

bob



All the essentials:

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK TEMPLATE





Your employee handbook is the bible of your business. It's the document that outlines your culture, your mission, your policies, and your expectations. Essentially everything that makes you, you.

This is why creating the perfect employee handbook is such an important task. No matter the size of your company, having a well-written, structured handbook is key.

With this in mind, we've drawn up an outline for the ultimate employee handbook. We've given you the structure of what should be in an effective employee handbook so that you can have the basic blueprint to create and sculpt your own document.

We've split the template up into eight different sections:

- Introduction
- Employment essentials
- Policies and conditions
- Code of conduct
- Compensation and continuing development
- Benefits and perks
- Paid time off and holidays
- Employee resignation and termination

Each of these sections is just as important as the last. They each include information that is vital for your employees, and so they are collectively the perfect go-to guide for employees while they're being **onboarded**, as well as a useful resource to refer back to throughout their employment.

Everyone can benefit from this free employee handbook template for small businesses or large corporations. So let's dive in!



Psst! If you need a little bit more information on what an employee handbook is, check out our quick overview "**What is an employee handbook?**".



HiBob's free employee handbook template

Introduction

It's important for your handbook to have a strong start. Your introduction should give the employee a brief overview of what will be in the handbook and should include a short welcome paragraph.

Don't forget that this may be the first official experience that your employee has with your company. So this introduction will act as a first impression—and we all know how important first impressions can be. It needs to reflect your values and your ethos as a business.

The introduction needs to be done in an engaging way, and this is especially important for your remote and hybrid employees as they won't get as much chance to physically immerse themselves in your company culture. An example of a great way to introduce your company is through video messages if you have a digital handbook. This way your employees can put faces to some important names as well as get a feel for the general atmosphere of the working environment.



Employment essentials

As the saying goes, get the basics right and the rest will follow. And the same goes for these basic employment essentials.

This is a heavily informative section that helps to establish the basic definitions related to their employment. It will outline their contract terms, their job classification, and the basic expectations amongst other things—it can essentially act as a basic FAQ section for whenever a new or existing employee has a question.

Your employment essentials section should include:

Employment contract terms

Here you will outline the basic terms and conditions of your employee's contract. You should define the difference between your full-time and part-time employees, as well as any other type of employment that your company offers.

Attendance terms

It's essential that there is no confusion surrounding your attendance policies. That includes what the procedure is if an employee needs to call in sick, or how they can officially file for paid or **unpaid time off**. You should also include the exceptions for an unreported absence.

Processes

In this section, you should include all of the vital processes of the company. This includes how the business handles **performance reviews**, how meetings are set up for remote and hybrid workers, and how you go about setting individual and team goals. This section should also detail the communication avenues that your business uses—whether that's an instant messaging service or email—as well as the proper way to set OOO (out-of-office) or WFH (work-from-home) messages.

Company values

In this section, you need to lay out the basic expectations that you have for the work environment and your values surrounding teamwork. It should also give a clear indication of the **company culture** that should be upheld by each employee.



Policies and conditions

This section is created with the aim of highlighting what sort of workplace your company is looking to build and maintain. It describes the conditions that your employees will be working under, and points out the policies that are in place to make sure that everybody stays safe and respectful with each other.

Your policies and conditions section should include:

Physical health and safety

Making sure that your workplace is as **safe as possible** is vital. This section should provide the employee with everything that they need to know in order to stay safe in the case of an emergency. It should include your fire drill policies such as gathering points, where fire extinguishers or blankets are situated, and anything else that an employee might need to know. This section should also include strict regulations on a smoke-free and drug-free workplace

Mental health and safety

Mental health is just as important as physical health; that's why it's important to outline your company's policy for maintaining the mental health and safety of its employees. This section should include how to take sick leave for mental health reasons, and what measures the company has in place to protect the mental health of its employees.

Hybrid and remote working policies

Hybrid and remote work is becoming more and more prevalent in the modern business world. This section should outline all of the policies that relate to remote workers. Including things such as regular check-ins, communication avenues, and remote monitoring.

Confidentiality and data protection

Companies are privy to a large amount of their employees' personal information. In order for someone to feel comfortable handing that information over, you should be able to guarantee that it will stay private. This helps to build a strong culture of trust between employees and the company.

Many companies will also be privy to a lot of customer information. Where relevant, this section should also highlight how employees are expected to keep customer data secure.

Sick leave

Everybody gets sick. It's an unfortunate fact of life. The law states that sick pay must be offered for employees, but you can also choose to add extra benefits for when your employees have to go off sick. So in this section, you should state your policy when it comes to sick leave, as well as include the definitions of what a short-term and long-term illness is.



Code of conduct

Your **code of conduct** is your framework for how you believe people should behave in the workplace. While some companies' codes of conduct are more stringent than others', it's always helpful to give a rough moral compass of how to build a workplace that people feel safe and comfortable in.

Your code of conduct section should include:

Equal opportunities

Every employee handbook should have an official statement on equal opportunities. But nowadays, DE&I should take the stage here. . This is where you can elaborate on your company's DE&I policy; how you treat people, respect for others, community, and values. It's important to outline how you promote diversity and inclusion, and how you foster a culture of respect and meritocracy. There are also the legal aspects in regard to equal opportunities that should be considered.

Harassment and violence

In order to have a happy and productive workplace, your employees need to feel safe and content. In this section, you can lay down your strict policies on any form of harassment, violence, or threatening behavior in the workplace. It's also important that you define exactly what constitutes each of these behaviors, as well as describe the repercussions. Make sure you include clear steps for reporting any concerns plus contact information to report issues if they do occur.

Conflict of interest and solicitation

Depending on what industry your company operates in, the rules surrounding a conflict of interest and solicitation may not be immediately clear to your employees. That's why it's important that you make this section clear, and describe the consequences for knowingly breaking these rules.

Reporting

This section should outline how to report a breach of the code of conduct. It's important that you highlight the fact that reporting can be done confidentially and there will be no negative consequences to reporting any breach, no matter who committed the offence.



Compensation and continuing development

Fair and worthy compensation should be given to all of your employees to reward their work. While this obviously includes a regular monetary payment, you should also be committed to rewarding your employees through their continued development. This is a great way to show that you value your employees and it gives them a clear sense that they have a bright future ahead of them at your company.

Your **compensation** and continuing development section should include:

Payroll and compensation

This section should go over exactly how employees will be paid, as well as any overtime rules. You should explain the legality behind each section and make sure there is no room for confusion.

Bonuses and equity

Here you should outline what your bonus program is—whether it's a yearly bonus, a quarterly bonus, or commission-based bonuses. If your company offers equity bonuses, then outline how employees are rewarded with equity within the company instead of a monetary reward.

Learning and development

Continued learning and development is an important part of any business's retention strategy. Here you can talk about what further training your company offers to make sure that each employee has the chance to climb the ladder and learn new skills.



Benefits and perks

Many companies provide their employees with a wide range of benefits and perks as a reward for working for the company. This is a great way to **incentivize employees** and can go a long way in terms of retention. But there's no point offering all of these benefits if your employees don't know they exist.

Your benefits and perks section should include:

Employee well-being

This section encapsulates a wide variety of factors. It can be anything from discounts for local gym memberships for their physical well-being, or a recommended and discounted psychiatrist or therapist for their mental well-being.

Insurance

There are many types of insurance that a company can offer their employees. Whether that's health insurance, life insurance, or dental insurance. This is especially important for companies that are in countries with no socialized healthcare systems as it could be their only affordable way to access healthcare. So this section should include a detailed description of what is and isn't covered by the company's insurance.

Pension and retirement

Investing in employee pensions shows that you're thinking about the future of your staff. It's a way of rewarding them for their hard work over the years and helping them to thrive once they've left the working world. In addition to laying out your pension scheme, this section is also where you can go through any pension and investment counseling that you might offer.

Company car and parking

If your company has employees out on the road, then the chances are that you'll want to offer a company car as a benefit. You'll want to outline the criteria for the car, and whether you're offering a contribution or the full value. For the wider employee base, you should state whether or not you offer free parking for the office workers.

Expenses

It is standard practice for companies to offer to cover work-related expenses. Whether that's when an employee is wining and dining a client, or just covering the petrol for an out-of-office salesperson. Here you should detail which expenses are covered and which aren't.



Paid time off and holidays

Holidays are a great way for your employees to take a well-deserved break. It's always important to have a good work-life balance and take the time to maintain your **mental health**, and this should be highlighted in this section—along with a detailed outline of what holidays your employees get as well as how the accrual of paid time off works.

Your paid time off and holidays section should include:

Paid time off (PTO) and time off

In this section, you should outline how the paid time off for your company works. Be sure to be inclusive in this section and aware of the differences between all employees whether contracted, hourly, interns, and management. You should also outline your policy of unpaid time off and how you handle it.

Holidays

Different countries observe different holidays; this can get confusing if your company is based in one country but has employees in others. In this section, you should outline all of the holidays that your company observes, as well as highlight your policy for any of your remote workers and their countries' holidays.

Compassionate leave

Many companies offer paid compassionate leave when employees lose a loved one or receive bad news. It's a small but noteworthy perk that can make a lot of difference for someone on dark days.

Parental leave

In this section, you should state how much leave an employee who is having or adopting a child should receive. You can also state if you offer flexi-hours for parents who have to pick their children up from school or if they have to take an hour or two to attend to parental duties.



Employee resignation and termination

Sometimes things just don't work out. It could be due to a mutual "It's not you, it's me" decision, an employee could be leaving for their own reasons, or it could be an unfortunate part of disciplinary actions. No matter what the reasons, your employees should have an idea of how their time at the company will come to an end.

Your employee resignation and termination section should include:

Resignation

Each company will have its own resignation policies and processes. You should clearly show what these policies are so that there are no uncomfortable experiences when an employee hands in their notice.

Notice periods

When an employee hands in their resignation, there should be a clear minimum notice period set out by the company so that they have time to prepare a replacement. This section should outline the notice periods for both the employee and the company. It's also important to note that notice period policies tend to vary from country to country. So if your company is spread across different locations, you should detail which policies apply to which location.

Contract termination

Terminating employees tends to be based on a mix of applicable laws and the company's internal policy. Here you should outline your policies regarding termination as well as lay out what compensations and severance pay you offer.

The bottom line

New employees rely on having a strong employee handbook to ease their transition into working for a new company with new rules and responsibilities. When everything is in writing, there's little room for confusion—so your employees can ease themselves into the transition and fully immerse themselves in the company's culture, as well as have a handy go-to guide for when questions inevitably arise.

By using this sample employee handbook template, you can build your own employee handbook filled to the brim with useful nuggets of information, and jam-packed with your company's culture and personality.



Meet Bob

We know how important it is to provide managers and HR teams with what they need to make decisions about your people, especially in light of today's modern workplace changes.

That's why we built Bob, an **employee experience platform** that provides valuable and personalized insights to grow your company's relationships, productivity, and **retention**.

Bob harnesses the powerful combination of data and human factors to give HR professionals and managers access to the understanding they need to make better decisions. In a short time, Bob can be deployed to enable communication, collaboration, and connectivity that drives stronger engagement, productivity, and business outcomes.



For HR

It automates many common processes, allows greater oversight and visibility of the business, and centralizes all people data in a secure, user-friendly environment.



For managers

It provides access to data and insights to help them lead more effectively and streamline processes.



For employees

It's the tools and information they need to connect, develop, and grow throughout their journey.