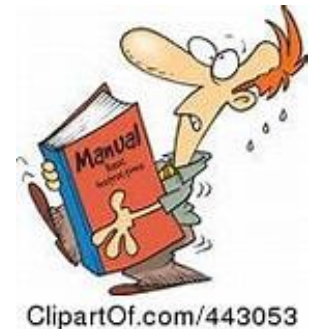




Staff handbooks and policies

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What is a staff handbook?

- Employee handbooks (or staff handbooks) are basically a company guideline on what an employee needs to do in various situations.

What should be included in an employee or staff handbook?

- Listed below are some of the essential elements which should be in a staff handbook.
1. Equal opportunities;
 2. Health and Safety Policy;
 3. Staff Drug and Alcohol Policy;
 4. Staff E-mail and Internet Policy;
 5. Data Protection Policy;

What should be included in an employee or staff handbook (contd)

6. Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental Leave Policy;
7. Flexible working Policy;
8. Sickness Policy;
9. Disciplinary, Capability and Dismissal Procedure;
10. Grievance Procedure;
11. Harassment;
12. Whistleblowing Policy;
13. Redundancies.

Equal Opportunities Policy

- Employees need to know what counts as acceptable/unacceptable behaviour in relation to Equal Opportunities.

- The policy should cover:-
 1. Training;
 2. Confidentiality;
 3. Non-acceptance of harassment;
 4. Complaints Procedure;
 5. Non-discrimination on the basis of gender, trans status, marital status, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or age.

Health and Safety Policy

- All businesses with five or more employees are legally required to have a written statement of general policy on health and safety. You may need an extra section if your business has "hazardous activities".

- The policy should cover:-
 1. Health and safety representation of employer;
 2. Health and safety representation of employee;
 3. Health and safety equipment;
 4. Manual Handling;

Health and Safety Policy (contd)

- 5. Manual Handling;
- 6. Health and Safety risk assessments;
- 7. Accidents;
- 8. Health and Safety representatives.

Staff Drug and Alcohol Policy

- Some companies carry out random drug and alcohol testing. While this is not a legal requirement and more of your choice as an employer. If you do decide to follow this, you need to have this stated in a written policy. This policy states the use of alcohol and drugs in the workplace and should cover:
 1. Staff driving on business;
 2. Alcohol consumption by staff at business functions;
 3. Illegal staff use of drugs;
 4. Alcohol consumption at work.

Staff E-mail and Internet Policy

- If you want your business to monitor your staff activities, there must be a written agreement in place. This policy should contain the following:
 1. Monitoring staff email;
 2. Handling confidential information;
 3. Staff personal use of email;
 4. Breach of procedure relating to email usage;
 5. Staff internet use;
 6. Staff personal use of the internet.

Data Protection Policy

- It is a legal requirement to have arrangements in place to ensure safe storage and processing of data about employees. This policy should include a consent form that employees should sign to indicate their agreement. This should include:
 - Principles of Data Protection Act they should follow;
 - Processing of staff data;
 - Handling of sensitive staff data;
 - Employee right to access and stop access of data.

Maternity and Paternity Leave

Companies must make sure they follow the requirements of the law and have sections set out for each process, addressing each employee leave request lawfully.

- Maternity Leave should include:

Antenatal appointments, staff informing business of pregnancy, protection during maternity leave, Statutory Maternity Pay, staff returning to work after maternity.

- Paternity Leave should include:

Staff eligibility for paternity leave, length of paternity leave, Statutory Paternity Pay.

Adoption and Parental Leave

- Adoption Leave should include:

Staff eligibility for adoption leave, length of adoption leave, Statutory Adoption Pay.

- Parental Leave should include:

Staff eligibility for parental leave, length of parental leave, non-payment / payment of parental leave.

Flexible Working Policy

- Any employee can ask for flexible working, but employees who care for adults or children 16 and under (18 if they're disabled) are entitled by law to request flexible working.
- The Flexible Working Policy should include:-
 1. Staff eligibility for flexible working;
 2. Making and responding to the employee's request for flexible working;
 3. Meeting and decisions on flexible working;
 4. Refusal and acceptance of request;
 5. Appeals.

Sickness Policy

- This sets the process of managing absence which is fair to the employee and meets the needs of the employer. This should include:
- Employee responsibilities;
- Sickness self-certification;
- Medical examination;
- Manual handling;
- Risk Assessment;
- Chemicals and hazardous solution;
- Accidents at work.

Disciplinary, Capability and Dismissal Procedure

- Within two months of the employee starting employment, the employer should give the employee a written statement of Initial Employment Procedures. Details of disciplinary rules should be included. The policy itself should include:
 - ACAS Disciplinary procedure Code of Practice;
 - ACAS Dismissal procedure Code of Practice;
 - Basic principles of the statutory disciplinary procedure;
 - Protective equipment;

Disciplinary, Capability and Dismissal Procedure (contd)

- Dealing with capability procedures;
- Dealing with disciplinary procedures that are not gross misconduct;
- Giving a disciplinary warning;
- Disciplinary meetings;
- Witness to disciplinary behaviour;
- Disciplinary and dismissal appeals;
- Gross misconduct.

Grievance Procedure

- It's important to set out how an employee can raise a grievance, and how the employer should respond. This should include:
- Requirements within the ACAS Grievance Procedure Code of Practice;
- Grievance procedures relating to a line manager;
- The procedure for addressing the grievance;
- The role of the representative;
- The procedure for responding to the grievance;
- Appeals and appeal meetings.

Harassment

- Harassment in the workplace is something that must not be tolerated, in any shape or form. It will in most cases cause a damaging effect on those that have been the target of it and others who have witnessed it taking place, which may possibly impact their health, confidence, morale, and work performance. An Employee Handbook should include a policy on harassment, which should clearly explain that it is a disciplinary offence and that those that have been the target of it should raise any incidents through the detailed grievance procedure.

Whistleblowing Policy

- It is clearly written in the law that there are set laws that protect whistleblowers from their employers subjecting them to detriment or dismissing them because they have spoken up if they believe that something is wrong. A whistleblowing policy outlines an internal system for employees to report, investigate and rectify any wrongdoing.

Redundancies

- Although all businesses hope that they will always be able to avoid redundancies, they are an unfortunate fact of business life. Employment law sets out clear rules on the process that should be followed when managing redundancies. This should include:
 - Avoiding redundancies;
 - Collective redundancy consultation;
 - Group and individual redundancy consultation;
 - Voluntary redundancy;

Redundancies (contd)

- The redundancy selection process;
- Redundancy appeals;
- Redundancy compensation;
- Alternative employment.

ANY QUESTIONS???