

Annual Faith Based Employee Handbook Audit Checklist

A structured annual review for Christian employers

2027 Curriculum | HR and Workforce Policy

Purpose. Use this checklist at least annually and after a major legal, operational, workforce, benefits, or doctrinal change. The review should test not only what the handbook says, but whether recruiting, job descriptions, manager decisions, accommodation practices, discipline, and separation records match it.

Important use limitation. This resource provides general educational information. It is not legal advice, does not create an attorney-client relationship, and is not a substitute for advice from qualified legal counsel familiar with your organization, workforce, locations, funding, contracts, and operations. Have counsel review revisions and state-specific requirements before publication or use.

Audit Record

Employer entity	_____	Audit date	_____
Handbook version	_____	Effective date	_____
HR owner	_____	Executive approver	_____
Reviewing counsel	_____	Next review date	_____

How to Complete the Audit

- Mark each item Yes, Needs Action, Not Applicable, or Counsel Review.
- Record the evidence reviewed; do not rely on memory or assumptions.
- Create an action item for every gap, with an owner and deadline.
- Do not publish revised language until the correct employer entity and approval authority are confirmed.
- Retain the completed audit, approval record, prior version, distribution record, and signed acknowledgments.

1 Employer Entity and Document Control

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
The handbook names the legal entity that actually employs each covered worker.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	_____ _____
All covered locations, remote workers, and affiliated entities are identified.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	_____ _____
The version number, adoption date, effective date, and superseded version are recorded.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	_____ _____

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
The handbook preserves amendment rights and identifies who may approve changes.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Offer letters, employment agreements, benefit plans, policies, and collective bargaining obligations have been reconciled.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The organization has retained prior versions and version-specific acknowledgment records.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

2 Christian Identity and Governing Documents

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
The Statement of Faith and governing documents remain formally adopted and current.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Handbook language accurately reflects beliefs the organization actually teaches and practices.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Faith-based standards identify the belief, workplace application, affected roles, and legitimate operational reason.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Public statements, website content, recruiting materials, benefit documents, and handbook provisions are consistent.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Changes in doctrine, ministry practice, leadership, affiliation, or governance have been evaluated.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The handbook avoids claiming that religious language or CEA membership automatically controls every legal issue.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

3 Organization and Role Classification

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
The organization has revisited whether it may qualify as a religious organization under applicable law.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Each role with religious criteria has an updated job description identifying actual religious functions.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Ministerial, mission-critical, faith-representative, supervisory, and general roles are not treated as interchangeable.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Religious requirements are tied to specific duties and communicated before hire or reassignment.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Job titles do not substitute for an individualized review of duties, authority, and actual practice.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Privileged classification analysis and counsel conclusions are kept outside the employee handbook.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

4 Employment Cycle Alignment

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Recruiting materials describe Christian identity and role-specific requirements accurately.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Applications and interviews use lawful, job-related questions and consistent documentation.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Offer and onboarding documents disclose material faith and conduct expectations before acceptance.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Performance evaluations measure the duties and standards actually assigned to the role.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Promotion, discipline, accommodation, and separation decisions use consistent standards and approval paths.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The stated reason for each recent adverse decision matches the contemporaneous record.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

5 Core Employment Policies

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
At-will language, where lawful, is consistent across the handbook, offer letters, and agreements.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Equal employment language accurately addresses lawful religious criteria without promising unlawful discrimination.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Anti-harassment, retaliation, reporting, confidentiality, wage discussion, and protected-activity rules are current.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Timekeeping, overtime, break, leave, payroll correction, and remote-work rules match actual practices.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Safety, workplace violence, substance, technology, privacy, recording, social-media, and data rules remain operationally accurate.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
State and local supplements cover each jurisdiction in which employees work.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

6 Accommodation and Leave

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Managers can recognize oral or informal requests that may trigger an accommodation process.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Religious accommodation procedures reflect the current governing legal standard and require individualized analysis.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Disability, pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, medical, military, and protected-leave processes remain distinct where required.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The organization documents the request, information reasonably needed, alternatives considered, decision, effective period, and follow-up.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Medical and accommodation records are stored separately with need-to-know access.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
No handbook rule predetermines an outcome or substitutes a blanket rule for an individualized review.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

7 Faith Based Conduct and Workplace Practice

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Conduct standards define workplace-related expectations instead of requiring employees to be “biblical” at all times.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Religious activities are accurately labeled as required, voluntary, or role-dependent.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Speech, names, pronouns, dress, grooming, facilities, privacy, marriage, sexuality, and off-duty conduct provisions have received current counsel review.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Policies distinguish adopted faith commitments from safety, service, performance, and other operational requirements.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Rules preserve lawful reporting, accommodation requests, wage discussions, organizing activity, and other protected conduct.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Faith-related expectations are administered consistently while allowing fact-specific review and lawful accommodation.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

8 Manager Administration and Decision Controls

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Managers received training on the current handbook and know where to route questions.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Managers do not improvise doctrine, promise outcomes, or announce that a legal protection automatically applies.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Complaint intake, investigation, preservation, confidentiality, nonretaliation, and escalation procedures are understood.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Pre-discipline review checks facts, notice, comparable cases, role requirements, protected activity, accommodations, and decision authority.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Recent decisions were sampled for consistency across leaders, locations, roles, and protected categories.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
High-risk decisions require documented HR, executive, and counsel review before action.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

9 Distribution and Acknowledgment

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Every covered employee can access the handbook and applicable supplements in an accessible format.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The acknowledgment identifies the exact version and confirms receipt, access, responsibility to read, and reporting channels.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
A general receipt acknowledgment is separated from any role-specific Statement of Faith affirmation or conduct covenant.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Electronic signatures are authenticated and missing acknowledgments are followed up without treating silence as agreement.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Material revisions are communicated before enforcement, with training where needed.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
Translation, disability access, literacy, and remote-worker needs have been addressed.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

10 Final Approval and Follow Up

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Counsel reviewed federal, state, and local developments affecting the employer and its workforce.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The correct governing body or executive approved the final version and supplements.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	
The organization recorded each change, reason, owner, approval, and implementation date.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	

Audit item	Status	Evidence or action
Conflicting forms, intranet pages, manager guides, job descriptions, and benefit documents were corrected.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	_____ _____
The prior version was archived, the new version distributed, and acknowledgment completion monitored.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	_____ _____
The next annual review date and interim legal-update responsibility are assigned.	☐ Yes ☐ Action ☐ N A ☐ Counsel	_____ _____

Corrective Action Log

Create one line for every item marked Needs Action or Counsel Review. Attach additional pages if needed.

Item	Required action	Owner	Counsel	Due	Closed

Item	Required action	Owner	Counsel	Due	Closed

Final Certification

HR owner _____ Date _____

Executive approver _____ Date _____

Reviewing counsel _____ Date _____

New handbook version _____ Effective date _____

Christian Employers Alliance

Defending Your Right to Do Business God's Way

This member resource is educational and does not create an attorney-client relationship. Seek advice from qualified counsel regarding your specific facts and jurisdiction.