EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE POLICY TEMPLATE

Are you and your people back in the office? Is your company taking a hybrid approach? Or is the work from home (WFH) setup working well for you? While some companies are regrouping into physical office spaces again—with people remembering the joys of a takeaway coffee on the daily commute—others are embracing a more flexible approach.

Whatever your decision, as your people enjoy a better work-life balance, it's not unusual for challenges to arise. Reducing the real-life contact with managers and colleagues afforded by office work can mean that some employees feel a little freer than their employers might expect.

If your people are doing their work and meeting their goals, that's great. However, suppose you feel that some people are taking advantage of the more flexible situation at work and failing to deliver their deadlines as and when expected. In that case, an attendance policy can help.

What is an Employee Attendance Policy?

An employee attendance policy document sets out what your company expects of its people and what measures will come into play if these are not met. You can think of it as a set of boundaries or ground rules that help everyone in the business to work together without conflict.

It outlines, in writing, the overview of when people are expected to be at or available for work—whether that means they're in the office or free to jump on a video call from home.

An employee attendance policy also clarifies how your company defines and **calculates** absences. This empowers your people by making it easy to manage their time at work—and their time off.

The policy can also outline your company's definitions around the problems that can arise with tardiness and absenteeism—and explain how you'll manage unforeseen absences. You may also want to include an explanation of what good behavior looks like, in case it's needed.

Finally, you can use your employee attendance policy to highlight managerial responsibilities around attendance—and the standards your managers will hold people to.

As a more general point, your company's employee attendance policy offers helpful guidance. As such, it should apply to all non-exempt employees—regardless of their position or type of employment.

Why you should have an employee attendance policy

Every company is different, and there's no right way to do HR or create policies. Still, by setting your expectations from the start with an employee attendance policy, you can help everyone understand their role and contribution to the company—as well as what they can expect from their colleagues.

Here are some reasons why an employee attendance policy can be helpful—if not invaluable—for your company:

You can introduce the company culture on day one
Including your attendance policy in your employee handbook can be a great way to ensure all new hires know what's expected of them regarding their attendance and time off. And it's a great way of introducing your company culture and helping them understand your values from day one.

You can nurture a positive working environment
Developing a robust employee attendance policy helps nurture a positive, respectful, and productive environment across your organization. It creates the foundation for a professional space where people can rely on each other, where everyone pulls their weight, and where people work together for the collective good.

You can reduce stress
Life happens. All employers understand that. But sometimes, it can happen more dramatically than we'd all like, for example, in the event of an accident or a severe illness. Your employee attendance policy can help remove some of the extreme stress of such occurrences with clear definitions of what constitutes an excused absence and details of who to contact to ensure someone at work knows what is happening.

You can make life simple
Your attendance policy is a clear set of ground rules. It's not there to act as Big Brother or make people feel they're being policed. Instead, it's there to outline the clear and agreed expectations your company has of its people. And it should make people's lives easier. With detailed definitions of time off and absences, for example, people can easily arrange a dentist trip, get the morning off to attend a school event, or book a vacation in the sun.

You can prevent problems from escalating
Having a company attendance policy in place can prevent problems like tardiness and absenteeism from escalating into written warnings or disciplinary action. Reminding someone of the agreed policy can be enough to help them remember what's expected of them—while quietly highlighting that their actions have been noticed.

You can preserve employee morale
When people don't show up for work regularly, it's understandable that feelings of frustration, unhappiness, and resentment can quickly spread among those who are there and working hard.

After all, they're the people who may need to deal with the impact of missed collective deadlines or take on heavier, unplanned workloads. And this can have a detrimental effect on their mental health. A clear reminder of the agreed attendance policy can help prevent situations like this.

You can avoid tardiness
Tardiness is when an employee is consistently late to work, takes unarranged breaks, or leaves early without asking permission. It might look like being late from lunch or disappearing to do personal errands during working hours. Whatever the reason, the fact is that it's disruptive and can cause unhappiness in the broader team, potentially impacting productivity levels.

If you need confirmation that a tardiness problem needs your attention, try introducing a time and attendance management software. The software makes it easy to see who's working and when, shows unexpected absences, and provides accurate, actionable data you can use to follow up and address the issue.

You can avoid absenteeism
Sometimes, it can take a while to notice people's behavior. By this point you can find yourself having to deal with an established issue. Problems like absenteeism occur when people regularly fail to show up to work when expected—or take excessive leave without being able to show a sick note when asked.

Absenteeism can escalate into job abandonment, where a person misses work without authorization, fails to show up for a specified number of days, and fails to communicate any reason for their absence.

If you find people are taking advantage of your company's more **flexible working situation** like this, you can schedule a meeting with them and refer to the expectations outlined in the attendance policy and try and address the behavior with them in person.

You can identify and rectify problems at speed
Being proactive and referring people who are repeatedly late to your employee attendance policy can help to nip things in the bud. It also prevents poor attendance records that can lead to performance plans—or even a parting of ways.

Introducing an employee attendance policy should help you improve your employees' productivity, reduce absenteeism, and set clear and consistent expectations for all your employees—leading to a happier and healthier workplace.

What should you include in your employee attendance policy?

Whether you're implementing a new employee attendance policy to tackle ongoing attendance issues or you're a new startup—developing an employee attendance policy to include in your employee handbook helps you clarify what you expect of your employees.

Your company's employee attendance policy will be unique to your **culture** and business needs, but, in general, it should include:

- **The company's attendance policy scope:**
  — What time do you expect people to start work?
  — What constitutes a late start?
  — What are people's schedules?

- **How you define and calculate unauthorized absences:**
  — What do you define as an unauthorized absence?
  — How do you calculate unauthorized absence?
  — What should people do if they can't get to work on time or at all?
  — What are the consequences of unauthorized absences?

- **The difference between absenteeism and tardiness:**
  — How do you define absenteeism
  — How do you define tardiness
  — What are the consequences for each?

- **What do you classify as an unforeseen absence?**
  — What is an unforeseen absence?
  — What are the consequences of an unforeseen absence?
  — What should people do if they can't get to work on time or at all?

- **What is an excused absence?**
  — How do you define an excused absence?
  — What can't be classed as an excused absence

- **What good attendance looks like**
  — What does good attendance look like in your company?
  — What does bad attendance look like?
  — Are there rewards for good attendance?

- **Managerial responsibilities**
  — Who can people go to for help to manage their attendance?

- **Disciplinary actions**
  — What are the disciplinary actions you will take for different attendance problems?

Create a thriving workplace

With an effective employee attendance policy in place, you'll create a workplace where your people can thrive. Your employees will know when to be at work, when they're **expected to be available**, and what to do if they're late—or need to be absent.

One size doesn't fit all, but with clear conversations and some careful planning and adjustments, you can develop an employee attendance policy that meets the needs of your business. Download the template as a guide to put a clear and simple company attendance policy in place for your employees today.

Once it's written and agreed upon, include your employee attendance policy in your employee handbook. Ask new and existing employees to sign and date it so you've got a record that it's been read, understood, and agreed upon by everyone in the business.

Meet Bob

At HiBob, we've built a modern HR platform designed for modern business needs—today and beyond. It sits at the center of your HR ecosystem, is fully customizable, and grows with your organization.

In a short time, Bob can be deployed to enable communication, collaboration, and connectivity that drives stronger engagement, productivity, and business outcomes.

For HR

it delivers automation of many common processes, allows greater oversight and visibility of the business, and centralizes all people data in a secure, user-friendly environment.

For managers

It provides access to data and insights to help them lead more effectively and streamline processes.

For employees

It's the tools and information they need to connect, develop, and grow throughout their journey.

bob

hibob.com