

8 HR Policies You Should Audit Right Now



HR laws are changing fast—ensure your key policies are up to date and legally sound. As HR director, it's incumbent on you to ensure that your company is monitoring and, if necessary, revising its HR policies to keep up with these developments. Here's a rundown of the 8 policies you should be auditing right now (along with links to analysis and policy templates on the HRI site).

1. Workplace Harassment Policy

The traditional workplace harassment policy is quickly becoming obsolete as a result of sweeping new OHS laws, most notably [Bill C-65](#), which took effect for federally regulated employers on January 1. But new harassment laws have or soon will go into effect in a number of other jurisdictions, including New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Québec and Yukon. **What To Do:** Review your current [harassment policy](#), particularly the provisions dealing with [hazard assessment](#) and [investigating complaints](#).

2. Telecommuting & Work from Home Policy

Although the pandemic didn't start the telecommuting revolution, it sure accelerated it. One of the unforeseen effects has been to extend employers' [OHS duties](#) to the home office, at least in [some jurisdictions](#). **What To Do:** Make sure you have proper policies for [approving telecommuter arrangements](#) and ensuring that [telecommuters work safely](#)—which can be separate or combined into one policy.

3. Cyberbullying & Harassment Policy

A court in Ontario created a new online harassment tort. **Translation:** Victims of online harassment can sue for money damages. And that may include [employee lawsuits against employers](#) when harassment occurs in or by somebody in the workplace. **What To Do:** Be sure you have a clear [written policy](#) on cyberbullying and online harassment.

4. Attendance & Punctuality Policy

For many, if not most HR directors, ensuring employees show up for work on schedule and [on time](#) remains the primary challenge. But without the right policies, you have absolutely no chance of [controlling absenteeism](#). **What To Do:** Make sure your organization has legally sound [attendance](#), [absenteeism](#) and [punctuality](#) policies.

5. Workplace Drug & Alcohol Use Policies

Legalization of marijuana and recent court cases have changed the legal parameters of keeping employees sober at work. Zero tolerance, while still defensible in principle, has become unworkable as a practical policy thanks to marijuana legalization, privacy and disability discrimination laws. **What To Do:** In addition to [keeping on top of the key new court cases on workplace drug testing](#), there are 2 crucial policies you need to control workplace drug use: i. a [fitness for duty policy](#); and ii. an [alcohol/drug testing policy](#).

6. Social Media Use Policy

Contrary to what many employees believe, social media activity *is* subject to discipline even when it happens off-duty and away from work. But you can't do it unless you have the [right policy](#). **What To Do:** Make sure you have a clearly worded, legally sound policy on employee use of [company computers](#) and [social media](#).

7. Domestic Violence Leave Policy

Just about every jurisdiction has now adopted employment standards laws giving employees the right to take leave, in some cases paid, to deal with domestic violence. **What To Do:** Make sure your [domestic violence leave policy](#) is up to date with the laws of your particular jurisdiction.

8. Use of Work Time & Time Theft Policy

Courts across the country are finally recognizing what organizations and their HR directors have known for years: employee time theft is a serious problem. Recent cases have marked out [the path to follow to hold employees accountable and discipline them for time theft](#). Contrary to what many employees believe, social media activity *is* subject to discipline even when it happens off-duty and away from work. But you can't do it unless you have the [right policy](#). **What To Do:** Make sure your organization has [a policy that](#) expressly addresses time theft and spells out the potential consequences for employees who engage in it.