

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS: WHY DO I NEED ONE?

Although no law requires it, employee handbooks should be a staple to every company, whether you have 1 employee or 1,000,000 employees.

Employee handbooks set forth expectations between the employer and the employee. It should provide clear policies and procedures to let an employee know what the company rules are such as dress code, employee benefits, and expected behavior/professionalism. Additionally, in today's internet dominated world, an employee handbook should address social media usage and expectations.

A handbook aids employees in understanding their responsibilities and what they can expect from you as their employer. A handbook can also help you reduce or eliminate detrimental business interruptions, outline the company's policies in responding to complaints, reduce confusion about benefits offered, and minimize employee frustration that often arises from unclear or inconsistently applied guidelines. Simply put, written policies and procedures not only streamline employee management, they can help reduce your company's employment liability by setting forth clear expectations and resolution procedures.

Employee handbooks should have enough detail to articulate each party's responsibilities, without overly burdening the reader. A company's size may dictate the length and some content of the handbook, but usually it should contain information about pay schedules, benefits, dress code, human resource issues, leave, worker's compensation, performance reviews, retirement, drug, alcohol and sexual harassment policies, as well as safety and discipline issues. A company must also ensure that its handbook follows federal, state and local laws.

Once you have developed your internal policies and procedures, it is equally important to review them on a regular basis to confirm they still apply and reflect current best practices as well as State and Federal law. The attorneys at Waldron & Schneider can help you navigate the world of employees by helping you create, review, and update your employee handbook. Please call our office to schedule an appointment.