

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS

MICHIGAN SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

85TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Amway Grand Plaza
Thursday, April 25th, 2024
1:15 – 1:45 p.m.
Room H18

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AGENDA

- What is and isn't an employee handbook what is it's purpose
- What are the typical sections found in an employee manual
- How do you maintain and communicate the employee manual



DEFINITION & PURPOSE

- An **employee handbook** is written with employees as the intended audience.
- It is written straightforward language and layout for easy referencing of company policies and procedures.
- It is a document for familiarizing employees with the mission, important policies (EEO & anti harassment policy and complaint process), pay and benefit programs, and general expectations, including acceptable and behavior expectations, employment status (at will v. just cause), and can be shared publicly.



DEFINITION & PURPOSE (CONTINUED)

- A **policies and procedures manual** is a comprehensive text that details company policies and procedures, accountabilities, forms used, is usually written as a reference manual for management to follow as guidelines.
- This type of manual may not be generally shared with all employees and is usually specific to functional areas such as Finance, IT, Purchasing, Transportation, Safety, etc.
- The manual may contain references to federal and state laws that correlate to each policy.



TYPICAL AREAS COVERED INCLUDE

WELCOME

ACCESS TO PERSONNEL
FILES

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

EMPLOYMENT-AT-WILL
STATEMENT

EMPLOYMENT OF
RELATIVES

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

HARASSMENT

NONDISCRIMINATION
AND EQUAL

EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITY

STANDARDS OF
CONDUCT

WORK WEEK AND
HOURS OF WORK

DRESS POLICY

PAYCHECKS

TIME RECORDS

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY
POLICY

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

INSURANCES

HOLIDAYS

RETIREMENT PLAN

SICK LEAVE AND CREDIT
ACCUMULATION

VACATION

WORKERS' COMPENSATION
INSURANCE

ATTENDANCE

COMPUTERS, INTERNET,
EMAIL AND OTHER
RESOURCES AND
EQUIPMENT

CONFIDENTIAL
INFORMATION

JOB ABANDONMENT
POLICY

JOB PERFORMANCE

REDUCTIONS IN FORCE

SEPARATION FROM
EMPLOYMENT

SOCIAL MEDIA
ACCEPTABLE USE

SAFETY IN THE
WORKPLACE

DRUG, SMOKE, AND
ALCOHOL-FREE
WORKPLACE

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE
PREVENTION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND
RECEIPT

SOME GOOD EXAMPLES OF KEY SECTIONS: WELCOME

- It's our pleasure to welcome you to our SCHOOL DISTRICT. We are dedicated to high standards of excellence and quality. Our goal at the DISTRICT is to make the experiences of each and every employee, customer and vendor exceptional. We value each one of our employees, and we hope that you find your work here rewarding and satisfying.
- Our School District provides educational services to children beginning with kindergarten through senior high school. We are committed to maintaining the highest quality of education and service to our students, parents and community members and the board annually develops goals to address student growth, collaboration with our parents and community, our learning environment, and fiscal responsibility. We have two elementary schools and a junior-senior high school.
- Our Vision for our district is to be a cutting-edge leader in educational advancement that empowers all students for life-long success in a changing world.
- Our Mission is to engage, challenge and motivate life-long learners toward excellence through innovation.
- Every staff member is valued as a member of the team that ensures our students are able to learn to the best of their ability, in an environment that nurtures educational and personal growth. Every staff member has a role to play in this student-centered district.
- Our Board of Education is committed to maintaining the highest quality of education and service to our students, parents and community members. We annually decide on specific goals for each within these general areas: Student Growth in the Core Academic Areas, Fostering a Positive and Collaborative Relationship with the District's Parents and Community Members, Providing a Learning Environment Consistent with the 21st Century in Regard to Classroom Instruction and Technology, and Demonstrating Fiscal Responsibility.

SOME GOOD EXAMPLES OF KEY SECTIONS: HARASSMENT

Sexual and other forms of unlawful harassment violate various federal and state laws, as well as Board Policies. The District is committed to providing a work environment free of sexual and other harassment. Harassment of District staff by management, supervisors, coworkers, and nonemployees who are in the workplace is absolutely prohibited. Any retaliation against an individual who has a complaint about sexual or other harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. Unlawful harassment is conduct that:

- has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment;
 - has the purpose or effect of substantially and unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or
 - otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities because of the individual's membership in a protected class.
- Employees are encouraged to review the applicable Board Policies for more detailed explanations, examples, and various methods to address these situations. (see Board Policies 1662, 3362, and 4362, as applicable.)

SOME GOOD EXAMPLES OF KEY SECTIONS: NONDISCRIMINATION/EEO

- The Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and transgender identity), disability, age, religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. Equal employment opportunity applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.
- The District expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment or discrimination based on any of the characteristics listed above. Employees and applicants for employment who believe they have been unlawfully discriminated against, harassed, or retaliated against are encouraged to review the applicable Board Policies and seek resolution through the procedures described therein. The Board Policies also describe a complaint process, should the employee choose to use it. (see Board Policies on discrimination 1422, 3122, and 4122 as applicable to your specific employee group. Policies specifically related to harassment include 1662, 3362, and 4362.)

SOME GOOD EXAMPLES OF KEY SECTIONS: DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

- Subject to a bargaining unit employee's right to resort to the regular grievance procedure in the event of discharge or any other disciplinary action, the Employer reserves the right to discharge or discipline any employee for reasons detrimental to the school system (see Administrative Board Policies 3139 and 3140, Support Staff Board Policies 4139 and 4140).
- No employee will be disciplined without just cause. The District uses a progressive discipline approach including verbal, written, and final warning processes. Written warnings, final warnings, and terminations may be appealed to a review committee appointed jointly by the staff member and management. (See Peer Review Policy)
- Any driver who tests positive under the provisions of the Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act, or who refuses to submit to required testing, will be terminated without recourse.

SOME GOOD EXAMPLES OF KEY SECTIONS: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

- The District is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace for its employees. All staff are asked to refrain from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual and to refrain from behaving in a threatening or violent manner. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee will not be tolerated. A threat may include any verbal or physical harassment or abuse, attempts to intimidate others, menacing gestures, stalking, or any other hostile, aggressive and/or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation. This policy also covers these behaviors off-site at a school district event. Employees are encouraged to periodically review the District's anti-harassment policies (3362, 4362), its crisis intervention policy (8410), its anti-harassment guidelines (3362, 4362), its guidelines addressing reporting requirements (3362A, 4362A), and its threat assessment guideline (8400A).
- Each District employee is responsible to keep our work environment free from violence or potential violence. Any employee who witnesses or is the recipient of violent behavior should promptly inform his/her supervisor, or the Superintendent's office. All threats will be promptly investigated, and appropriate action will be taken, up to and including disciplinary action, police reports, and/or prosecution, as appropriate. No employee will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this directive.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Outdated, inaccurate, ignored, unknown, and inflexible manuals are morale and legal liabilities.
- Regularly updating the manual is critical.
 - Some update the manual as policies change. Others on an annual basis when all policies and procedures are reviewed.
 - Involving various employees in the process helps to make sure it's comprehensive and accurate. A best practice is to have a diverse committee responsible for reviewing and recommending updates.
 - Employee policy manuals can be electronic, updated electronically, and accepted electronically. If employees do not have email access you can provide printed copies as an exception.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

- The manual should allow for exceptions at the sole discretion of management.
- Periodic review by legal counsel is essential to keeping current on the numerous laws, regulations, and court cases that affect personnel policies.
- Communicating changes, additions, and updates to the manual should be clearly written with detailed information on exactly what has changed.
- Writing the manual so it applies to both bargained and non bargained employees is a challenge but not impossible.



WRAP-UP

- Final thoughts, questions, comments?



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



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