



# The Employee's Handbook

Version: 9.1

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This handbook provides guidelines to the regular employees of MERN IT SOLUTIONS describing benefits, policies, and general information. In this document hereinafter, an employee of MERNIT SOLUTIONS is referred to as "the Employee" and MERN IT SOLUTIONS is referred to as "the Company".

To retain the necessary flexibility in administering the policies and procedures, the Company reserves the right to review, revise, delete and interpret the policies and procedures defined inthis manual at its discretion without notice whenever it determines that such action is warranted.

The contents of this manual do not constitute the terms of an employment agreement. The employee will need to sign an employment agreement for a formal employment with the Company. When in conflict, any terms stipulated in your employment agreement or conveyed to you in writing subsequent to your signing the agreement shall override any stipulation in thisdocument.

The Company retains all managerial and administrative rights and prerogatives entrusted to it and conferred on employers inherently and by law. These include, but are not limited to the right to exercise judgment in establishing and administering policies, practices, and procedures, and to make changes in them; the right to take whatever action is necessary in the Company's judgment to achieve organizational goals; and the right to set the standards of productivity andservices to be rendered, etc.

Failure of the Company to exercise any such prerogative or function in a particular way shall not be considered a waiver of the Company's right to exercise that prerogative or function in the future or to preclude it from exercising that prerogative or function in some other way.

## **2 EMPLOYMENT AND BENEFITS**

The Company's compensation and benefits objectives are designed to attract, retain, and motivate quality employees and provide the highest level of productivity, quality of work andcareer fulfillment. The Company is committed to employing the best skilled

people available to work with and has the vision of “*Right person at Right Job*”.

## 2.1 WORK SCHEDULE

The normal workweek extends from Monday through Friday. Working hours are from *10:00 AM to 07:00 PM* with a total of one hour for break for Namaz & Lunch which is *01:00 PM to 02:00 PM*. Flexible timings may apply with a core-hour term subject to an appropriate approval from the HR via email before at least 3 working days.

Regular employees are required to work *40 hours* per week normally. However, working hours and timings may vary as per need to meet the required deadlines.

For part-time employees, the total work hours per week (or month) and their timings are agreed before signing the employment contract.

## 2.2 LEAVES AND ABSENCE

**Note:** All employees of MERN IT Solutions will be entitled with total (18) leaves starting from every JAN and Ending with every DEC. Out of the total allowed leaves (14) leaves can be en-cashed (excluding medical leaves) every DEC if not availed during every year.

*Any leave or working modality will only be considered valid if approved via email. Sandwich leaves without any valid proof will be considered as absent and may result in voiding the office SOP's e.g if Friday is taken off and upcoming Monday then these will be calculated as 4 leaves. Employee may avail 2 leaves max per month whereas any serious issue can be accepted with exceptions. Breakdown of cadre wise leaves is mentioned below and can be clarified with HR team whenever needed.*

### 2.2.1 CASUAL LEAVE

The Employee may avail a maximum of ten (10) days with pay under this clause. Casual leave (planned holidays) must be applied and approved three (3) days in advance. Employee can avail max 2 leaves in one Month whereas employee is required to inform well before time unless leave request will be rejected-emergency cases will be exempted.

### 2.2.2 MEDICAL LEAVES

The Employee may avail a maximum of four (4) days leaves under this clause.

### 2.2.3 EMERGENCY LEAVES

The Employee may avail a maximum of four (4) days with pay under this clause and will be handled under casual leaves head and can informed via phone/email.

#### **2.2.4 MARRIAGE LEAVES**

The Employee may avail a maximum of five (5) days with pay under this clause.

#### **2.2.5 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS**

The company observes the Gazetted holidays, announced by the Government of Pakistan.

#### **2.2.6 SURPRISE HOLIDAYS**

Holidays announced on 11<sup>th</sup> hour will not be entertained by the company and will be considered as normal working day whereas the compensation of that particular day will be treated as per SOP's.

#### **2.2.7 UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE FROM WORK**

Any absence from work, any circumstances (*other than death of close relatives which include immediate family members*), must be reported to HR not later than 4 hours after the start of the working day on which the absence occurs, giving reasons for the absence and expected date of the return.

The Company have the right to take administrative action on an employee's contract without any prior notice if he /she remains absent for more than three (3) days without reason or notice.

#### **2.2.8 RULES ON LATE COMING**

1. Every employee of the company is expected to be present for the duty at his workplace ten minutes before the start time on all the working days.
2. However, to accommodate the delay which may occur due to valid reason the following relaxation will be available to each employee with effect from 01<sup>st</sup> July 2024.
3. Grace period of 30 minutes will be available to each employee 3 times in a month without any deduction having some valid reason.
4. For delay of more than 3 times of 30 minutes in a month will result in deduction of half day salary.
5. A proper explanation will be called from the chronic late-comers and suitable action will be taken.

### **2.3 RULES ON WORK FROM HOME**

1. The Company "Do Not" encourages Work from Home Modality.

2. Employee can avail work from home with the permission of HR if He/She has a valid reason including medical issues; medical record in hard form needs to be submitted to HR in advance.
3. HR team will assess that resource requesting for WFH will be eligible to work from home or not as health should be the first priority and we encourage our team members to take care of their good health.
4. Without prior notice work from home is not allowed and will be marked as absent.
5. If an employee is not feeling well depending on their health, instead of WFH – he/she will be allowed to take medical leave.

## **2.4 RULES ON SHORT LEAVE**

The following rules will be observed on short leave:

1. Three half an hour either coming late or going early with the permission of the HR will be exempted and no deduction will be made.
2. Between three to four hours delay and leaving the duty early, half day leave will be considered.
3. Any employee requiring more than 4 hours, short leave will be required to apply in advance.

## **2.5 PROVIDENT FUND**

MERN IT Solutions has introduced an internal Provident Fund (PF) savings scheme designed to provide employees with financial security and stability during their long-term job plan. It is an optional fund in which both employees and employers contribute based on their grades. Contribution based on grades will be G4 – 5,000, G3 – 7,000, G2 – 10,000, G1 – 12,500 of their monthly total basic salary on a monthly basis. These contributions accumulate over the employee's working life divided into 3 and 5 year plan.

The main features of a Provident Fund include:

- 1) PF scheme is offered on 3 and 5 year plan basis.
- 2) After completion of 3 years, employee will be awarded with both employee/employers complete share.
- 3) After completion of 5 years, employee will be awarded with both employee/employers share and additional monetary compensation from the company.
- 4) During the tenure if employee wants to leave the company before the agreed timeline of 3/5 years or gets terminated, he/she will get only his/her shared amount till the time of elimination.
- 5) During the tenure if any unfortunate incident happens e.g employee gets deceased before the completion of half tenure than he/she will get their share whereas if any unfortunate incident happens after half tenure than his/her next of kin will receive

lump sum policy amount which he/she selected either 3/5 year plan.

### **3 HEALTH COVERAGE**

Upon completion of the probation period in MERN IT SOLUTIONS employees will be eligible for health coverage. The Company will provide health benefit cards for employees and dependents including spouse and children only to all regular employees.

As MERN IT Solutions always treat their team as Family Members so keeping in view the sincerity and dedication of its valued resources; The Company offers additional maternity benefit to all permanent employees which can be availed by submitting original medical documents to HR and resource will be entitled for 70,000 Rs. cash lump sum.

### **4 FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

The Company provides lunch, tea and clean drinking water to its permanent employees who work in the premises of office free of cost. All employees bound to eat/utilize these items within the office timing and within office premises and no one allowed to take food items provided in office with them outside.

### **5 QUARTERLY DINNER**

Company will Host quarterly dinners for the entire team to foster camaraderie, boost morale, and strengthen team cohesion. It provides an opportunity for everyone to socialize in a relaxed setting outside of work and can contribute to a positive company culture.

Plus, it's a chance for team members to bond and get to know each other better, which can ultimately improve collaboration and communication within the workplace. Make sure to consider everyone's dietary preferences and any other relevant factors to ensure that all team members feel included and valued.

### **6 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DAY**

Company will organize a sports activity day for the entire team which will be a great way to promote team bonding, improve morale, and encourage a healthy lifestyle among our team members.

Considering the interests and preferences of our team members we will choose the sports activities. It include a variety of options such as soccer, cricket, volleyball, basketball, frisbee, relay races, tug-of-war etc..

We encourage friendly competition and team spirit by dividing participants into teams and assigning team colors or themes. Consider awarding prizes or recognition to the

winning teams or individuals.

## 7 MONETARY BONUS

Company Provide Bonuses to its permanent employees. Company can determine the defined criteria and will award a monetary bonus. The bonus amount will be transferred to that employee with Salary and will be divided into upcoming months.

Main points evaluated for awarding the bonus to employee will be as follows

- Punctuality
- Dedication
- Behavior
- Teamwork
- Technical Skills
- Extra Effort
- New Skill Learning
- Communication

## 8 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

As a progressive and dynamic enterprise, it is the objective of the Company to motivate and encourage its employees to be productive contributors. Performance appraisals are used as a powerful tool to assist the Employee and the Company in this task.

Performance reviews will be conducted at specified times during the course of the year.

If an employee would like to get feedback as to how he/she is doing before the scheduled review, they are encouraged to talk to their supervisor.

The Company would also like to remain flexible in order to recognize and reward employees for exceptional contributions. The Company hopes to establish and maintain an environment, which encourages people to do their very best and will always respect and honor employees' contributions.

## 9 SALARY RAISES

All salary increases for the employees are not automatic and therefore as per the company policies they will be granted solely on the basis of year completion starting from July to June every year or before that depending upon employee's performance and meeting the criteria of increment. In other words, salary increases shall be based upon the Company's perception of the Employee's performance and potential with every fiscal year's completion and shall range from 0-15%.

Such raises are generally based on an employee's job performance and, therefore, are granted in recognition of an employee's effectiveness, achievement and demonstrated competence and superior performance in his/her present job.

## 9.1 SALARY INCREMENT CRITERIA

### 9.1.1 EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR & PUNCTUALITY

1. Appearance matters.
2. Be responsible and avoid taking surprise holidays. Make sure your time off is pre planned and HR is well aware of that.
3. Always be on time.

### 9.1.2 COLLABORATION

1. Better communication skills. Always keep in touch with the management and communicate about the progress, any blockers, improvements, or updates
2. Must be team player and help others with their code and learning.
3. Must be a good reviewer. Review the code both dry and local execution. Suggest improvements and avoid duplicates.

### 9.1.3 QUALITY OF WORK

1. Code quality
2. Test coverage. 100% is achievable.
3. In time completion of assigned duties

### 9.1.4 RESPONSIBILITY

1. Management skills (if applicable). Must be able to and willing to take the ownership of the project/feature that your team is working on. You are responsible for the project/feature. In-time completion, quality, improvements, suggestions are expected from you.
2. Ownership of tasks - so that if they are assigned a task, it's not just completing that but also making sure the functional and nonfunctional requirements are met. E.g., is the implementation going to impact other parts, any related code needs any improvements, any bugs found, or any possible improvements found while working on task
3. Shall be willing to go the extra mile to have the assigned task completed. Regardless of if it takes extra time or help from other team members.

### 9.1.5 LEARNING

1. Regular study and keeping in touch with the trends in industry.

2. Articles reading
3. Relevant skills introduced either by completing any online course or some new tool that is directly or indirectly usable for the whole team and for the company. The skills that you learn must be used so that the performance can be measured.

#### **9.1.6 Communication**

Communication skills are integral to professional success and salary increments. They enhance workplace relationships, productivity, leadership, client relations, and contribute significantly to both personal and organizational goals. Investing in developing these skills can lead to greater career advancement and rewards.

### **10 EMPLOYEE EMERGENCY LOAN**

MERN IT SOLUTIONS always treat all its employees like a family member and help the family members whenever required. Company makes available to its employees an emergency loan program which will be considered for only **Emergency cases**.

The purpose of this program is to provide loans to employees who have an immediate need for funds as the result of an emergency and have no other source of money available within the time necessary to act, or who have a dire personal financial hardship.

#### **10.1 ELIGIBILITY:**

All MERN IT SOLUTIONS permanent employees who already completed his/her serving period of at least 2 years will be eligible depends on the approval of Director after presenting case.

#### **10.2 AN “EMERGENCY”:**

For the purposes of this policy, an emergency is considered to be an event that

1. could not be reasonably expected to occur, and
2. is unlikely to occur again

#### **10.3 LOAN LIMITATION:**

The amount of loan must not exceed 700,000 PKR.

#### **10.4 LOAN REPAYMENT TERMS:**

1. The maximum loan repayment period is twelve months and employee must return all amount in installments as agreed with the company within twelve months.
2. Repayment of an emergency loan must be made through a monthly payroll deduction unless an alternate means of repayment is approved in writing by the Director.

3. The first repayment of a loan will be scheduled for the next available payroll deduction, with subsequent payments deducted monthly until the emergency loan is paid in full.
4. All loans are due and payable in full on resignation from job or upon termination of employment from company well before 15 days of leaving the Company.

*Loan payment to any employee is only solely decision of company management and management have the rights to approve or disapprove any application in this regard and employee will not react to this in anyway on rejection of loan.*

*Loans initiation till completion will only be considered valid if processed via email.*

*Loan payment to any employee is only solely decision of company management and management may change the policy as / when required.*

## **11 PROBATION PERIOD**

The employee is subject to a three-month probationary period beginning from the first day of employment.

Confirmation as a regular employee will be dependent upon an individual's performance evaluation during the initial probationary period. If a probationary employee's performance does not meet the Company's evaluation criteria in force, the employee will be counseled accordingly, and a subsequent performance review will be scheduled at a pre-agreed date.

An unsatisfactory performance appraisal may result in the extension of the probation period by up to three months; the total maximum duration of the probationary period may not exceed six months.

## **12 CONFIDENTIALITY**

All regular employees are required to sign an Employee Non-Disclosure Agreement with the company.

Information regarding your salary, bonuses, and any other types of compensation from the Company shall be treated as confidential. The Company requests that the Employee must not discuss these with his/her co-workers. The Company makes every attempt to offer competitive salaries and compensation to each employee. However, the exact details of each individual's terms and conditions of employment should and shall remain Confidential. Only those employees or management officials requiring this information to fulfill their job duties shall have access to it.

Information such as customer and client lists, business and/or marketing plans, growth plans, financial information and data, payroll system information, specifications, code, product/project development plans and other information or data, is to be treated with the utmost level of confidentiality. All such information or data must be safeguarded and the person possessing that information is responsible to see that it remains safeguarded at all times.

Proprietary information, products or data must not be copied unless explicitly. Any and all such information shall be released only with priorwritten consent of the Company, or the persons assigned thereof.

## **13 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Disregarding or failing to conform to these standards shall warrant disciplinary action ranging from a warning notice to dismissal. For your guidance, grounds for disciplinary action and/or dismissal include, but are not limited to, the following

1. Theft, destruction, damage, or unauthorized removal or use of Company property or materials, including documents, records, data, computer programs, training materials and other proprietary information and materials.
2. Careless performance of job responsibilities or inability to perform duties satisfactorily.
3. Gadget Items allocated to team members e.g Laptop, Computer screens etc.. Need to be handled with utmost care and in case any office property is found damaged while in use of employee needs to be paid in cash back as per the recent cost of new item.
4. Commission of any act of violence in the workplace.
5. Any kind of harassment including abusive, sexual, physical will not be tolerated and company will take immediate strict action without any toleration.
6. Forming an association with another employee with a view to collective bargaining with the Company.
7. Insolvency.
8. Conviction by the Court of Law on any criminal offence involving moral turpitude.
9. Negligence that results in injury to personnel, a visitor, or a customer.
10. Falsification of records in the transaction of Company business.
11. Falsification of expense reports.
12. Irregular attendance, unreported, unexcused or excessive absence, abuse of sick leave or abuse of an approved leave of absence or failure to request and obtain an approved leave of absence or an extension in a timely manner.

13. Insubordination, including refusal or failure to perform assigned work.
14. Fighting or provoking a fight or interfering with others in the performance of their jobs.
15. Making malicious, false, or derogatory statements that may damage the integrity or reputation of the Company, its clients or employees.
16. Falsification, misrepresentation, or withholding of pertinent facts in securing employment.
17. Refusal to follow instructions of supervisory or authorized personnel, rude or discourteous conduct toward a supervisor, fellow employees, clients or visitors, or any action which endangers the health or safety of others.
18. Possession, display, or use of explosives, firearms, or other dangerous weapons while on Company property or while functioning as a Company employee.
19. Failure or refusal to follow general policies, rules and regulations of the Company.
20. Disclosing or discussing Company or customer confidential matters to outsiders.
21. Giving or accepting payments and/or undue benefits and/or other inducements inappropriate in the course of ordinary business.
22. Treating coworkers in a way that may be considered disrespectful, slanderous or potentially threatening.
23. Any breach of one or more of the Service Rules for the time being in force.

It is not possible to define rules for every conceivable situation that might arise. Activities not expressly covered in these rules will be handled on a case-by-case basis. All employees are expected to act with good common sense and in a professional manner.

## **14 DUAL SOURCE OF INCOME**

We at MERN IT Solutions does not restrict our employees for doing Freelancing/part time/consultancies but do restrict them on doing full time second job.

Employees may avail this facility of doing part time projects on following conditions...

1. Employees must inform their line Manager about their freelancing which needs to be in knowledge of HR through Line Manager.
2. Office resources including premises, Laptops, Internet, office working hours and other office resources should not be used.
3. Companies tasks should not be delayed due to their own work as if they are doing their work in late hours then daily office work should not be compromised.
4. The company will not entertain any reference check for employees own projects.

5. Employees may do their projects at their own but they are not allowed to work in a group e.g more than 1 employee of MERN IT Solutions is not allowed to work on same project.
6. All the work at MERN IT is copyright protected and owned by MERN IT or its clients. No code snippets, architecture, codebase, design or any other asset can be used for any outside project.
7. The work employees want to do outside the organization needs to be registered and shall be considered in the bi-annual/annual review process as part of learning.

If any employee is found breaching the above-mentioned points then clause no 10 of Employee Contract will be implemented immediately.

## **15 GRIEVANCES AND REPORTING**

It is the aim of the Company to maintain good employee relations and to avoid grievances and disputes. The Company wishes to remain fair and unbiased in all actions, processes and decisions involving, affecting, or concerning its employees but at the same time reserves its rights to exercise or not to exercise all managerial and administrative rights at its discretion and judgment.

Grievances should be resolved, where possible, at the lowest level and therefore employees are encouraged to air their grievances with their immediate supervisor(s) if they deem appropriate.

In case, an Employee feels a need to escalate his/her grievance, he/she should write in confidence to HR at the immediate next or at higher level of management in the Company.