

HR Compliance Solutions, LLC

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**Eva the Compliance Diva Answers Your Questions!**

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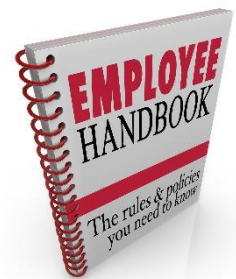
Hi Eva,

My name is Rick. I have been trying to keep up to date with all the new federal, State and local regulations when I am updating my employee handbook. I would like a step-by-step approach to guide me and also would like to know what the guidelines are to consider outsourcing the employee handbook if needed. Our headquarters is in California, and we have employees in 7 states. Can you help?

**Answer- Hi Rick,**

Thanks for your inquiry. It is one of my favorite topics and I would like to help you with this process

First, developing an Employee Handbook can be a 3–4-month project if you do not schedule appropriately. Additionally, if you are swamped with workplace projects like employee enrollments, performance evaluation or software updates it can supersede your calendar.



**What Are the Phases When Developing an Employee Handbook?**

- Federal Regulations (research)
- State Specific Regulations (research)
- Multi-State Regulations (research)
- Company Policies and Procedures (internal current culture)

- Policies and Procedures that Companies Want to Add (policies that exceed the regulations requirements)
- Employee Handbook Acknowledgement
- Yearly Updates on the above

### **What Should Be Included in an Employee Handbook**

- Federal Regulations
- Industry standards
- State regulations
- Mission & Values
- Company Policies
- Time & Leave
- Business Conduct
- Disciplinary Process
- Benefits
- Compliance
- Termination
- Authorization

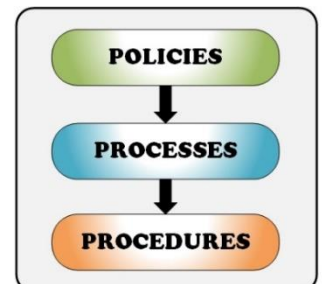
### **Federal & State Regulations (research)**

- Federal regulations are an important part of the employee handbook
- It is based on the number of employees and needs to be included
- Usually placed in the beginning of the employee handbook but can be placed in any order
- State regulations should be included whether it is one state or multi-state locations
- If you are multi-state, you can add each state as an addendum or throughout the document as a footer
- This is the most time consuming process especially if there have been many years of outdated handbooks or handbooks that are outdated



### **Internal Policies and Procedures that Companies Want to Add**

- Many Employers develop their internal policies based on their company culture, philosophies and employees
- Employers can add any type of policy that meets the regulations or exceeds it (for example, FMLA requirement is for Employers with 50 employees or more but an Employer who has less than 50 employees can offer policies that exceed the requirements as long as it is consistently done)
- Policies can exceed guidelines but not reduce guidelines



- This is a time to get with leadership to assess what policies can be added to help the company and the employees while staying compliant
- You can also survey employees if you want them to be included in the discussion

### **Employee Handbook Communication to Employees**

- Whenever there are updates, changes or deletions Employers must share each with current employees, new hires and managers
- Include changes in an Employee Handbook overview session with PowerPoint presentation
- Add to the company Intranet (if you have one)
- Have employees acknowledge each update



### **Yearly Updates and Future Employee Handbook Projects**

- Schedule an annual review of the handbook and put it on your calendar
- Identify who will be the lead in checking for employee handbooks updates
- Create a budget which includes time for this process since it is easy to get caught up with other large projects like open enrollments, evaluation process, updating payroll systems or other large projects
- Consider outsourcing which would take less time with a reputable employee handbook developer and provide you with a quality, accurate handbook that you can be proud of
- For less than \$3500 (depending on number of employees or multi-state)

### **Outsourcing the Employee Handbook does several things**

- If you have current outstanding litigation the employee handbook project could prioritize based on your employment law exposure
- If you have multiple projects and your department has a timeline challenge, outsourcing could be an effective option
- Are you in multi-state and need to ensure compliance for all locations even remote employees?
- Are you concerned about other regulations like paid leave in certain states, criminal background checks? Salary bans for hires in certain states and other state regulations.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to reach out to me and I will guide you based on your needs. Reach out and let me know about your situation.



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