

# HR Services Model Employee Handbook—2020 Update

## Guide to Changes

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### Update Highlights

**2020 Update.** This version of the *Model Employee Handbook* includes editorial changes to ensure text accurately reflected policy or legal provisions. Detailed descriptions of all changes included 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® (meh\_editable\_2020.docx).**

The formatting included in the editable Microsoft Word® version of the 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/Title Page			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated date</li> <li>In the editable version, changed “e-mail” to “email” on the title page</li> </ul>
Table of Contents	1–2	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added entries for new topics (Scope and Sequence, Public Information on Private Devices, and Discharge of Convicted Employees)</li> </ul>
Board of Trustees	9–10	6–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the fourth paragraph, changed the two-hour notice to a one-hour notice as required by Texas Government Code §551.045</li> <li>In the first paragraph in the “Local considerations” column, replaced cumulative voting with “or single member districts”</li> </ul>
Equal Employment Opportunity	12	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, made an editorial change</li> <li>In the editable version, added “including pregnancy” to the first sentence of the first paragraph</li> </ul>
Contract and Noncontract Employment	13–14	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, edited the explanatory note for the subheading, Probationary Contracts</li> </ul>
Certification and Licenses	15	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added last sentence to the first paragraph addressing notification by employees licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations</li> <li>In editable version, made editorial change to the first sentence and added last sentence to match MEH text</li> </ul>
Health Safety Training	17	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, replaced the notation to HB 684 with a reference to Policy DMA (LEGAL)</li> </ul>

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Staff Development	21	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deleted policy code reference (DMD)</li> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, updated policy reference</li> </ul>
Jury Duty	41	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added policy code references</li> <li>Added a sentence to the first paragraph prohibiting employers from negatively responding to employees who appear for jury duty</li> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, replaced legislative references with applicable policy codes</li> </ul>
Standard of Conduct	46–50	33–36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the “Local considerations” column on page 47 of the MEH, deleted the note regarding amendments to the Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics</li> <li>In the editable version, added “who” to Standard 2.7 of the Educators Code of Ethics</li> </ul>
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	52–53	38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deleted policy reference “FFG”</li> <li>In the “Local considerations” deleted the reference to FFG (Exhibit)</li> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, replaced the legislative reference with applicable policy code</li> <li>In editable version, changed “a facility” to “the facility” in the first paragraph and edited the fifth paragraph so text aligns with MEH</li> </ul>
Scope and Sequence	54	39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added a new topic describing when a teacher can and cannot be penalized for not following the district’s scope and sequence</li> </ul>

Topic	Page Number (MEH)	Page Number (Editable Version)	Description of Change
Technology Resources	n/a	39–40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the editable version, changed “e-mail” to email in the first sentence of the first paragraph</li> <li>• In the second bullet, changed “computer or network resources” to “technology resources”</li> </ul>
Personal Use of Electronic Communications	55–56	40–41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the fifth bullet, deleted “Policy” in references to exhibits</li> <li>• In the second and third paragraphs of the editable version, replaced “media” with “communications”</li> <li>• In the editable version, replaced “e-mail” with “email in the third, second-level bullet; the third, second-level bullet choice for establishing protocol employees must follow; and the fourth bullet from the bottom</li> </ul>
Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents	57–60	41–44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the “Local considerations” column on page 60, added reference to Texas Government Code §552.004 which requires the preservation of email and text on personal devices as public information</li> <li>• In the editable version, made the following corrections to align text with MEH:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In the last sentence of the first paragraph, changed “e-mail” to “email”</li> <li>○ In the first sentence of the second paragraph, added “the” before “provisions”</li> <li>○ Changed “e-mail” to “email” in the first bullet in the second set of bullets</li> <li>○ Updated policy reference in the last of the second-level bullets on page 44</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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Public Information on Private Devices	61	44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added a new topic regarding preserving public information on employee private devices</li> </ul>
Copyrighted Materials	n/a	48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deleted the third sentence to align text with MEH</li> </ul>
Possession of Firearms and Weapons	68	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, deleted the legislative reference</li> </ul>
Bad Weather Closing	70	52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changed the topic heading to Emergency School Closing</li> <li>Edited the first sentence to include epidemics as reason for school closing</li> </ul>
Personnel Records	n/a	53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the second sentence, changed “e-mail” to “email”</li> <li>Updated the bulleted list to align with text in MEH</li> </ul>
Resignations	73	54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the subsection, Contract Employees, added the timeline for principal notification to the superintendent to the second paragraph</li> <li>In the subsection, Noncontract Employees, added a second paragraph on requirement to report misconduct and corresponding note to the “Local considerations” column</li> </ul>
Dismissal of Noncontract Employees	73–75	55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added reference to Policy DP</li> <li>Added a second paragraph regarding reporting duties</li> <li>In the “Local considerations” column, added a note referencing TEC §22.093</li> </ul>
Discharge of Convicted Employees	75	55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added new topic regarding discharging employees who have been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for certain offenses</li> </ul>

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Reports to Texas Education Agency	75–76	56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added reference to Policy DHC</li> <li>• Added subheadings to distinguish requirements for certified and noncertified employees</li> <li>• In the “Local considerations” column, added reference to TEC §21.006, §22.087, and §22.093</li> <li>• Reworded the second paragraph to include violation of assessment security procedures</li> <li>• Added paragraph on reporting of noncertified employees upon termination or resignation if there is evidence of misconduct</li> </ul>
Index	84–86	62-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added or modified entries for new and revised topics (public information, scope and sequence, and terminations: discharge of convicted employees).</li> </ul>