



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM & GUIDE

**Included:**

Overview

Dos and Don'ts Checklist

Sample Employee Handbook Acknowledgment Form

## 1. Overview

Employees are some of the most valuable resources that a company has, and can contribute substantially to the success of a business. Conversely, poor employee performance or behavior can lead to a decrease in product quality, customer satisfaction, and commercial achievement. Managing employee behavior is essential to a company's growth and longevity and a written employee handbook is a key component of that management.

Employee handbooks inform employees about company policies, procedures, and practices, and can communicate standards of performance and conduct. In some cases, they are a new employee's first inside impression of a company. If well-constructed, it can start the employment relationship off on the right foot and can also serve as an important tool to avoid employee lawsuits. Although state and federal laws sometimes require that policies and procedures be posted on bulletin boards or other public places, distributing a handbook to all employees ensures that the company's critical standards are accessible to all, and that each employee will have a handy reference when questions arise.

The enclosed document provides an acknowledgment of an employee's review and understanding of the handbook he or she received. This can serve to prevent future disagreements and misunderstandings, and can build the framework for a long-lasting employment relationship.

## 2. Dos & Don'ts Checklist

- It's a good idea to set aside time and allow your employee to read the handbook during the orientation process, or to provide an extra thirty minutes at a break during the first week for this specific purpose.
- The form provided does not ask your employees to indicate that they have already read the handbook. It does provide that the employees understand that their employment is "at-will" (i.e., can be terminated at any time). By limiting what you are asking your employees to swear to, you are allowing them to answer honestly and can create a positive atmosphere on their first day at work.
- An acknowledgment form offers essential protection against lawsuits. It prevents employees from arguing that they did not know about your company's at-will employment policies.
- Although it is generally not required, it may be a good idea to put the acknowledgment at the beginning of the employee handbook. If your employees are aware of the importance of the handbook, this can help to ensure that they actually read it.
- Make several copies of the signed acknowledgment, and give one to the employee at the end of your discussion. Place an additional signed copy in that employee's personnel file.
- Insert the title of the person who has the authority to make changes to contracts or alter the at-will status of an employee. This will usually be someone like the "President" of your company. Using a title rather than an individual's name will limit revisions of your handbook at a later date.

- Keep copies of every employee handbook revision you make. Get signed acknowledgment forms for each employee covered under each version. If the changes to the handbook are substantial, consider asking existing employees to sign an acknowledgment of those revisions.

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**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I have received my copy of the [COMPANY]'s employee handbook. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and familiarize myself with the policies and procedures contained in the handbook.

I understand that I am employed on an at-will basis and that my employment may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by me or the Company.

I understand that except for employment at-will status, any and all policies or practices can be changed at any time by the Company. The Company reserves the right to change my hours, wages, and working conditions at any time. I understand and agree that other than the [TITLE] of the Company, no manager, supervisor, or representative of the Company has authority to enter into any agreement, express or implied, for employment for any specific period of time or to make any agreement for employment other than at-will; only the [TITLE] has the authority to enter into any agreement and then only in writing, signed by the [TITLE].

I understand and agree that nothing in the employee handbook creates a contract, a promise, or a representation of continued employment and that my employment may be terminated at the will of the Company at any time without notice or agreement on my part.