

HR Services Model Employee Handbook — 2026 Update

Guide to Changes

Update Highlights

May Update. The May 2026 version of the *Model Employee Handbook* includes editorial changes to ensure text accurately reflects policy or legal provisions. Two new topics, Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Prohibited Classroom Instruction, are included in this update. Detailed descriptions of all changes made in this update are listed in the chart below.

Accessibility. The editable version of the *Model Employee Handbook* is formatted to support accessibility for individuals with disabilities. This version of the handbook is a simple, linear, clearly structured document that will be easy to read in its original state and is most likely to remain accessible across a wide range of assistive devices. It is recommended that districts take the time to transfer local information into the most recent editable version and refresh the format of their employee handbook. It will be easier to add material to the current editable format than to retrofit an existing handbook for accessibility. Refer to [“Help for Editors”](#) for additional information.

Editing Features

Text changes made in this update of the *Model Employee Handbook* (PDF version) have been marked to ease the district update process. Additions appear as blue, underlined text (e.g., [additions](#)) and deletions appear as red, strike through text (e.g., ~~deletions~~).

All changes identified in the text column of the *Model Employee Handbook* have been incorporated into the Editable Model Employee Handbook in Microsoft Word® (Editable MEH 2026-27.docx).

The formatting included in the editable Microsoft Word® version of the model employee handbook includes a table of contents and index that are built automatically in Word. Instructions for using these features are provided in the online document, [“Help for Editors”](#).

Topic	Page Number (MEH)	Page Number (Editable Version)	Description of Change
Cover Page			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated dates and copyright statement
Table of Contents	1-2	1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated page numbers and order of entries Added new topics of prohibition on diversity, equity, and inclusion and prohibited classroom instruction
Health Safety Training	16-17	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated requirements to reflect safety training requirements for certain positions and the requirement to submit documentation to the district
Notification to Parents Regarding Qualifications	22	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated the language to reflect the positions that require parent notification including substitutes. Removed the language regarding DOI exemptions since this is not allowable under new law
Outside Employment and Tutoring	22-23	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added local considerations referencing policies outside employment for administrators including the penalty for violation of law
Performance Evaluation	23	17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added policy reference Removed the reference to code for nursing review committee and added the policy reference
Employee Involvement	24	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added local considerations for a single campus district
Mental Health Training	25	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated the code reference for the requirements for mental health training for employees who regularly interact with students
Leaves and Absences	34	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added policy references
Temporary Disability Leave	45	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added local considerations to address the process for placing an employee on temporary disability leave
Jury Duty	48	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added local considerations about the prohibition of reducing an employee's personal leave for jury duty

Topic	Page Number (MEH)	Page Number (Editable Version)	Description of Change
Standards of Conduct	55	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added policy reference DHA Updated the language to reflect policy for reports to SBEC by the superintendent
Educator Code of Ethics	56-59	39-42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renumbered factors under 3.9 to reflect policy
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	62-63	44-45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated and emphasized the 24-hour reporting timeline for child abuse Updated that abuse must be reported to DFPS even when made to law enforcement Updated local considerations with proper code and the requirements under law
Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children	64	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated policy reference Removed the reference to the bill
Reports to Texas Education Agency	64-65	45-46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added reporting timeline of 48 hours to report to TEA Added local considerations to add Education Code and requirements for superintendent and principals Added reporting time line of seven days for a certified employee for certain misconduct
Technology Resources	66	47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added a policy reference
Personal Use of Electronic Communications	67-68	47-48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changed policy reference DH to DHA Changed DH(EXHIBIT) to DHA(LEGAL)

Topic	Page Number (MEH)	Page Number (Editable Version)	Description of Change
Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents	69-72	49-51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed licensed therapists to school psychologists to reflect updated title change
Employee Arrests and Convictions	73-74	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added local considerations addressing reporting requirements for superintendents
Tobacco and Nicotine Products and E-Cigarette Use	75-76	53-54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated language and local considerations to align with law • Added definition of “e-cigarette” defined in policy and health and safety code
Resignations	86-87	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated local considerations to address the principal reporting requirement to superintendent after an educator’s resignation and superintendent’s requirement to report to SBEC • Changed SBEC to TEA for required reporting by the superintendent for noncertified employees • Added a statement in local considerations to note that the superintendent should follow reporting requirements to TEA after notification from a principal or director of a noncertified employee’s resignation or termination
Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees	87-88	62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added new policy references
Dismissal of Noncontract Employees	88	62-63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added policy references

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Prohibition on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	89	63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added new topic of the prohibition of engaging in diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for employees with policy references and local considerations
Prohibited Classroom Instruction	89	63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added new topic of prohibited classroom instruction for employees with policy references and local considerations
Appendix	96-98	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated legal and local policies to be distributed to employees
Index	99-102	69-71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated page numbers Added two new topics