

Managing Employees in the Medical Practice

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There are several questions a medical practice's administrators should confront themselves with. These questions include the following: Is our practice legally compliant with employee practices and documentation? Do we handle employee-performance issues effectively and efficiently? Do our employees know the expectations of their job and of our office?

For practice managers and doctors seeking answers to employee policy and performance issues, it is essential to implement a comprehensive human resource system. This can be accomplished through the acquisition and/or creation of an employee handbook. Acquiring the correct information is critical to the success and efficiency of a practice.

The Challenges of Human Resources within a Medical Practice

A significant portion of office managers' or doctors' day is dedicated to issues of human resources within their practice. By effectively and efficiently setting policies and creating systems for managing these issues, much time-consuming exertion can be controlled. Issues in human resource policies involve managing legal and personnel processes in an efficient manner providing coverage for both the employee and the employer. To provide a stable work environment within a practice is a benefit to all involved. Moreover, by giving the proper documents, policies, and processes for those policies, the human resource system becomes manageable—a desirable trait in any practice. Additionally, all practices must examine their policies at least once a year, making sure legal issues and new policies are addressed and implemented properly.

The Most Basic Topics to Consider

Human resources are based on the following goals:

- Compliance with legal and social obligations
- Enhancement of productivity of employees and the practice
- Promoting individual growth and development

Issues that go along with these three basic goals are the following: Does your practice address employee standards of conduct, pay, attendance, time off, health and welfare programs, and/or essential employment forms? To properly address these mentioned issues, a medical practice should have a comprehensive employee handbook that covers all these topics as well as an annual review process.

Complying Within the Law

Is your practice addressing legal issues within employment law? Does your practice comply with and document legal forms and policies? Does your practice address the following?

- An Employment Contract
- Code of Ethics
- Abuse and Neglect
- Sexual and Other Harassment
- Licenses, Certifications
- Termination of Employment
- Drug-Free Work Place
- Social Security Benefits
- Workers' Compensation Insurance
- Unemployment Compensation

These topics should be covered in the most basic form of employee communication—The Employee Handbook and should also be reviewed annually. It is preferable that they are addressed in a staff meeting so that everyone involved is familiar with the practice's policies and procedures. The reason for this is that questions are better answered within a staff training as well by reducing potential redundancy.

Enhancing Productivity While Enhancing Individual Growth and Development

A comprehensive employee handbook should also provide information on the following topics:

- Employee Orientation
- Code of Ethics and the Dress Code
- Performance Evaluation
- Classification of Employees
- Attendance and Reporting
- Reasons for Termination of Employment
- Time off
- Addressing Educational Opportunities

Increased Communication Leads to Increased Productivity and Improved Policy Management

Many issues that arise from employee uncertainty regarding specific employment requirements can be addressed by inclusive training and an indispensable employee handbook. The result of these two things is greater job satisfaction, improved employee productivity, diminished employment issues, and legal compliance.

Finding reputable HR advice can be tricky. An efficient HR process begins with the right information from reputable sources. Utilize professional sources and access government websites for updated forms. Make sure the laws within the state are followed and that policies are reviewed annually.

Each medical office differs in that each office has its own requirements, policies, and must act within the state laws governing the location. An annual review of laws, a comprehensive training or review with staff, and a revised written policy and procedure manual (i.e., employee handbook) will minimize questions regarding employment and set the stage for increased productivity and employee job satisfaction.

For further information go on-line to

<http://www.practicehq.com>

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