

Dear HR Knowledge, are Employee Handbooks required?

There are no laws requiring employers to have an employee handbook, but there are several federal, state, and local laws that employers must make employees aware of in writing.

Whether you call it a handbook, employee guidelines, or procedure manual, here are five reasons why this document is strongly recommended by HR Knowledge:

1. Conveys your company brand, culture, philosophy, mission, and goals. Introduces new employees to your culture, mission, and values and, if well-written, sets the tone for a positive employer-employee relationship.
2. Establishes a foundation for effective and consistent policy management and compliance. Helps ensure that key company policies are clearly and consistently communicated and applied fairly across the board.
3. Serves as an essential communication tool between you and your employees by conveying to employees what is expected of them and, in turn, what they can expect of your organization.
4. Can protect your company by preventing misunderstandings, reinforcing employer expectations, and helping to keep your workplace free of potential lawsuits arising from discrimination, harassment, and wrongful termination claims.
5. Defines required federal, state-specific, and local employment laws and employee rights.

In addition to having a handbook, we highly recommend that you have employees sign a handbook acknowledgment. This is a critical part of the process as it demonstrates that employees received the handbook and are responsible for understanding the information contained in it.

The acknowledgment process can be seamless, as distribution can often be done electronically, for example, by uploading the handbook to a self-service portal. These systems often contain an electronic policy acknowledgment feature, which is an effective, “paperless” way to not only distribute your handbook but have your employees acknowledge that they received and understand it.

While not required, a well-crafted handbook that is known about, respected, and acknowledged by your employees is a valuable tool for any organization.

Would you like to develop a handbook for your company? Or revamp one that was created a decade ago? We can help! To learn more about our services, please [contact us](#).

About HR Knowledge

Founded in 2001, HR Knowledge, Inc. is a privately funded company providing integrated outsourced HR services tailored to our clients' needs. Our full array of offerings includes managed payroll, employee benefits administration, and HR consulting and support



services, such as training, compliance, custom-built software solutions, and Hiring Process Management™, our comprehensive recruitment service that takes you from finding to onboarding new talent. Our major markets are fast-growing small- and medium-sized businesses, many of which are venture-capital-backed; foreign companies expanding into the states; and charter schools. Partnering with HR Knowledge can reduce your administrative costs, minimize your legal risk, help you find and develop talent, and alleviate the HR burden so that you can focus on your core business.

This content is provided with the understanding that HR Knowledge is not rendering legal advice. While every effort is made to provide current information, the law changes regularly and laws may vary depending on the state or municipality. The material is made available for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for legal advice or your professional judgment. You should review applicable laws in your jurisdiction and consult experienced counsel for legal advice. If you have any questions regarding this blog, please contact HR Knowledge at 508.339.1300 or [email us](#).