

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Overview

At _____, showing up matters — for your teammates, for our customers, and for the business we're all building together. This policy sets clear expectations for attendance so everyone knows what's expected and what to do when life gets in the way.

This policy applies to all exempt and non-exempt employees. It covers:

- What counts as an absence, tardiness, or early departure
- How to report unplanned absences and request time off
- How we track time worked
- What happens when attendance expectations aren't met
- The accommodations and flexibility available to you

A few important notes: This policy doesn't override protections under federal law, including the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), or applicable state and local leave laws. If you have questions about how these laws apply to your situation, please speak with your manager or _____ directly.

Definitions

Tardiness: Arriving late to a scheduled shift, or returning late from a meal break or rest break.

Planned absence: A scheduled day off approved by your manager in advance, including vacation, personal time off (PTO), or foreseeable medical appointments.

Unplanned absence: An absence that wasn't approved in advance. This includes unexpected illness, family emergencies, or other sudden circumstances. Unplanned absences aren't automatically unexcused, how you communicate and how quickly you do it matters.

No-call, no-show: Failing to show up for a scheduled shift without notifying your manager beforehand. This is treated more seriously than an unplanned absence where notice was given.

Early departure: Leaving your shift before your scheduled end time without manager approval.

Absenteeism: A pattern of frequent or recurring absences — whether excused or unexcused — that disrupts business operations. For this policy, a pattern is defined as

Job abandonment: When an employee misses _____ [e.g. typically 3] or more consecutive shifts without contact. At that point, the employee may be considered to have voluntarily resigned. (See the Job Abandonment section for more detail.)

Attendance expectations

Reliable attendance is one of the most important things you can offer your team. When someone doesn't show, someone else has to cover — and that affects everyone.

Here's what we ask of every team member:

- Arrive ready to work at the start of your scheduled shift. Plan to be on-site _____ minutes early so you're clocked in and ready to go by your start time.
- Stay for the full duration of your scheduled shift unless your manager approves an early departure.
- Clock in and out on time, including for meal breaks of _____ minutes.
- Communicate early and often. If something comes up, don't wait. Let your manager know as soon as possible.

There is a _____-minute grace period at the start of each shift. Arriving after that window is considered tardiness.

Reporting absences and time off

For planned time off (vacation, appointments, personal days): Submit your request at least _____ weeks in advance using [our scheduling app / written request to your manager]. Requests aren't approved until your manager confirms. Don't assume silence is a yes.

For sick days: Let your manager know as soon as you're able, ideally at least _____ hours before your shift starts so coverage can be arranged. If your illness lasts more than _____ consecutive days, a doctor's note may be required upon your return.

Note for business owners: Many states and cities have mandatory paid sick leave laws that set minimum accrual rates and employee eligibility rules. These may override what is set in this policy. Check your state and local requirements before finalizing this section.

For unplanned emergencies: Contact your manager directly by email, or phone at _____, as soon as possible. Text or app messages are acceptable if you can't call.

Shift coverage: If you need time off and want to find someone to cover your shift, you're welcome to reach out to a coworker. Any swap must be approved by a manager before it's considered confirmed.

Your PTO balance:

Full-time employees accrue _____ days of PTO per [year/month/pay period].

Part-time employees accrue _____ days of PTO per [year/month/pay period] / are not eligible for PTO.

PTO becomes available after _____ days of employment.

Unused PTO _____.

Questions about your balance? Ask your manager or check [your scheduling app / HR system].

Time tracking and clock-in/out

Accurate time records protect you and the business. Every employee is required to clock in and out using _____ at the start and end of each shift, and for any meal breaks longer than _____ minutes.

A few ground rules:

Clock in yourself. Don't clock in or out for another employee, and don't ask someone to do it for you. This is considered time fraud and will be treated accordingly.

Don't clock in early without manager approval. If you arrive before your scheduled start time, wait to clock in until your shift begins or check with your manager first.

Forgot to clock in or out? Let your manager know as soon as possible. Timekeeping corrections can be made, but repeated forgotten clock-ins may be treated as a policy violation.

Time records are used to calculate your pay. If you believe there's an error in your hours, bring it to your manager's attention before the payroll deadline: _____.

Tardiness and early departures

Tardiness: Arriving late, even by a few minutes, affects your teammates and customers. Occasional lateness happens, and we understand that. But a pattern of tardiness, meaning _____, will be addressed through the disciplinary process outlined in the Disciplinary Actions section.

If you know you're going to be late, call or text your manager before your shift starts. Don't wait until you arrive.

Early departures: Leaving before your shift ends without manager approval is a policy violation. If you need to leave early — for illness, an emergency, or any other reason — speak with your manager first. They'll do their best to accommodate when they can.

Job abandonment

If an employee misses _____ or more consecutive scheduled shifts without any contact, _____ [Business Name] may consider the employee to have abandoned their job and voluntarily resigned.

Before that determination is made, a manager will attempt to reach the employee by phone and [text/email] on each missed day. If an emergency contact is on file, we may reach out to them as well.

We take this step seriously. If something happened to you, we want to know. Don't hesitate to reach out — it's never too late to communicate.

Return to work after extended absence

If you've been out for _____ consecutive days due to illness, injury, or a personal emergency, here's what to expect when you're ready to return:

Let your manager know in advance when you expect to return so they can plan coverage and prepare for your first shift back.

A doctor's note may be required if your absence was due to illness or injury lasting more than _____ days. Your manager will let you know if this applies to your situation.

Check in with your manager on your first day back to catch up on anything you missed and confirm your schedule going forward.

Extended leaves covered under FMLA, ADA, or applicable state law may have additional return-to-work requirements. Speak with _____ if this applies to you.

Disciplinary actions

When attendance expectations aren't met, here's how we'll address it. Each step gives you an opportunity to correct the behavior before further action is taken.

Step 1 — Verbal warning: A private conversation between you and your manager about the issue. This is documented internally.

Step 2 — Written warning: A written summary of the concern, what was discussed, and what's expected going forward. You'll be asked to sign acknowledging receipt.

Step 3 — Disciplinary meeting: A formal meeting with your manager [and/or owner] to discuss the ongoing pattern and agree on a corrective action plan. This may include a suspension period of _____ days.

Step 4 — Final written warning: A final notice that outlines all prior steps taken and makes clear that termination is the next step if the behavior continues.

Step 5 — Termination: If the pattern of violations continues after all prior steps, employment may be ended.

Note: In cases of serious violations — such as a no-call, no-show or falsifying time records — we reserve the right to skip steps and move directly to termination.

Accommodations and special circumstances

Life is complicated, and we know it. If you have a medical condition, disability, religious observance, caregiving responsibility, or other circumstance that affects your ability to meet standard attendance expectations, please talk to _____. We'll do our best to work something out.

Requests for accommodation are confidential and won't be held against you. What we ask is that you communicate early rather than waiting for a problem to develop.

Federal law provides specific protections under the ADA and FMLA that may apply to your situation. We take those obligations seriously. When in doubt, ask.

Manager and supervisor accountability

This policy works both ways. Managers at _____ are accountable for:

- Applying this policy consistently and fairly across the team
- Keeping accurate records of absences, tardiness, and disciplinary conversations
- Following the progressive discipline steps outlined above before escalating
- Responding promptly to shift coverage needs when a team member is out
- Approaching attendance conversations with empathy first — circumstances matter
- Referring employees to appropriate resources when accommodations may be needed

If you feel this policy has been applied unfairly or inconsistently, bring your concern to _____.

Employee sign-off

By signing below, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to the _____ Attendance Policy. I understand that violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Employee name (print): _____

Employee signature: _____

Date: _____

Manager/owner signature: _____

Date: _____

Questions about this policy? Contact _____ at _____.