or illnesses related to the workplace. We will periodically conduct risk assessments and job hazard analyses [*through a workplace safety committee*] to uncover health risks to employees. And we will establish preventative measures to address risks accordingly.

At a minimum, we will:

- [*Hold employee training sessions on safety standards and procedures.*]
- [*Make sure employees who work in dangerous locations are safe.*]
- [*Provide protective gear like gloves, protective uniforms and goggles.*]
- [*Direct inspectors and quality control employees to evaluate equipment and infrastructure regularly.*]

We also expect you to take safety seriously. Always use protective equipment and follow standards whenever necessary. If you deliberately disregard our guidelines, we may terminate you for your own and others' safety.

### Emergency management

Emergency management refers to our plan to deal with sudden catastrophes like fire, floods, earthquakes or explosions. Our emergency management provisions include:

- [*Functional smoke alarms and sprinklers that are regularly inspected.*]
- [*Technicians (external or internal) available to repair leakages, damages and blackouts quickly.*]
- [*Fire extinguishers and other fire protection equipment that are easily accessible.*]

- [*An evacuation plan posted on each floor and online.*]
- [*Fire escapes and safety exits that are clearly indicated.*]

## Smoking

[*Company's name*] is a smoke-free workplace. You can smoke in [*designated smoking areas, balconies, open-air verandas and outer premises, like gardens and sidewalks.*]

Any other area in our workplace (like restrooms, lobby, offices, staircases, warehouses) is strictly smoke-free to protect non-smokers.

We also advise you to:

- Extinguish your cigarettes and discard them in [*outdoor ashtrays, cigarette urns.*]
- Avoid smoking when you have scheduled meetings with clients or vendors.
- Avoid smoking near flammable objects and areas.

Setting off fire alarms and causing fires by smoking are serious offenses. If you are found responsible, you may face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Drug-free workplace

[*Company's name*] is a drug-free workplace. Whether you are an employee, contractor or visitor, you must not bring, use, give away or sell any drugs on company premises. If you are caught with illegal drugs, or show that you are under the influence of substances, you will face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

A list of prohibited drugs and substances includes, but isn't limited to:

- [*heroin/cocaine/methamphetamine in any form*]
- [*marijuana*]

## Alcohol

We prohibit employees from consuming alcohol during working hours, but they may consume alcoholic drinks in moderation at company events.

## Prescription drugs

If you feel that a prescription drug (e.g. an anxiety medication) unexpectedly affects your senses, thinking or movement, ask for the rest of your day off. If your manager suspects substance abuse, you may face disciplinary action.

You [*must not*] use medical marijuana in our workplace. We have the right to terminate you if your off-duty use of medical marijuana makes you unable to complete your job duties correctly.

We expect employees who hold safety-sensitive jobs (e.g. machine operators or drivers) to be fully alert and capable of performing their duties at all times. We may terminate you if we conclude your prescription drug use creates severe safety risks. If you need to use prescription drugs for a limited time and you think they may impair your abilities, use your PTO or sick leave.

If your job includes secondary tasks that are safety-sensitive and your prescribed drugs affect your ability to perform these tasks, we can make reasonable accommodations to ensure you and your colleagues' safety.

### **Dealing with addiction**

Being sober is a prerequisite to thriving at our company and we want to help you as much as possible. We offer Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) that can help employees overcome addictions. If you face a relevant problem, please reach out to our [*EAP Officer*.]

We won't tolerate substance addiction that results in violent, offensive or inappropriate behavior.

## **Employee Code of Conduct**

As an employee, all company policies mentioned above apply to you. We have some additional expectations about your behavior at work, which we outline here. We can't cover every single case of conduct, but we trust you to always use your best judgement. Reach out to your manager or HR if you face any issues or have any questions.

### **Dress code**

Our company's official dress code is [*Business/ Business Casual/ Smart Casual/ Casual*.] This includes [*slacks/ loafers/ blouses/ boots*.] However, an employee's position may also inform how they should dress. If you frequently meet with clients or prospects, conform to a more formal dress code. We expect you to be clean when coming to work and avoid wearing clothes that are unprofessional (e.g. workout clothes.)

As long as you conform with our guidelines above, we don't have specific expectations about what types of clothes or accessories you should wear.

We also respect and permit grooming styles, clothing and accessories that are dictated by religious beliefs, ethnicity or disability.

## Cyber security and digital devices

This section deals with all things digital at work. We want to set some guidelines for using computers, phones, our internet connection and social media to ensure security and protect our assets.

### Internet usage

Our corporate internet connection is primarily for business. But, you can occasionally use our connection for personal purposes as long as they don't interfere with your job responsibilities. Also, we expect you to temporarily halt personal activities that slow down our internet connection (e.g. uploading photos) if you're asked to.

You must not use our internet connection to:

- Download or upload obscene, offensive or illegal material.
- Send confidential information to unauthorized recipients.
- Invade another person's privacy and gain access to sensitive information.
- Download or upload pirated movies, music, material or software.
- Visit potentially dangerous websites that can compromise our network and computers' safety.
- Perform unauthorized or illegal actions, like hacking, fraud or buying/selling illegal goods.

### Cell phone

We allow use of cell phones at work. But, we also want to ensure that your devices won't distract you from your work or disrupt our workplace. We ask you to follow a few simple rules:

- Use your cell phone in a manner that benefits your work (business calls, productivity apps, calendars.)
- Keep personal calls brief and use an empty meeting room or common area so as not to disturb your colleagues.

- Avoid playing games on your phone or texting excessively.
- Avoid using your phone for any reason while driving a company vehicle.
- Don't use your phone to record confidential information.
- Don't download or upload inappropriate, illegal or obscene material using our corporate internet connection.

Also, you must not use your phone in areas where cell phone use is explicitly prohibited (e.g. laboratories.)

## Corporate email

Email is essential to our work. You should use your company email primarily for work, but we allow some uses of your company email for personal reasons.

- **Work-related use.** You can use your corporate email for work-related purposes without limitations. For example, you can sign up for newsletters and online services that will help you in your job or professional growth.
- **Personal use.** You can use your email for personal reasons as long as you keep it safe, and avoid spamming and disclosing confidential information. For example, you can send emails to friends and family and download ebooks, guides and other safe content for your personal use.

## Our general expectations

No matter how you use your corporate email, we expect you to avoid:

- Signing up for illegal, unreliable, disreputable or suspect websites and services.
- Sending unauthorized marketing content or emails.
- Registering for a competitor's services, unless authorized.
- Sending insulting or discriminatory messages and content.
- Intentionally spamming other people's emails, including your coworkers.

In general, use strong passwords and be vigilant in catching emails that carry malware or phishing attempts. If you are not sure that an email you received is safe, ask our [*Security Specialists*.]

## Social media

We want to provide practical advice to prevent careless use of social media in our workplace.

We address two types of social media uses: using personal social media at work and representing our company through social media.

### **Using personal social media at work**

You are permitted to access your personal accounts at work. But, we expect you to act responsibly, according to our policies and ensure that you stay productive. Specifically, we ask you to:

- **Discipline yourself.** Avoid getting sidetracked by your social platforms.
- **Ensure others know that your personal account or statements don't represent our company.** For example, use a disclaimer such as "opinions are my own."
- **Avoid sharing intellectual property (e.g trademarks) or confidential information.** Ask your manager or PR first before you share company news that's not officially announced.
- **Avoid any defamatory, offensive or derogatory content.** You may violate our company's anti-harassment policy if you direct such content towards colleagues, clients or partners.

### **Representing our company through social media**

If you handle our social media accounts or speak on our company's behalf, we expect you to protect our company's image and reputation. Specifically, you should:

- Be respectful, polite and patient.
- Avoid speaking on matters outside your field of expertise when possible.
- Follow our confidentiality and data protection policies and observe laws governing copyrights, trademarks, plagiarism and fair use.
- Coordinate with our [*PR/Marketing department*] when you're about to share any major-impact content.
- Avoid deleting or ignoring comments for no reason.
- Correct or remove any misleading or false content as quickly as possible.

## Conflict of interest

When you are experiencing a conflict of interest, your personal goals are no longer aligned with your responsibilities towards us. For example, accepting a bribe may benefit you financially, but it is illegal and against our business code of ethics. If we become aware of such behaviour, you will lose your job and may face legal trouble.

For this reason, conflicts of interest are a serious issue for all of us. We expect you to be vigilant to spot circumstances that create conflicts of interest, either to yourself or for your direct reports. Follow our policies and always act in our company's best interests. Whenever possible, do not let personal or financial interests get in the way of your job. If you are experiencing an ethical dilemma, talk to your manager or HR and we will try to help you resolve it.

## Employee relationships

We want to ensure that relationships between employees are appropriate and harmonious. We outline our guidelines and we ask you to always behave professionally.

### Fraternization

Fraternization refers to dating or being friends with your colleagues. In this policy, "dating" equals consensual romantic relationships and sexual relations. Non-consensual relationships constitute sexual violence and we prohibit them explicitly.

### Dating colleagues

If you start dating a colleague, we expect you to maintain professionalism and keep personal discussions outside of our workplace.

You are also obliged to respect your colleagues who date each other. We won't tolerate sexual jokes, malicious gossip and improper comments. If you witness this kind of behavior, please report it to HR.

### Dating managers

To avoid accusations of favoritism, abuse of authority and sexual harassment, supervisors must not date their direct reports. This restriction extends to every manager above an employee.

Also, if you act as a hiring manager, you aren't allowed to hire your partner to your team. You can refer them for employment to other teams or departments where you don't have any managerial or hiring authority.

## **Friendships at work**

Employees who work together may naturally form friendships either in or outside of the workplace. We encourage this relationship between peers, as it can help you communicate and collaborate. But, we expect you to focus on your work and keep personal disputes outside of our workplace.

## **Employment of relatives**

Everyone in our company should be hired, recognized or promoted because of their skills, character and work ethic. We would not like to see phenomena of nepotism, favoritism or conflicts of interest, so we will place some restrictions on hiring employees' relatives.

To our company, a "relative" is someone who is related by blood or marriage within the third degree to an employee. This includes: parents, grandparents, in-laws, spouses or domestic partners, children, grandchildren, siblings, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, step-parents, step-children and adopted children.

As an employee, you can refer your relatives to work with our company. Here are our only restrictions:

- [*You must not be involved in a supervisory/reporting relationship with a relative.*]
- [*You cannot be transferred, promoted or hired inside a reporting relationship with a relative.*]
- [*You cannot be part of a hiring committee, when your relative is interviewed for that position.*]

If you become related to a manager or direct report after you both become employed by our company, we may have to [*transfer one of you.*]

## **Workplace visitors**

If you want to invite a visitor to our offices, please ask for permission from our [*HR Manager/ Security Officer/ Office Manager*] first. Also, inform our [*reception/ gate/ front-office*] of your visitor's arrival. Visitors should sign in and show identification. They will receive passes and will be asked to return them to [*reception/ gate/ front-office*] once their visit is complete.

When you have office visitors, you also have responsibilities. You should:

- Always tend to your visitors (especially when they are underage.)
- Keep your visitors away from areas where there are dangerous machines, chemicals, confidential records or sensitive equipment.
- Prevent your visitors from proselytizing your colleagues, gathering donations or requesting participation in activities while on our premises.

Anyone who delivers orders, mail or packages for employees should remain at our building's reception or gate. If you are expecting a delivery, [*front office employees/security guards*] will notify you so you may collect it.

## Solicitation and distribution

Solicitation is any form of requesting money, support or participation for products, groups, organizations or causes which are unrelated to our company (e.g. religious proselytism, asking for petition signatures.) Distribution means disseminating literature or material for commercial or political purposes.

We don't allow solicitation and distribution by non-employees in our workplace. As an employee, you may solicit from your colleagues only when you want to:

- Ask colleagues to help organize events for another employee (e.g. adoption/birth of a child, promotion, retiring.)
- Seek support for a cause, charity or fundraising event sponsored, funded, organized or authorized by our company.
- Invite colleagues to employee activities for an authorized non-business purpose (e.g. recreation, volunteering.)
- Ask colleagues to participate in employment-related activities or groups protected by law (e.g. trade unions.)

In all cases, we ask that you do not disturb or distract colleagues from their work.

## Compensation & development

In this section, we outline our guidelines for compensating employees according to their employment status. We also describe our performance management and employee development policies.

## Compensation status

[Insert this section if you are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) in the U.S.]

There are two types of employees under FLSA guidelines:

- **Non-exempt employees**, who are covered by the FLSA's minimum wage and overtime provisions.
- **Exempt employees**, who aren't covered by the FLSA because they meet three exemption criteria: (a) they are paid at least [\$23,600] per year ([\\$455] per week), (b) they are paid on a salary basis, and (c) they perform exempt job duties ("executive," "professional" and "administrative.") Most employees must meet all three criteria to be exempt.

If you are unsure as to whether you should be exempt or not, please ask HR to clarify your status.

The FLSA excludes some types of jobs (e.g. railroad workers, truck drivers) because they are covered by other federal laws. Some other workers, like outside salespeople, are excluded by definition. Feel free to ask HR for clarifications any time.

## Overtime

Occasionally, we may need you to work more than your regular working hours. We will pay for overtime work according to local and national laws.

[Insert this if employees are in the U.S: If you are an exempt employee, you are not entitled to overtime pay by federal law. In the event that an exempt employee must work overtime, we will set a cap for overtime hours at [10 hours per week] to prevent overworking and burnout.

If you are a non-exempt employee, you are entitled to overtime pay of one and a half times your wage. Please record your overtime hours accurately, so we can calculate your pay correctly. We also ask you to work overtime only after it's authorized by your supervisor to make our record-keeping easier.]

## Payroll

We pay your salary or wage [*at the end of month/ every 15th and end of month*] by [*checks/ bank transfers/ cash*.] If you are an hourly employee, you should be diligent [*in clocking in and out/using our timesheet software*] so we can accurately calculate your pay.

## Performance management

We have built our performance management practices to:

- Ensure you understand your job responsibilities and have specific goals to meet.
- Provide you with actionable and timely feedback on your work.
- Invest in development opportunities that help you grow professionally.
- Recognize and reward your work in financial or non-financial ways (e.g. employee awards.)

To meet these objectives, we have:

- Established [*annual/ bi-annual/ quarterly*] performance reviews. During these reviews, your manager will fill out your performance evaluation report and arrange a meeting with you to discuss it. Through these discussions, managers aim to recognize employees who are good at their jobs, identify areas of improvement and talk about career moves. Pay increases or bonuses are not guaranteed. But, we encourage managers to recommend rewards for their team members when they deserve them. There won't be any forced ranking or other comparison between employees, as our goal is to help all employees improve and develop their careers.
- Instructed all managers to meet with their team members once per [*week*] to provide feedback and talk about their work and motivations. This way, you can receive feedback in a timely manner and avoid surprises during your [*annual/ bi-annual/ quarterly*] performance review.

### How we expect managers to lead employees

If you manage a team, you are responsible for your team members' performance. To conduct effective regular meetings and performance evaluations, we expect you to:

- **Set clear objectives.** Your team members should know what you expect of them. When you first hire someone to your team, ensure they understand their job duties. Set specific goals for each team member (and team-wide if

applicable.) Revisit those goals during [*annual/ bi-annual/ quarterly*] performance reviews.

- **Provide useful feedback.** During scheduled meetings with your team members, give them both guidance and praise, as appropriate. Be fair and specific to help them understand and implement your feedback.
- **Keep your team members involved.** There should be two-way communication between you and your team. Make your expectations clear, but always take your team members' motivations and aspirations into account. Discuss training and development opportunities that may interest your team members.
- **Keep logs with important incidents about each one of your team members.** These logs help you evaluate your team, but may also prove useful when rewarding, promoting or terminating your team members.

## Employee training and development

We owe our success to our employees. To show our gratitude, we will invest in our employees professional development. We want employees to feel confident about improving their efficiency and productivity. We also want to help our employees achieve personal growth and success.

Each employee has [*\$1,000*] annually to spend on educational activities or material. Subscriptions and books are included in this budget, unless they are necessary for you to complete your everyday duties. Send your expenses to HR [*by email/ expenses software.*]

Apart from online courses, we offer these training opportunities:

- Formal training sessions (individual or corporate.)
- Employee coaching and mentoring.
- Seats at industry conferences.
- On-the-job training.
- Job shadowing.
- Job rotation.

Development is a collective process. Team members and managers should regularly discuss learning needs and opportunities. And it's HR's responsibility to facilitate any development activities and processes.

## Benefits and perks

In this section, we describe what we offer to our employees. We provide information on our health insurance plans and benefits like work from home options and company-issued equipment.

### Employee health

Employee health is important to us. We don't discriminate against people with disabilities or health conditions, but we want to do everything possible to help employees stay healthy. At a minimum, we provide [[group health insurance](#)] to all eligible employees. For more information about our insurance package, contact HR.

[*Insert this if you have more than 20 employees in the U.S: According to the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), you may choose to continue your group health benefits for a limited period after leaving our company. This can happen after you experience a qualifying event, i.e. termination for reasons other than gross misconduct and reduction in your hours of employment. Covered spouses and children may also be able to extend their health coverage after certain qualifying events. Please ask HR for guidance.*]

We have also established non-smoking and substance abuse policies to protect employee health. We will create a workplace with minimal noise and good lighting and offer [[free healthy snacks, wellness programs](#).]

### Workers' compensation

We strive to keep our workplace safe, but accidents may happen occasionally. Employees who are injured at work (by accident or disease) can receive wage replacement, medical care and rehabilitation benefits according to workers' compensation laws, when appropriate. Please inform us of your injury as soon as possible. Ask HR for forms that you need to file a claim or contact your state agency for workers' compensation.

Our company has a workers' compensation policy according to guidelines of the states (or countries) we operate in. [*Insert summary of your workers compensation insurance*

*packages and details on who will handle workers' compensation when employees are injured. If you operate in multiple states or countries, mention any specific guidelines and, if possible, provide employees with contact details of workers compensation boards for the states or countries you operate in.]*

## Work from home

If your job doesn't require you to be present at our premises, you can occasionally work from home (WFH). We normally allow [*one day per week.*] If you need to telecommute for more days per week, talk to your manager.

Please inform your manager that you want to work from home [*using our HRIS*] at least [*two days*] in advance. [*You can also set a recurring WFH day per week.*] If there's a rare emergency, you may work from home without having received prior approval, but call or email your manager as soon as possible. If they are in a different time-zone, contact HR instead.

When you are working from home, please use an internet connection and devices that are fast and secure. Choose a place without loud noises or distractions. And, check in with your team frequently to make collaboration easier.

If there is inclement weather (e.g. a blizzard) please check your [*email*] to see if the office is officially closed. If you judge that your commute during inclement weather is dangerous, let us know. We will not force you to come to work if your safety is at stake or if there is an official travel warning.

## Remote working

Remote working refers to working from a non-office location on a temporary or permanent basis.

If you're an office-based employee, you may work remotely for a maximum of [*two consecutive weeks*] per year. You may arrange this if you [*are a new parent or suffer from a short-term disability.*] If you have another reason, talk to your manager. Submit your remote working requests [*through our HRIS*] at least [*one week*] in advance.

If you work remotely permanently, we ask that you adhere to our security, confidentiality and equal opportunity policies just like your office-based colleagues.

## Employee expenses

There are some expenses that we will pay directly on your behalf (e.g. hotel rooms for work-related travel.) But, we ask you to keep track and report on those reimbursable expenses that you pay yourself. We reimburse employee expenses that are related to:

- [*Business travel*]
- [*Relocation*]
- [*Education and training*]
- [*Upon approval, outings with business partners or colleagues*]

Not all travel expenses are reimbursable. For example, we will pay for your transportation to an airport for work-related travel, but not to a museum for a personal visit. Before traveling for business, contact HR to clarify which expenses are reimbursable within your particular trip.

Please keep receipts for all reimbursable expenses. You can submit them to your manager [*through our expense software*] within [*three months*] after the date of each expense. If your manager approves your expenses, you will receive your reimbursement within [*two*] pay periods [*by check*.]

## Company car

You may drive a company car if you:

- Need it as an indispensable part of your job (e.g. truck drivers and delivery drivers.)
- Receive it as a benefit attached to your job.

Either way, your car belongs to our company. You may use your company vehicle for personal reasons as our policy permits. You will get reimbursed only for approved, business-related expenses.

To get a company car, you should have a valid driver's license and a clean driving record for at least [*two years*.] Drive safe and sober and respect traffic laws and fellow motorists. You should also check your car regularly to ensure gas, tire pressure and all car fluids are at appropriate levels.

We expect you to avoid:

- Smoking in a company car.

- Leasing, selling or lending a company car.
- Using a company car to teach someone how to drive.
- Leaving your company car unlocked, unattended or parked in dangerous areas.
- Allowing unauthorized people to drive a company car, unless an emergency mandates it.

On our part, we will ensure that our cars are safe and in good condition, as well as appropriately insured.

## Accidents

If you are involved in an accident with a company car, contact our HR department immediately, so we can get in touch with our insurance provider. You shouldn't accept responsibility or guarantee payment to another person without authorization.

Follow this policy's guidelines to avoid disciplinary action. For minor offenses, like allowing unauthorized people to drive a company car, we will reprimand you or reclaim your car. But for more serious offenses, like causing an accident while intoxicated, we may terminate you.

## Parking

We will prioritize parking space assignments for [*employees with disabilities, executives and employees who drive company vehicles.*] We will then allocate our remaining parking spaces on a first-come, first-served basis. Interns and trainees may also receive parking spaces. If you want to receive a parking spot, file your request with our [*HR department/ facilities manager.*]

We expect you to keep our parking lot clean and use only your assigned space. Please behave responsibly to avoid causing damage, injury or loss of property.

We will not assume any liability for theft, vandalism, fire or damage regarding an employee's vehicle in our parking lot.

## Company-issued equipment

As an employee, you may receive [*company cell phone, laptop or other device, furniture.*] Unless otherwise mentioned in your contract, any equipment we offer belongs to our company and you may not sell it or give it away. You are also responsible for keeping our equipment safe and in as good condition as possible. If your equipment breaks or malfunctions, let us know so we can arrange to get it repaired.

If you are part of our corporate cell phone plan, please use your phone within our plan's restraints. You may have to pay any extra charges yourself.

### **Theft and damage of company equipment**

Our equipment is insured for theft and damage. We ask you to inform us within [24 hours] if your equipment is stolen or damaged. We might be able to trace stolen laptops and cell phones. Please also file a theft statement (affidavit) with the police and submit a copy to us.

### **Security of company issued devices**

We advise you to keep your company-issued computer, tablet and cell phone secure. You can do this if you:

- Keep all devices password-protected.
- Ensure you do not leave your devices unattended.
- Install security updates for browsers and other systems as soon as updates are available.
- Log into company accounts and systems through secure and private networks only.
- Follow all instructions for disk encryption, anti-malware protection and password management that you received along with your equipment.

## **Time**

In this section, we explain our provisions for your working hours and time off. We include [five] types of leave and holidays.

### **Working hours**

Our company operates between [*9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays*.] You may come to work at any time between [*9 a.m. and 11 a.m.*], depending on your team's needs.

Some departments may work after hours, too [*(e.g. customer support, shipping.)*] If you work in these departments, you will follow a shift schedule as needed.

## Paid time off (PTO)

Employees receive [20 days] of Paid Time Off (PTO) per year. Your PTO accrual begins the day you join our company and you receive [1.7 days per month.] You can take your PTO at any time after your first [week] with us and you [can] use time off you haven't accrued yet. You will earn one additional day per year after your [first year] with our company, with a cap at [25 days overall.]

If you want to use PTO, send a request [*through our HRIS*.] If your manager or HR approves, you are permitted to take your leave. You do not have to specify a reason for requesting PTO.

You [can/cannot] transfer any remaining PTO to the next year. We encourage you to use your time off throughout the year.

If you leave our company, we may compensate accrued PTO with your final paycheck according to local law. When the law doesn't have provisions, we will compensate accrued leave to employees who were not terminated for cause.

## Holidays

Our company observes the following holidays:

- [*New Year's Day*]
- [*Martin Luther King Day*]
- [*President's Day*]
- [*Good Friday/Easter Monday*]
- [*Memorial Day*]
- [*Independence Day*]
- [*Labor Day*]
- [*Columbus Day*]
- [*Veterans Day*]
- [*Thanksgiving Day*]
- [*Christmas Day*]

If a holiday falls on a day when our company doesn't operate (e.g. Sunday), we will observe that holiday on the closest business day.

Our company offers a floating day, which you can take as a holiday any day you choose. If you want to observe a religious holiday that isn't included in our list, we may allow you to take unpaid time off for that day. Or, you may use your PTO.

## Holiday pay

- Exempt employees are entitled to their normal compensation without any deductions.
- Permanent non-exempt employees receive holiday pay as a benefit after they have worked with us for more than [*three months*.]

## Working on a holiday

These holidays are considered “off-days” for most employees. If you need a team member to work on a holiday, inform them at least [*three days*] in advance.

If you are a non-exempt employee, you will receive your regular hourly rate with a premium for working on a holiday. If you are an exempt employee, we will grant you an additional day of PTO that you must take within [*12 months*] after that holiday.

We [*will/ won't*] count hours you worked on a holiday to decide whether you are entitled to overtime pay.

## Sick leave

We offer [*one week*] of [*paid*] sick leave. In states or countries where employees are entitled to a greater number of sick leave days by law, we will follow that law. You can take sick leave to recover from short-term illness, injuries, mental issues and other indisposition. If you have the flu or other contagious disease, please use your sick days.

If you become sick, inform your manager and send a sick leave request [*through our HRIS*.] You may take a partial day off or work from home, but we advise you to rest and recuperate for a day before returning to work.

Use your PTO or arrange for a flexible work schedule if you want to attend routine health care (e.g. doctor's/dentist's appointments.)

Occasionally, we may ask you to submit a physician's note or other medical certification and/or complete a sick leave form. We will do this for insurance purposes if you are absent for more than [*three days*] of sick leave.

## Long-term illness

[Insert this section in your handbook if you employ 50 or more employees in the U.S.:  
The U.S. Family and Medical Leave Act provides employees 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period with the same group health benefits for medical and family reasons. One of those reasons is to recover from a serious health condition or to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition.]

You are eligible for this type of leave if you have worked for us for more than 12 months and you have worked at least 1,250 hours within 12 months before your leave begins. Contact HR for more information when needed.]

## Bereavement leave

Losing a loved one is traumatizing. If this happens to you while you work with us, we want to support you and give you time to cope and mourn.

For this reason, we offer [*three days*] of paid bereavement leave. You may take your bereavement leave on [*consecutive/non-consecutive*] days to:

- Arrange a funeral or memorial service.
- Attend a funeral or memorial service.
- Resolve matters of inheritance.
- Fulfill other family obligations.
- Mourn.

If you have to travel long-distance for a funeral or service, you can take [*two*] additional unpaid days off. If you require more time, please use your PTO.

## Jury duty and voting

If you are called for jury duty and you are an exempt employee, you can take [*one day*] off without deduction from your salary. If local or national law stipulates more days of paid jury duty leave, we will follow the law. On election day, you can take [*two hours*] off to vote. You can take [*a paid half-day off*] if you need to travel a short distance to vote. If your trip lasts more days, please use your PTO.

Hourly employees may take [*one unpaid day*] off for jury duty and voting. If local or national law obliges us to provide hourly employees with paid jury duty leave, we will follow the law.

To keep good records, we ask you to bring us [*a copy of your summons for jury duty and a document that proves you served.*]

## Parental leave

Caring for a newborn is an exciting time for parents. We want to support new mothers and fathers in their first months of parenthood with paternity and maternity leave.

Afterwards, we will continue to support parents with [*flexible work options and child care.*]

### Paternity and maternity leave

[*Insert this if you're covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA): The FMLA provides eligible employees with 12-weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for the birth or adoption of a child. You are eligible for this type of leave if you have worked for us for more than 12 months and you have worked at least 1,250 hours within 12 months before your leave begins. Contact HR for more information when needed.*]

Our company offers [*three months*] of paid maternity and paternity leave. If local or national law stipulates longer leave, we will follow the law.

If you are about to be a new mother or father (either through childbirth or adoption), talk to HR to arrange your leave. Please give us at least [*three months*] notice before your leave begins.

Depending on local or national law, pregnant women can take part of their leave before labor. If you suffer complications during childbirth or have other issues, you can ask for an unpaid leave extension of up to [*two months.*] Contact HR as soon as possible to arrange this.

### Returning to work after parental leave

We are committed to helping new parents transition back to work after their leave ends. We offer:

- [*Remote working/ Flexible hours.*]
- [*Onsite/ External paid day care.*]
- [*Lactation rooms.*]

# Leaving our company

In this section, we describe our procedures regarding resignation and termination of our employees. We also refer to our progressive discipline process that may sometimes result in termination.

*[Insert this if employees are in the U.S: We remind you that in the U.S. employment is “at-will.” This means that you or our company may terminate our employment relationship at any time and for any non-discriminatory reason.]*

## Progressive discipline

Here we outline steps we will take to address employee misconduct. We want to give employees a chance to correct their behavior when possible and assist them in doing so. We also want to ensure that we thoroughly investigate and handle serious offenses.

Our progressive discipline process has six steps of increasing severity. These steps are:

- i. Verbal warning
- ii. Informal meeting with supervisor
- iii. Formal reprimand
- iv. Formal disciplinary meeting
- v. Penalties
- vi. Termination

Different offenses correspond to different steps in our disciplinary process. For example, minor, one-time offenses (e.g. breach of our dress code policy) will trigger Step 1. More severe violations (e.g. sexual harassment) will trigger step 5.

If you manage employees, inform them when you launch a progressive discipline process. Pointing out a performance issue is not necessarily a verbal warning and may be part of your regular feedback. If you judge that progressive discipline is appropriate, let your team member know and ask HR to help you explain our full procedure.

Managers may skip or repeat steps at their discretion. Our company may treat circumstances differently from that described in this policy. But, we are always obliged to act fairly and lawfully and document every stage of our progressive discipline process.

Keep in mind that our company isn't obliged to follow the steps of our progressive discipline process. As you are employed “at-will” in the U.S, we may terminate you

directly without launching a progressive discipline process. For serious offenses (e.g. sexual harassment), we may terminate you without warning.

## Resignation

You resign when you voluntarily inform HR or your manager that you will stop working for our company. We also consider you resigned if you don't come to work for [*three*] consecutive days without notice.

You are not obliged to give us advance notice before resigning. But, for efficiency's sake, and to make sure our workplace runs smoothly, we ask that you give at least [*two weeks*] notice, if possible. If you hold a highly specialized or executive position, we ask that you give us at least [*a month's*] notice, when possible.

We accept verbal resignations, but we prefer that you submit a written and signed notice of resignation for our HR records. We will reply with an acceptance of resignation letter within [*two days*.] HR will inform your manager that you are resigning if you haven't already done so. Whether you want to announce your resignation to your team is up to you, but we encourage you to be open.

## Tuition or relocation reimbursement

If you have relocated or studied at our company's expense, you are bound by your contract to remain with us for at least [*two years*.] If you resign before that period, you may have to reimburse us for part or all of these expenses.

## Forced resignation

You can resign anytime at your own free will and nobody should force you into resignation. Forcing someone into resigning (directly or indirectly) is constructive dismissal and we won't tolerate it. Specifically, we prohibit employees from:

- Creating a hostile or unpleasant environment.
- Demanding or coaxing an employee to resign.
- Victimizing, harassing or retaliating against an employee.
- Forcing an employee to resign by taking unofficial adverse actions (e.g. demotions, increased workload).

## Termination

Terminating an employee is always unpleasant but sometimes necessary. If that happens, we want to ensure we act lawfully and respectfully.

We may terminate an employee either for cause or without cause.

- **For cause termination** is justified when an employee breaches their contract, engages in illegal activities (e.g. embezzlement), disrupts our workplace (e.g. harasses colleagues), performs below acceptable standards or causes damage or financial loss to our company.
- **Without cause termination** refers to redundancies or layoffs that may be necessary if we cease some of our operations or re-assign job duties within teams. We will follow applicable laws regarding notice and payouts.

We will offer severance pay to eligible employees. We may also help employees who were terminated without cause to find work elsewhere, if possible.

We may also compensate accrued vacation and sick leave upon termination, depending on local law. Whenever local law doesn't have relevant stipulations, we will pay accrued leave only to those who weren't terminated for cause. We will also take into account union agreements and abide by agreed terms.

If you manage team members, avoid wrongful dismissal. When you terminate an employee for cause, we expect you to be certain you made the right choice and keep accurate performance and/or disciplinary records to support your decision.

## References

When we terminate employees, we may provide references for those who leave in good standing. This means that employees shouldn't have been terminated for cause. If you are laid off, you may receive references. Please ask your manager.

If you resign, you may ask for references and your manager has a right to oblige or refuse.

## Policy revision

We will always strive for fairness and equal opportunity and penalize offensive and illegal behaviors. But, as laws and our environment change, we may revise and modify some of our policies.

We have established an [*annual*] revision of our handbook to bring it up to date with legislation and employment trends. We also ask you to contact HR if you spot any

inconsistencies or mistakes. And, if you have any ideas about how to improve our workplace, we are happy to hear them.

## Employee acknowledgement

Please sign to acknowledge that you've read this handbook and that you are committed to following our policies. If you need any clarifications, feel free to ask HR.

Date: .../.../...

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