



5 Things you should know about Policies & Procedures

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1. It's important to explain to employees whether they are employees who have been with you for a while, or are a new employee, what the rules of your business are. Alternatively, you can think of your Employee Policies and Procedures as "the way we do things around here."

There are many benefits to having suitable employment policies in place. Setting standards is the key to healthy workplace relations. It can reduce the need for disciplinary and legal action. It may also increase productivity and morale, as well as help employee retention. Clear policymaking can also be positive for your business' reputation externally, e.g. among clients and the local community. It can also help in attracting new staff.

If a policy is well developed and clearly written, it helps communication with employees, clarifies expectations and makes sure that everyone is treated in a consistent and fair way.

The Policies and Procedures that you decide to put into place, will also set the tone for your business and will help you to create the working culture of your business, so it is really important to spend the time on getting them right.

2. There are certain legal requirements that must be met from a Policies and Procedures perspective. **It is a legal requirement to set out your health and safety policy in writing if you have five or more employees. It is also a legal requirement to set out your disciplinary rules and procedure for dealing with disciplinary matters, whether you have 1 or more employees. As well as having a grievance procedure in writing.**
3. The other policies that you have to have in place legally (but not in writing bizarrely!) are as stated below. However, I would suggest that it is best practice to also have these key policies set out in writing to avoid any confusion and to offer employees' complete transparency.
 - Anti- Bullying and Anti-Harassment
 - Equality and Diversity and Inclusion
 - Flexible Working Policy
 - Maternity / paternity / adoption/shared parental leave

- Pay, how and when you pay
 - Redundancy
 - Smoking, drugs and alcohol
 - Whistleblowing / protected disclosure
 - Working time and time off
 - Time off for Dependents
 - Time off for Emergencies
 - Parental Bereavement Leave
4. The other policies that you have will be determined by the nature of your business. For example, if your staff operate machinery, it may be a good idea to implement a specific policy on drugs and alcohol use and misuse. If most of your staff use computers and the internet for their work, you should have an email and internet usage policy as well as a Social Media Policy. It is advisable to discuss what policies and procedure you should put into place with an HR or legal professional.
5. It is important to determine where you will keep these rules and procedures for employees to access, as well as determining who and how often they will be checked and updated.

Many people have a Company intranet and like to keep their policies and procedures on the intranet site or their Google Docs/MS Cloud etc and can refer employees to the intranet site if they need them to. There is a danger with this approach, as people may not read them and can then use the argument that they “weren’t aware of a policy” if they haven’t seen it.

For this reason, the majority of employers prefer to issue employees with an **Employee Handbook** at the same time as issuing them with their Contract of Employment which contains all of the policies and procedures. You can also ask employees to sign a statement to say that they have read, understood and accept the terms of these policies and procedures.

How can we help?

If you already have an Employee Handbook, and you're not sure if it meets legal requirements, and would like us to review what you have, we are happy to do this for **free**, do get in touch with us if you'd like us to review your Employee Handbook.

If you want or need to develop your employee policies and procedures, it's important that you get some advice as your policies and procedures not only state the rules and expectations of your business, they will also help you to set the tone for your business and create the culture of your business - reducing the need for disciplinary and legal action. The right policies and procedures may also increase productivity and morale, as well as help employee retention, so it's important that you don't get this important task wrong!

If you'd like us to help you create your very own Employee Handbook, then please do get in touch. The cost of a bespoke Employee Handbook is just £500 plus VAT.

Your people are your greatest business asset. Knowing how to recruit, manage, develop and retain them is key to your success.

To find out how we can help, get in touch;



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