

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK TEMPLATE

We are pleased to send you a copy of the **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**, which is exclusively available to our CFIB members. This is a template which you may adapt and use when hiring new staff. The content of this document is broadly inspired by the *Labour Standards Act* and can serve as an excellent starting point for putting together a practical reference document which your employees can consult at any time. The **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK** is an essential tool for successfully integrating new staff into your team!

**Recommendations for using the Employee Handbook**

In keeping with human resources best practices, we recommend that you give a copy of this Handbook to your employees on their first day of work. This will allow you to review the various topics covered in the Handbook and establish the setting in which your employees will be working. Once you have completed this review, you will be in a position to answer your employees’ questions, and can then give them their copy of the Handbook along with a sample letter in which they acknowledge having read the document. This letter can be found on the last page of the Handbook and will be inserted into the employee’s personal file.

In the event of a misunderstanding or legal proceedings, it may well be to your advantage if you have ensured that the employee has read and understood the Handbook.

**A few hints on customizing your Employee Handbook:**

* Words highlighted in grey must be replaced by information specific to your company.
* *We have also included some optional tips; they are to be deleted before printing this document.*

It is important to periodically update the Employee Handbook so that it will reflect all legislative, regulatory and internal policy changes that have occurred. As a member of CFIB, you have free, special access to our business support services, including advice from human resources consultants who can assist you in modifying or supplementing this Handbook.

**Need customized advice? Contact us!**

**1 888 234-2232 |** **cfib@cfib.ca**

***This guide is provided to you for information purposes only. CFIB cannot be held responsible for its final content or for any subsequent use and interpretation thereof by the company or a third party.***

*We suggest that you remove this introductory page when preparing your company’s Employee Handbook.*

**INSERT YOUR LOGO HERE**

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

*Insert the date of the most recent changes made to this document.*

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# LettER FrOM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Employee,

We are pleased to welcome you to the **name of business** team.

This is a good opportunity to provide you a copy of the EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, which will help you get off to a good start. The objectives of the Handbook are to give you an overview of the organization and the human resources practices of our company, and to ensure the efficiency of our operations and the harmony of our team.

This Handbook contains the following:

* **Name of business** (short form)
* Working Conditions Handbook
* Company Rules and Regulations
* Code of Ethics

All employees, whether seasoned or new, may occasionally need to consult the Employee Handbook.

This document is intended as an easy-to-use reference tool containing the answers to your main concerns. If you cannot find what you are looking for, please feel free to pass your questions on to me or ask your immediate supervisor. We will be pleased to supplement the information in this Handbook and provide you additional details.

Finally, the Employee Handbook is an evolving document that will be adapted as appropriate to reflect cultural and organizational changes within the company, as well as the modifications that are constantly being made to government regulations.

On behalf of the whole team, welcome to **name of business**.

*Signature*

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Print the business owner’s title (e.g., Chief Executive Officer)**

# NAME OF BUSINESS (SHORT FORM)

*Please adapt the following paragraph as appropriate for your company:*

**Name of business** is committed to offering products/services that precisely match our customers’ specifications, and to ensuring exceptional after-sales service.

We exist to serve our customers, who are at all times our number one priority. Indeed, our jobs depend on providing quality products and services to these customers.

We are fully aware that employee involvement is vital to the effective operation of a business. All of us need to keep in mind that every product we ship and every service we perform is actually the company’s business card – a card on which all of our names are listed. This is the basis for our reputation and our long-term survival as a business.

The respect that **name of business** has earned in the marketplace is due to our team, i.e., an experienced team which takes pride in its achievements and in which the company places its ongoing trust for a prosperous future.

## OUR MISSION

**Describe your company’s mission.**

## OUR VALUES

*Below are some examples of values. Describe your company’s values.*

* **Work team:** Our development is based on our employees’ involvement and collaboration; we establish structures that encourage dialogue as a way of implementing best practices.
* **Respect:** To preserve a climate that is conducive to workplace well-being, it is vital that we treat our colleagues and customers with respect and fairness, while also being sensitive to each individual’s needs.
* **Innovation:** To remain competitive, we strive to encourage new ideas by maintaining an ongoing improvement process. We believe in human potential and in the constant improvement of our processes.
* **Occupational health and safety:** As a responsible employer, we ensure that every member of the team is committed to promoting and creating a working environment that is safe under all circumstances. This approach is the best way to ensure ongoing improvement in workplace health and safety.

*You may add the company’s organizational chart to this section, as well as telephone numbers for emergencies or reporting workplace incidents, etc.*

# WORKING CONDITIONS HANDBOOK

## PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Before being classified as a permanent employee of the company and accumulating seniority, each new employee must work for a probationary period lasting **three or six (3 or 6)** calendar months. During this period, the company reserves the right to terminate a worker’s employment without notice if his/her work is deemed unsatisfactory. The employee may also resign without giving prior notice. The probationary period may be extended an additional three (3) months if the employee fails to demonstrate possession of the skills required for his/her position.

During the probationary period, employees are not eligible for a salary review or for participation in the employee benefits program; however, they are compensated for any statutory holidays occurring during this period, starting with their first day of employment and based on a calculation establishing the compensation amount. The sole exception is Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, which is a statutory general holiday for which all Quebec workers are paid. The only requirement for receiving this benefit is that the employee be employed on this date.

*The concept of a probationary period is not specifically recognized in the Act respecting labour standards of Quebec (Labour Standards Act). While potentially relevant for purposes of evaluation and monitoring, the probationary period is not legally required.*

*Three (3) months is the standard probationary period, but it may also be shorter. However, you need to set a time that gives new staff a fair opportunity to prove themselves and assimilate their duties. If you prefer to set a longer period, you will then need to give one week’s notice if the employee does not meet the job requirements.*

## COMPENSATION

The wages of every employee are determined before he/she is hired. Management establishes the amount in accordance with the applicable pay scales and taking into consideration the tasks to be executed and the employee’s relevant recognized experience.

The employee must provide a void cheque so that his/her pay can be deposited in the appropriate bank account. The pay is deposited to this bank account **(insert the time, e.g.: Thursdays)** and covers **(insert the time period, e.g.: a one-week period)** from **(e.g.: Sunday to Saturday).**

Each employee will receive a pay stub when his/her wages are paid. If the pay statement contains any errors or the employee has any questions about it, he/she must contact the payroll administrator.

An annual salary adjustment may or may not be made, depending on the employee’s job appraisal and the company’s performance.

*If the company implements a wage policy, it must be spelled out. Similarly, details may be provided here regarding performance appraisals, e.g., frequency, who conducts them, etc.*

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The employer contributes to all plans, insurance policies and other programs provided for by law, i.e., the Quebec Pension Plan (QPP), federal Employment Insurance (EI) and the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP).

Employees who wish to continue receiving benefits during a long-term absence such as a temporary layoff, sick leave, maternity/paternity/parental leave or unpaid leave must continue to pay their portion of the costs. Employees and employers must arrange a payment agreement.

Drug insurance is required under the *Act Respecting Prescription Drug Insurance*.

Group life, health and wage insurance plans will be negotiated with the employee. Whenever a new employee joins a group insurance plan, the employer is required to pay 50% of the insurance cost. The employer offers the employee the opportunity to contribute to a payroll savings plan.

*If the company offers a group insurance plan, e.g., RRSP or VRSP, provide details here about the plan’s benefits.*

## TIME SHEETS

*Possible options – choose or adapt as appropriate for your company.*

Every employee is provided with a time sheet. This sheet is required for calculating his/her wages and for corporate record-keeping. Consequently, it must stay at its designated location, be handled carefully and not be used by any person other that the employee whose name appears on it. The time sheet must be filled in by the employee.

OR

Every employee is provided with a time sheet. This sheet is required for calculating his/her wages and for corporate record-keeping. Consequently, it must stay at its designated location, be handled carefully and not be used by any person other that the employee whose name appears on it. The time sheet must be filled in by the time-stamp machine.

OR

Every employee is provided with a smart card. This card is required for calculating his/her wages and for corporate record-keeping. Employees who do not have their card with them may manually enter their code. Those who forget to record their arrival or departure times must go to the office to rectify the situation.

## WORK SCHEDULE, BREAK PERIODS AND MEALS

Day schedule:

The standard work week is forty (40) hours, Monday through Friday. The standard work day starts at 7 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Two fifteen-minute break periods are allowed each day, i.e., at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Employees are entitled to one unpaid 60-minute lunch period per standard work day, i.e., from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

*According to the Labour Standards, after a period of work of five (5) consecutive hours, employees are entitled to a 30-minute period, without pay, for their meal. They must be paid for this period if they are unable to leave their workstation. Break periods of 10 to 15 minutes may be granted during work shifts but are not mandatory. However, if such periods are granted, they must be paid.*

Evening schedule: add if applicable

Night schedule: add if applicable

The work schedule may change temporarily to accommodate the company’s production requirements.

The regular work hours may not be the same for all employees, depending on the type or location of the work that is assigned to them. In such instances, the working conditions are spelled out when the employee is hired or his/her job is modified.

Summer work schedule: add if applicable

##

## AbsenceS and LATENESS

Employees are sometimes required to be absent from, or late for, work. The company has provided a procedure for such cases to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.

Employees are responsible for advising *(indicate how – by telephone, email, text message, …)* their immediate supervisor of any absence or lateness as soon as possible before the start of their work shift so that the supervisor can make the necessary replacement arrangements and maintain good continuity of the department’s activities.

If an employee is absent for more than three (3) consecutive days, the employer reserves the right to ask him/her for a medical certificate.

Unauthorized or excessive absences may result in the imposition of disciplinary measures by management, depending on the seriousness of the situation.

## OVERTIME

Employees will occasionally be required to work overtime in order to meet production schedules. When this occurs, they must be available for a reasonable number of overtime hours, as required.

Employees are not authorized to approve their own overtime; therefore, all work which they perform outside the usual schedule must receive prior approval from their immediate supervisor.

*Hours worked in addition to the standard work week must be paid at one and a half times the standard hourly rate. Employees are entitled to a weekly minimum rest period of 32 consecutive hours. Employees may refuse to work more than two hours beyond their usual work hours.*

*You may reach an agreement with your employees to stagger work hours on a non-weekly basis. Although CNESST authorization is not required, certain conditions do apply:*

* *The agreement must be evidenced in writing;*
* *Hours may be staggered over a maximum period of four weeks;*
* *A work week may not exceed by more than 10 hours the standard provided for in the Labour Standards Act or its regulations. This means that, in the case of most employees, the work week cannot exceed 50 hours;*
* *An employee or the employer may terminate the agreement on staggered work hours after giving at least two weeks’ notice prior to the scheduled end of this agreement.*

## PAID STATUTORY HOLIDAYS

The paid statutory holidays are listed below: *(these are the minimum under the Labour Standards)*

* New Year’s Day (January 1)
* Good Friday or Easter Monday (at the employer’s option)
* National Patriots’ Day (Monday preceding May 25)
* National Holiday (June 24)
* Canada Day (July 1)
* Labour Day (first Monday in September)
* Thanksgiving (second Monday in October)
* Christmas Day (December 25)

*Employees are entitled to an indemnity or a paid compensatory leave, at the employer’s option. This leave must be taken in the three (3) weeks preceding or following the statutory holiday, except for the National Holiday.*

*The indemnity for paid statutory holidays and for the National Holiday is computed as follows: 1/20 of the wages earned during the four complete weeks of pay preceding the week of the holiday, excluding overtime.*

***List of additional statutory holidays that you might consider offering:***

* *New Year’s Eve (December 31)*
* *Day after New Year’s Day (January 2)*
* *Good Friday or Easter Monday*
* *Remembrance Day (November 11)*
* *Boxing Day (December 26)*

## VACATIONS

*Below are the minimum vacation times prescribed by the Labour Standards:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Depending on hiring date* | Vacation | Indemnity |
| Less than 1 year | 1 day for each month of service performed in the reference year | 4% |
| 1 year to less than 3 years | 2 weeks | 4% |
| 3 years or more  | 3 weeks | 6% |

Annual vacation days must be earned during the reference year, that is, from day/month to day/month, and employees have 12 months in which to use them. Vacation days must be taken during the current year because they do not carry over from one year to the next and cannot be cashed out. You will be given a form that you must fill out prior to the summer period informing us of your desired vacation time. Although we will try to accommodate the preferences of all employees, vacation scheduling will be based on operational needs. Preference will be given to seniority to the extent possible.

When the company opts to close part or all of its operations during the summer period, you must take your vacation during this same period.

*It is the prerogative of the employer to set the vacation dates. However, the employer must inform the employee of the date of his/her vacation at least four (4) weeks in advance.*

*The common practice of establishing schedules based on seniority is not required by law. In fact, the concept of seniority is not recognized as such in the Labour Standards Act and carries no legal weight when setting up vacation schedules.*

## MATERNITY/PATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE

The employer recognizes maternity/paternity/parental leave as continuous employment. For instance, an employee who has an uninterrupted year of service when she goes on a one-year maternity leave will be credited with two years of continuous employment when she returns from her leave.

Employees must give their employer written notice at least three (3) weeks prior to their leaving, indicating the date of their departure and the expected date of their return to work.

On return from maternity/paternity leave, the employee’s vacation time is calculated as specified in the Labour Standards. The employee will then be free to use his/her vacation time for a gradual return to work. Vacation days do not accrue under parental leave.

## LEAVE WITH PAY

Employees who have completed more than three months of uninterrupted service are entitled to two days of paid leave each calendar year (January 1 to December 31) for the following reasons:

* Illness
* To fulfil family obligations related to the care, health, or education of their child or their spouse’s child, or caregiver duties for a parent or other person whose health condition requires them
* Organ or tissue donation
* Following an accident, domestic violence, sexual violence or a criminal offence

These paid-leave days are non-refundable and non‑cumulative.

For these days, the employee’s compensation will be calculated in the same manner as for statutory holidays.

*Note: At the employer’s discretion, you may take partial sick days.*

\*Medical appointments are not considered sick days, as they are planned.

## OTHER CONDITIONS

Using the Internet and social media

The Internet and social media may be used during work hours only for purposes of carrying out job-related requirements and responsibilities. When the Internet and social media are used for work purposes, employees must act in a professional manner while also abiding by the organization’s Code of Conduct. It is forbidden to play video games during work hours. The company does, however, allow employees to use the Internet after work hours provided that another employee does not need to use the system to carry out his/her duties.

Using personal mobile devices

Using personal mobile devices during work hours is not allowed since doing so could adversely impact the productivity of employees, their departments and the company.

Using computer software

Computer software must be approved by the management team and be compatible with the technological options chosen by the company, and must always be accompanied by a user license.

*Some other conditions you might mention include:*

* *Travel expenses*
* *Meal and accommodation expenses*
* *Dress code*

# COMPANY CODE OF ETHICS

Our company has adopted values that will allow us to achieve our growth objectives while also promoting general workplace well-being. These values must be upheld by each and every one of us. Management cannot, therefore, tolerate any conduct that contravenes these company values. Below is the Code of Ethics by which all employees – workers and managers alike – must abide. We encourage you to inform your manager of any conduct that is illegal or contrary to the Code of Ethics. The company is committed to protecting employees against all forms of reprisals.

*Examples of elements that may be included in your company’s Code of Ethics.*

respect

* Treat all of your colleagues and managers the same way, with respect and equality.
* No vexatious conduct, words or actions shall be tolerated, in accordance with our policy on psychological and sexual harassment prevention.
* Show an interest in your colleagues and be a good listener.
* Be courteous, polite and straightforward with your colleagues.
* Greet your colleagues in the morning.
* Respect other people’s work areas as well as their knowledge and skills.

HONESTY

* Honesty vis-à-vis all your workplace activities is essential.
* Theft is not tolerated and may lead to dismissal.
* It is important to avoid placing yourself in a situation of personal conflict of interest vis-à-vis your employment obligations.

professionalism

* Respect the confidentiality of information provided by customers, colleagues or management.
* Project a positive corporate image; any work-related problems must be settled internally rather than outside the company.
* Employees must pay particular attention to cleanliness and are expected to maintain a workplace-appropriate appearance. We rely on your good judgment to determine what is and is not acceptable, within the bounds of safety and the public image that goes with your job.

AUTONOMY

* Show initiative in terms of improving the workplace or the services provided to our customers.

responsibilitY

* Look for solutions to work-related problems and submit these solutions to management.
* Admit your mistakes without looking for excuses.

WORK TeAM

* Know how to provide mutual support.
* Be sensitive to the needs and requests of your colleagues.
* Be ready to collaborate and offer constructive criticism.

commitment

* Show enthusiasm in the workplace.
* Strive to constantly improve your work methods.

structure AND organiZation

* Abide by management directives.

ATTENTIVENESS

* Respect the work schedule.
* Be vigilant in performing your tasks.

loyalty

* Refrain from saying anything that might damage the reputation of the company or management, both within and outside the company.
* Be vigilant in everything you say so that the people around you will see that you stand in solidarity with your employer and colleagues.

# COMPANY RULES AND REGULATIONS

**Name of business** expects staff to abide by certain rules and regulations in order to create a positive working environment for everyone.

Employees are also required to follow the rules, regulations and guidelines laid out in this Handbook and communicated within the workplace.

*Examples of rules and regulations. You may also add sector-specific rules and regulations related to health and safety standards.*

Workplace health and safety. As an employee, you must:

* Follow the health and safety regulations.
* Observe the hygiene standards.
* Wear protective equipment when required.
* Immediately report a workplace accident to your immediate supervisor.
* Show respect for your work colleagues and/or not use abusive or disrespectful language.
* Avoid getting into fights or quarrels, running or shouting.
* Refrain from having a weapon on the employer’s property.
* Refrain from having or consuming alcohol or drugs on the employer’s property and from working under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
* Adhere to the new provisions regarding psychological harassment added to the *Work Standards Act* in 2004. Company management will use the necessary means to enforce these provisions.

Respect in the workplace setting. As an employee, you are not allowed to:

* Smoke on indoor work premises and within nine metres of the outside doors and windows.
* Gamble on the employer’s property.
* Engage in insubordination, or refuse to work, as this will result in an employee’s immediate suspension for the remainder of his/her shift.

Work schedule. As an employee, you must:

* Always follow the work schedule that has been assigned to you.
* Arrive on time for the start of your work shift and return punctually from breaks.
* Be at your workstation at the beginning of your work shift and remain there until the end or, as appropriate, until your replacement arrives.
* Obtain authorization from your immediate supervisor to leave your work area.
* Obtain authorization from your immediate supervisor to work overtime.

Company equipment and assets. As an employee, you are not allowed to:

* Use the employer’s production equipment for personal reasons during work hours. Permission to do so may be granted outside work hours.
* Falsify files, documents, punch cards and production/quality reports.
* Possess or transport any assets belonging to the company off the employer’s property without written authorization.
* Break tools or equipment belonging to the company.
* Be on the employer’s property without authorization or invitation when not on the job.
* Park vehicles anywhere other than in specifically designated areas.
* Engage in fund-raising on the employer’s property without prior authorization.
* Post items on the company billboard without authorization.
* Violate our **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy regarding threats, verbal or physical violence towards representatives of the employer and/or vandalism on the employer’s property; such violations will result in immediate dismissal.

The employer expects staff to exercise judgment with regard to appropriate work conduct. In order to ensure respect, harmony and safety for everyone in the workplace, employees who breach the regulations may face disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal.

Since it is difficult to anticipate and list all situations that might arise in the course of your work, this handbook makes broad reference to the *Labour Standards Act* and to other applicable employment legislation in Quebec. Some parts have been transcribed or improved for easier consultation.

**INSERT YOUR LOGO HERE**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HAVING READ THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, attest that I have read the Employee Handbook and its various components, including the following:

* Working Conditions Handbook
* Company Rules and Regulations
* Company Code of Ethics

I acknowledge having received all the relevant information that I needed in order to have a good understanding of the content or scope of this Handbook.

Employee’s signature Date

Executive Director’s signature Date

*Please sign this letter and give it to your employer.*