

## Employee handbook(s)

No matter how big or small your company is, an employee handbook should exist. Without some guidelines and expectations in place, you are may be leaving yourself quite vulnerable. Now, larger companies should always have a very detailed employee handbook that asks the employees to perform, act and appear in such manners that are in the best interest of the company. Smaller businesses obviously want the same effects that a large company has, but they may want to have the flexibility to be changing and updating their handbooks as situations arise or as more employees become employed.

There are some things that are of major importance to include in an employee handbook. You definitely want to address what kind of clothing attire is appropriate and that will depend on what kind of company you have and the image that you hope to achieve. You will want to include benefits, vacation, holidays and pay information as well. Addressing the issue of tardiness or absenteeism is also quite important. Employee conduct is also of great importance. You certainly don't want your employees to be fighting or working against each other. If you want a teamwork environment, stress in an employee handbook that it is expected that all employees respect one another and make efforts to get along with one another. To save yourself from some legal issues and headaches, be sure to mention that sexual harassment is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Keep in mind that if your employee handbook mentions that a particular action or issue is not acceptable, it needs to be enforced. If you have a no tolerance mention of sexual harassment and an employee comes to you complaining of harassment, it needs to be addressed immediately. If not, you open yourself up to lawsuits and a huge mess.

Depending on what type of business you have, confidentiality should be mentioned. You can, in fact, have confidentiality forms that should be signed by employees. That way, if you find out that they're leaking information about your company, you can hold them liable for it. That can be difficult to prove, but having a confidentiality policy in place will only discourage those who may be tempted to spread some secrets or at least prove that you will not tolerate any breaches.

Electronics policies in employee handbooks nowadays can be of vital importance. More and more companies are finding that their employees are spending quite a bit of time on the internet and a lot less time performing their job duties. Having rules in place and enforced can save you a lot of grief and protect you from viruses and leaking of information. Plus, why pay your employees to be sitting in an office surfing the internet? Have an electronics policy in your

employee handbook.

You also want to mention in your handbooks what can and will be done if the need arises for discipline. How will warnings, suspensions or dismissals be handled? Cover all of the bases that you feel that are of importance. If you have doubts about something, ask a lawyer or another business owner. Just remember that an employee handbook can set the stage for how your employees behave and perform.