

New Workplace Policies Employers Should Consider

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As the workplace landscape continues to evolve, employers must stay ahead of emerging challenges by implementing thoughtful and proactive policies.

In 2025, three key areas stand out as critical for fostering a positive and productive work environment: promoting collaboration and respect, supporting employee well-being, and responsibly integrating artificial intelligence. In this article, we'll explore how well-crafted policies in these areas can enhance workplace culture, ensure compliance, and boost employee satisfaction.

Policies Promoting Collaboration, Respect, and Opportunity

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion ("DEI") is a [key employment topic to prioritize in 2025](#). On January 21, 2025, President Trump signed [Executive Order 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity](#), which encourages private employers to end "illegal DEI discrimination and preferences." This executive action directs federal agencies to promote "the policy of individual initiative, excellence, and hard work" in the private sector, and it directs the Attorney General to submit a report containing recommendations for enforcement measures to end "illegal discrimination and preferences."

Despite the recent executive action, employers may still implement a policy addressing collaboration, respect, and opportunity in the workplace. In implementing this policy, employers should balance between an initiative that will aim to ensure fair treatment and equal opportunity for all, regardless of background, as opposed to one that incites claims of discrimination. An effective policy on collaboration, respect, and opportunity can foster a positive working environment, promote a sense of belonging and satisfaction, boost morale, and drive innovation.

Well-Being in the Workplace

Workplace well-being has transitioned from a perk to a necessity. Often, when an employee's well-being deteriorates, so does their job performance. According to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(last updated April 2023\)](#) ("NAMI"):

- Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the United States experience mental illness each year; and
- Approximately 1 in 20 adults in the United States experience a serious mental illness each

year.

Additionally, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") data shows that charges of discrimination based on mental health conditions (including substance use disorders) are substantial. Well-being not only has a physical and social impact on the individual employee, but it also has a financial impact on the employer as employee well-being impacts productivity levels and healthcare costs.

A comprehensive well-being in the workplace policy provides guidance on collaboration between employees, encourages healthy habits through on-site initiatives, provides access to mental health resources, and implements strategies designed to promote social engagement (for example, a well-being in the workplace policy may offer days off for volunteering activities). An effective well-being in the workplace policy can reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and stress, cultivate a sense of purpose and accomplishment in the workplace, and ultimately enhance job satisfaction and productivity.

AI in the Workplace

The rapid integration and easy access of artificial intelligence ("AI") in the workplace necessitates clear employment policies. There are several accessible (and often free) AI tools for work that assist employees in drafting emails, preparing summary notes, drafting work materials, and preparing presentations. However, an array of legal issues may arise when employees use AI tools to perform their job duties. While these tools may be useful in promoting efficiency, they also generate legal risks if used improperly—primarily confidentiality. A comprehensive AI policy should address AI usage guidelines (including clearly defining "AI usage," listing permitted and prohibited uses, and implementing protocols for human oversight), ethical considerations, data privacy, and mandatory training. An effective AI policy can cultivate responsible innovation, build trust, and assist in a smooth transition into an AI-driven work environment.

Conclusion

Although employers typically update their employee handbooks either at the end or beginning of the calendar year, there is never a bad time to implement new policies that address significant issues in the workplace. These policies are only three examples of proactive steps an employer can take to improve their workplace culture and compliance with important laws.

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