

ACME CORPORATION

Employee Policy Handbook

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

Version 4.2 — Sample / Illustrative Document

This document is a fictional sample used for demonstration purposes only. All names, policies, and figures are illustrative and do not constitute legal advice.

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1. Introduction & Scope

This Employee Policy Handbook (the "Handbook") sets out the policies, expectations, and standards of conduct that apply to all employees, officers, contractors, interns, and agents of Acme Corporation and its subsidiaries (collectively, "Acme" or the "Company"). The Handbook supports our mission to operate with integrity, serve our customers responsibly, and foster a workplace where every employee can thrive.

This Handbook applies globally. Where local law imposes more stringent requirements, local law controls. Where local law permits a less stringent standard, this Handbook controls. Country- or region-specific addenda may supplement these policies.

Important: This Handbook does not create a contract of employment or guarantee employment for any specific duration. Employment with Acme is at-will where permitted by local law. The Company may modify, suspend, or discontinue any policy at any time, with or without notice, except as prohibited by law.

2. Code of Conduct & Business Ethics

Every employee is expected to act ethically, honestly, and in the best interests of Acme and its stakeholders. The Code of Conduct is the cornerstone of our policies and is summarized below.

2.1 Core Principles

- **Integrity:** Do the right thing, even when no one is watching.
- **Respect:** Treat colleagues, customers, and partners with dignity.
- **Accountability:** Own outcomes and speak up about concerns.
- **Compliance:** Follow the letter and spirit of applicable laws.
- **Stewardship:** Protect Acme's assets, reputation, and information.

2.2 Seeking Guidance

When a situation is unclear, employees should consult their manager, Human Resources, the Legal Department, or the Ethics & Compliance Office before acting. The Ethics Helpline (see Section 21) is available 24/7 and supports anonymous reporting where permitted by law.

3. Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest arises when an employee's personal interests — financial, familial, or otherwise — interfere, or appear to interfere, with the interests of Acme. Employees must avoid actual, potential, and perceived conflicts.

3.1 Common Examples

- Holding a material financial interest in a competitor, supplier, or customer.
- Hiring, supervising, or making employment decisions about a family member or romantic partner.
- Outside employment or consulting that competes with Acme or uses Acme resources.
- Serving on the board of a company that does business with Acme.

3.2 Disclosure Requirement

Employees must disclose any actual or potential conflict of interest in writing to their manager and the Ethics & Compliance Office within ten (10) business days of becoming aware of it. Annual disclosure attestations are required for all people managers and employees in designated sensitive roles.

4. Gifts, Hospitality & Entertainment

Modest business courtesies can help build professional relationships, but gifts and hospitality must never create the appearance of influencing a business decision. This policy applies equally to giving and receiving.

4.1 General Principles

- Gifts and hospitality must be *infrequent, reasonable in value, transparent, and never* given or accepted in exchange for favorable treatment.
- Cash and cash equivalents (gift cards, prepaid cards, cryptocurrency, securities) are **never** acceptable in either direction, regardless of value.
- Gifts must never be offered to or accepted from a party while a procurement decision, contract negotiation, audit, or investigation is pending.
- Special rules apply when dealing with government officials (see Section 5).

4.2 Approval Thresholds

Scenario	Per-Item Value (USD)	Required Action
Receiving a gift (non-government)	Up to \$75	Allowed; no pre-approval required. Use good judgment on frequency.
Receiving a gift (non-government)	\$76 – \$250	Disclose to manager and log in the Gifts Register within 10 business days.

Scenario	Per-Item Value (USD)	Required Action
Receiving a gift (non-government)	Over \$250	Politely decline or return. If refusal would offend, accept on behalf of Acme and escalate to Ethics & Compliance for donation or raffle.
Giving a gift (non-government)	Up to \$150	Allowed with manager approval; record in Gifts Register.
Giving a gift (non-government)	Over \$150	Requires written pre-approval from the Ethics & Compliance Office.
Any gift involving a government official	Any amount	Requires written pre-approval from Legal. See Section 5.
Business meals (giving or receiving)	Up to \$125 per person	Allowed if the host is present and the meal has a clear business purpose.
Business entertainment (sports, concerts, etc.)	Up to \$250 per person	Host must attend. Pre-approval required if over this amount.
Travel or lodging paid by a third party	Any amount	Requires written pre-approval from Ethics & Compliance.

4.3 Red Flags

Stop and consult Ethics & Compliance before proceeding if any of the following are true: the gift is offered secretly or "off the books"; the giver asks you not to tell your manager; the timing coincides with an open bid or negotiation; the gift is lavish, unusual, or outside normal industry practice; the recipient is a government official or a family member of one.

4.4 Gifts Register

All reportable gifts and hospitality (given or received) must be logged in the Acme Gifts Register, accessible via the Ethics & Compliance intranet site. Entries must include the date, parties involved, description, estimated value, and business justification. The Register is audited quarterly.

5. Anti-Bribery & Anti-Corruption

Acme complies with the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), the UK Bribery Act 2010, and all applicable anti-corruption laws worldwide. Employees must never offer, promise, give, request, or accept anything of value to improperly influence a business decision.

5.1 Prohibited Conduct

- Offering or accepting bribes, kickbacks, or facilitation payments.
- Using third parties (agents, consultants, distributors) to do indirectly what Acme would not do directly.
- Making political contributions on behalf of Acme without Legal approval.
- Charitable donations requested by or benefiting a customer, government official, or their family.

5.2 Government Officials

"Government official" is interpreted broadly and includes employees of state-owned enterprises, political parties, candidates for office, and their immediate family members. All interactions must be pre-approved and documented.

6. Equal Employment Opportunity & Non-Discrimination

Acme provides equal employment opportunity to all applicants and employees without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

This policy applies to all employment practices, including recruiting, hiring, training, promotion, compensation, benefits, discipline, and termination. Reasonable accommodations are provided to qualified individuals with disabilities and for sincerely held religious beliefs, absent undue hardship.

7. Anti-Harassment & Workplace Respect

Acme is committed to a workplace free of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Harassment based on any protected characteristic, or of a sexual nature, is strictly prohibited — whether in the office, at remote worksites, during business travel, at company-sponsored events, or on digital platforms.

7.1 Examples of Prohibited Conduct

- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for favors, or physical contact.
- Offensive jokes, slurs, epithets, or name-calling.
- Displaying offensive images, objects, or messages.
- Threats, intimidation, ridicule, or interference with work performance.
- Retaliating against anyone who reports a concern in good faith.

7.2 Reporting

Employees who experience or witness harassment should report it immediately to their manager, HR, or the Ethics Helpline. All reports will be handled promptly, confidentially to the extent possible, and without retaliation.

8. Confidentiality & Protection of Information

Employees have access to information that is valuable to Acme and, if disclosed, could cause harm. Confidential information includes business plans, customer data, pricing, source code, personnel information, unreleased product details, and any information marked as confidential or that a reasonable person would understand to be confidential.

8.1 Obligations

- Use confidential information only for legitimate Acme business purposes.
- Do not discuss confidential matters in public places, on public Wi-Fi, or with unauthorized individuals.
- Return or securely destroy all confidential information upon separation.
- Confidentiality obligations continue after employment ends.

9. Data Privacy & Personal Information

Acme collects and processes personal data about employees, customers, and partners. We comply with applicable privacy laws including the GDPR, UK GDPR, CCPA/CPRA, and other regional frameworks.

- Collect only the minimum personal data necessary for a defined purpose.
- Use personal data only for the purpose for which it was collected.
- Apply appropriate technical and organizational safeguards.
- Report suspected privacy incidents to *privacy@acme.example* within 24 hours.

10. Information Security & Acceptable Use of Technology

Acme information systems are provided for business use. Limited, reasonable personal use is permitted provided it does not interfere with work, consume excessive resources, or violate other policies.

10.1 Employee Responsibilities

- Use strong, unique passwords and enable multi-factor authentication on all accounts.
- Never share credentials or leave devices unlocked in public spaces.
- Encrypt laptops, phones, and removable media that store Acme data.
- Apply security patches and updates promptly when prompted.
- Report lost or stolen devices to IT Security immediately, and no later than four (4) hours after discovery.
- Do not install unauthorized software or connect unapproved devices to Acme networks.

10.2 Monitoring

To protect its assets and comply with the law, Acme may monitor the use of its systems, including email, network traffic, and files stored on company devices, subject to local law. Employees should not have an expectation of privacy when using Acme systems for non-business purposes.

11.Remote & Hybrid Work

Many roles at Acme support remote or hybrid schedules. Eligibility is determined by role and business need. Remote employees are expected to:

- Maintain a safe, ergonomic, and professional workspace.
- Be reachable and responsive during agreed core hours.
- Protect Acme data and use secure networks (VPN required for restricted systems).
- Report tax or immigration implications of cross-border remote work to HR before relocating, even temporarily.

12.Attendance, Hours of Work & Time Reporting

Standard working hours are 40 hours per week for full-time employees in the U.S. (local norms apply elsewhere). Non-exempt employees must accurately record all time worked, including overtime, and obtain prior approval before working overtime. Falsifying time records is grounds for termination.

13.Compensation, Expenses & Business Travel

Acme pays competitive, performance-based compensation and reimburses reasonable, necessary, and properly documented business expenses. Employees must:

- Book travel through Acme's approved booking platform where available.
- Submit expense reports within 30 days, with original receipts for items over \$25.
- Choose economical options (e.g., economy-class air for flights under six hours).

- Never submit personal expenses for reimbursement or charge them to a corporate card.

14. Paid Time Off, Leave & Holidays

Acme offers a comprehensive time-off program. Actual entitlements are described in country-specific benefits summaries.

- **Vacation / Annual Leave:** Accrued based on length of service; typically 15–25 days.
- **Sick Leave:** Available for personal illness or care of a family member.
- **Parental Leave:** Paid leave for birth, adoption, or foster placement.
- **Bereavement Leave:** Up to five (5) paid days for immediate family.
- **Jury Duty & Civic Leave:** Paid time off as required by law.
- **Military Leave:** Provided in accordance with applicable law (e.g., USERRA).
- **Company Holidays:** Published annually; varies by country.

15. Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Acme is committed to a safe and healthy work environment. Employees must follow safety procedures, use required personal protective equipment, report hazards and injuries promptly, and complete required safety training. Acts of violence, threats, or possession of weapons on Company premises are strictly prohibited.

16. Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace

Employees must not be impaired by alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused prescription medications while performing work or on Company premises. Moderate consumption of alcohol at authorized Company events is permitted where lawful. Employees who believe they may have a substance-use concern are encouraged to seek confidential help through the Employee Assistance Program.

17. Social Media & External Communications

Only authorized spokespersons may speak on behalf of Acme. Personal social media activity must:

- Make clear that views are personal and not those of Acme.
- Never disclose confidential or non-public information.
- Respect co-workers, customers, and competitors.
- Comply with securities laws during quiet periods and around material announcements.

18. Intellectual Property & Inventions

All work product, inventions, software, designs, and materials created by employees within the scope of their employment, or using Acme resources, are the property of Acme to the maximum extent permitted by law. Employees must promptly disclose inventions and cooperate with Acme to perfect and enforce its IP rights, including by executing assignment documents.

19. Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools

Acme encourages the responsible use of AI to enhance productivity and decision-making. Employees may use approved AI tools for business purposes, subject to the following:

- Only use AI tools that appear on the approved Acme Tooling List.
- Do not submit confidential, personal, customer, or regulated data into non-approved AI services.
- Treat AI output as a draft — verify accuracy, attribution, and licensing before using it in deliverables.
- Disclose substantive use of AI when required by a customer, regulator, or internal policy.
- Do not use AI to make final decisions that materially affect a person's employment, credit, health, or legal rights without human review.

20. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Acme believes diverse teams produce better outcomes. We invest in inclusive hiring, equitable development, pay equity analyses, and Employee Resource Groups open to all employees. DEI is a shared responsibility and is reflected in leadership expectations and performance reviews.

21. Whistleblower & Non-Retaliation

Employees are encouraged to report suspected violations of law, regulation, or Acme policy without fear of retaliation. Reports may be made to any manager, HR, Legal, Internal Audit, or the Ethics Helpline:

- **Phone:** +1 (800) 555-0199 (toll-free, 24/7, multilingual)
- **Web:** ethics.acme.example (anonymous where permitted by law)
- **Email:** ethics@acme.example

Retaliation against anyone who reports a concern in good faith, or who participates in an investigation, is prohibited and itself a violation of this Handbook.

22. Discipline & Corrective Action

Violations of this Handbook may result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment, as well as referral to law enforcement where appropriate. Acme may, but is not required

to, follow progressive discipline. Nothing in this section alters the at-will nature of employment where applicable.

23. Separation from Employment

Upon separation, whether voluntary or involuntary, employees must:

- Return all Acme property, including laptops, badges, mobile devices, credit cards, and documents.
- Transition work, including knowledge transfer and documentation, as reasonably directed.
- Honor ongoing obligations regarding confidentiality, IP assignment, non-solicitation, and, where applicable, non-competition.
- Participate, where offered, in an exit interview.

24. Policy Administration & Acknowledgment

The Ethics & Compliance Office, in partnership with Human Resources and Legal, owns this Handbook. Policies are reviewed at least annually. Questions, interpretations, and exceptions are managed by the Ethics & Compliance Office.

Acknowledgment. By my signature below, I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Acme Corporation Employee Policy Handbook. I understand that I am expected to comply with its terms, that the Handbook may be updated from time to time, and that failure to comply may result in corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

Employee Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____