



BROCHURE

Handbook Policy Must-Haves:

A Guide to a well-crafted, thoughtful employee handbook.

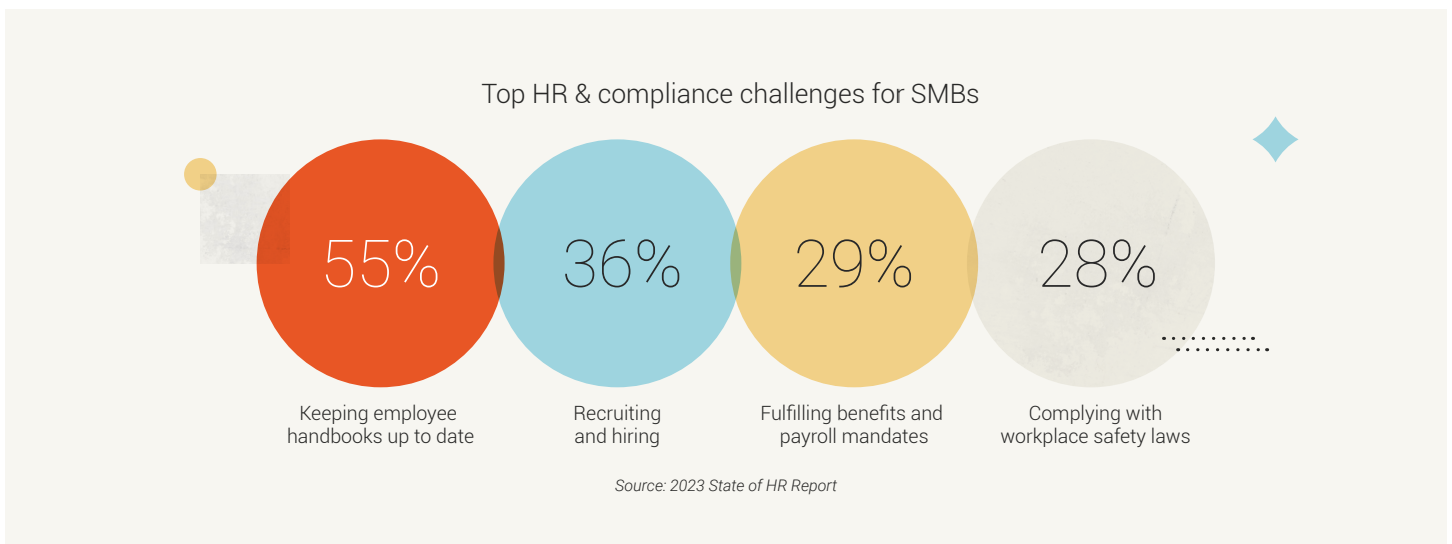
THE BASICS: THE FOUNDATIONS OF GOOD HANDBOOKS.



At its core, the purpose of a handbook is communication. A well-crafted, thoughtful employee handbook takes things to the next level. It serves as a roadmap for employees, offering clear guidance on company policies and expected behavior in the workplace. For businesses, it sets the tone for company culture while mitigating legal risks.

A poorly written or outdated handbook can leave your business vulnerable to lawsuits and costly compliance issues. **Ask yourself this question: is your handbook a liability or an asset?**

If the answer isn't the one you want, keep reading. We get that handbook strategy and maintenance can be tricky. In this guide, we'll break down the essentials of handbook strategy and maintenance, so you can create a clear, concise, and compliant document that resonates with your employees.



What Makes a Good Handbook?

A good handbook covers a range of topics that are important to the employment relationship, from nitty gritty laws to company culture. Part of what makes a good handbook is intention - remember that it is an employee handbook, not a contractor or volunteer handbook. Don't blur classifications! That will help you stay focused as you create the meat of your handbook.

Though handbooks will vary from company to company, they should all accomplish the following:

- Communicate expectations for all employees
- Explain your mission and values
- Outline certain manager responsibilities
- Showcase the benefits you offer
- Address state and federal employment laws
- Tell employees where to go for help

Most importantly, your handbook should be approachable to all employees. This means that it is:

- **Easy to Understand:** Avoid legal jargon and complex sentences. Use plain language that is easy to comprehend.
- **Well-Organized:** Structure the handbook logically, with clear headings and subheadings.
- **Concise:** Get to the point and avoid unnecessary information.
- **Differentiated:** If any policies apply to certain employees (e.g. managers), make that clear.

You Might Also Want to Consider: State laws can vary widely, so it's important to include state-specific information in your employee handbook. This might cover things like discrimination protections, family and medical leave, sick leave, meal and rest breaks, and employee record access. To stay compliant, consider creating state-specific addendums to your main handbook.

Critical Policies To Include

You have a lot of room to decide what goes into your handbook, but certain policies are necessities. Here are the policies Mineral Experts™ have identified as must-haves.



At-will Employment Statement

Employees need clarity about their employment status. You want to include a statement that employment is at will, meaning employment can be terminated by either party, at any time, with or without notice or cause. Again, this helps prevent misunderstandings.



EEO Statement

Employees want to know that their identities will be respected. An Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement affirms that your company will not discriminate against employees based on legally protected characteristics, such as sex or race. Make sure to include any characteristics that state and local laws protect.



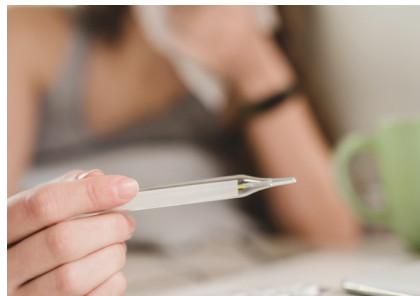
Anti-harassment Policy

Employees increasingly want to know that their company takes harassment seriously. An anti-harassment policy should include examples of harassment, manager responsibilities in reporting it, instructions on how to lodge a complaint, and a commitment to not retaliate. A policy like this is also essential to defend the company against claims of discrimination and harassment.



Complaint Procedure

Employees need to know who to go to with their concerns. You will want to name at least two people (or position titles) that an employee can report issues to, such as your HR Director and another senior leader. In practice, make sure the people you designate know their responsibilities and what they need to do.



Sick Leave Policy

Employees need to know under what circumstances they can take time off for illness. All the details—such as eligibility, compensation, and how much time they get— should be spelled out. As an added measure during the pandemic, it's recommended that you require employees to stay home if they are sick.



Updating Policies for Compliance

It is important to create comprehensive, compliant policies for your employee handbook. But remember that most policies aren't set-it-and-forget-it. Once created, they need to be regularly updated, or at least reviewed for accuracy.

The Crux of Compliance

Ensuring your employee handbook and other management policies are up to date with current laws will help you avoid liability and better manage any issues that may arise. Having policies that are out of compliance with the law is riskier than having no policies at all.

Regular Updating

When laws change, so does the way you do business. Regularly updating the handbook keeps you and your leadership team on top of any changes. This shows both management and employees that your organization is serious about accountability and change. That level of respect is critical for maintaining a positive culture and engaging employees well into the future.

When to Update Your Policies

You should make updates in response to changing legislation or regulations, emergency situations (such as the pandemic), and social issues that your organization cares about. Changing client or partner expectations, or changes in your organizational structure, can also trigger updates.

Updates can include changing policy language or creating addendums to your handbook. It can be wise to keep an eye on what's around the corner in the industry, in best practices, and even in what's on the minds of employees.

Most employers update their handbooks once a year, and that's generally okay. Be aware that if employment laws change in your state or California (which has a lot of employment laws), the updates could take effect that year, or even immediately, and would require that you do more frequent updating.

Pro Tip: Consider setting up a regular review process for your handbook, even if it doesn't need major updates. This can help identify potential issues or areas for improvement.





74%

of clients rate Mineral's Handbook Creation Tool as significantly better compared to other solutions.

Don't Let Outdated Policies Put Your Business at Risk

If you have access to the Mineral Platform, chances are you've got a powerful handbook builder tool - just a few clicks away. Smart Employee Handbook is your go-to tool for creating and maintaining federal and single state employee handbooks. Whenever applicable laws and regulations change, you'll receive proactive alerts with updated language to incorporate into your handbook.

Why Use Mineral?

We're not just a tool; we're your partner in HR compliance. Our proactive alerts and expert-crafted templates ensure your handbook is always accurate and up-to-date. Join thousands of satisfied customers who trust us to keep their businesses compliant and their employees happy.

With Smart Employee Handbook, you can:



Save Time

Automate updates and reduce manual effort.



Mitigate Risk

Stay up-to-date with the latest regulations.



Boost Employee Morale

Provide clear, concise, and employee-friendly policies.

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