

How to Write a Restaurant Employee Manual

Start on the Right Foot with New Restaurant Employees



A restaurant employee manual is a good idea for new hires.

An employee manual is a good idea for both new and existing restaurants. A good restaurant employee manual outlines all your expectations for job performance as well as job descriptions, safety procedures and any other communication you want to convey. If there is ever a dispute with an employee, about policies, behavior, etc....you can pull out your handy dandy employee manual for the correct answer.

Have New Employees Sign the Restaurant Employee Manual

Before letting any new employee on start on the floor or in the back of the house, have them read the employee manual cover to cover and sign a release saying they understand the terms and conditions of their employment at your restaurant. Their signature should acknowledge that they have read, understood and are willing to follow the rules and regulations put forth in the restaurant employee manual. Not only does this help set clear guidelines for new employees, it will help protect employers in the event of a lawsuit or other legal action.

What to Put in a Restaurant Employee Manual

Most employee manuals, whether a restaurant or other type of business contain the following information for new hires:

- A letter of welcome
- Performance expectations
- Emergency procedures
- Drug/Alcohol policies
- Safety policy

A restaurant employee manual should have job specific policies, as they relate to the different positions within a restaurant. These include:

- A Server Policy. What are the standard dining room procedures, including those for opening and closing. What side work are servers responsible for? What is the cash policy- do servers keep a float? Do they pool tips?

- Bartender Policies. These policies should outline the basics of the liquor- standard pours, inventory, and understanding the different types of alcohol, beer and wine served. The bartender policies should also touch on opening and closing duties and how to safely serve alcohol to patrons.

- Kitchen Staff Policies. Along with opening and closing procedures, the kitchen portion of an employee manual should include recipe protocol, safe food handling and cleaning responsibilities.

Other items to include:

- Restaurant mission statement (if you have one)
- Performance evaluations
- Company history
- Confidentiality protocol
- Social media policy

Other tips

Cross training in a restaurant - training employees to do multiple jobs- is extremely helpful in a restaurant, which often have high turnover rates. By putting all of these employee guidelines together in one manual, you ensure that new hires will have a better understanding of what you do as restaurant and how you do it.