

Leaves

(This chapter specifically deals with all aspects of leave, such as annual, casual, maternity and special leave due to a natural disaster. It also speaks about the principles, policies and legalities connected to leaves. The general and specific procedures are outlined. It also explains the practices for management and executive grades as well as for associates)

Corporate Policy

The company abides by the law of the land and the principles that holidays and leave represent periods of rest and recuperation that enable the continuity of excellent and acceptable work performance. Therefore, holidays and leave must not take precedence over perfect and acceptable work performance requirements.

The company can construe unauthorised absence or absence above prescribed or approved entitlements as disinterest to continue in the company's service.

General Procedures

The leave year is from January to December for all employees.

When leave days are counted, only working days are taken into account.

Annual leave must be availed of before the end of the leave year.

Every request for leave must be applied through the HRIS.

Leave is approved at the management's discretion. The manager will appoint an alternative approver in his absence.

On the first day of duty, the employee shall apply for leave. In the case of annual/casual leave (unless the reason is exceptionally urgent), this approval must be obtained before the person avails himself of the leave. The employee shall inform his superior of their absence in an emergency to avoid any inconveniences.

If no leave application is submitted before the salary process, the relevant days of absence shall be considered no-pay.

For administrative convenience, there are two separate procedures as follows:

TOPIC	
Procedure for Management/Executive/Staff Grade	
Procedure for Associate Grade	

These procedures are explained below in detail.

Management/Executive/Staff Grade Procedure

Company Policy

The leave entitlement is as per the Shop and Office Act.

Availing of Leave

The leave entitlement must be utilised in the current year. The leave entitlement that the year-end hasn't used will be reimbursed as follows;

Staff – up to 14 days (Annual Leave)

Executives and above – up to 7 days (Annual Leave) Associates – up to 28 days

New Recruits

In the year the employee commences employment, a recruit will be entitled to leave at a rate of ½ day for each completed month of service. Any leave applied during the first six months shall be deducted from the casual leave entitlement of 7 days, calculated on completion of the first six months.

On completion of one year of service, the employee will be entitled to annual leave only on a proportionate basis as follows: -

If employment commences between the 1st of January and the 31st of March	-	
14 days		
If employment commences between the 1st of April and the 30th of June	-	10
days		
If employment commences between the 1st of July and the 30th of September	-	
07 days		
If employment commences between the 1st of October and the 31st of December	-	04
days		

Additional Leave on No Pay

Only the CEO and Managing Director can approve requests for additional leave on no pay or special paid leave under exceptional circumstances but not more than one month's no pay leave will be granted at such a time. However, any number of days beyond this would be approved at the discretion of the management for sickness or hospitalisation or any other justifiable reason.

Casual Leave

The entitlement for casual leave is seven days for every calendar year. Casual leave must be applied for in advance. The absence could not have been foreseen; the management may approve such leave at its discretion.

Sick and sick leave entitlement is seven days for every calendar year. A medical certificate must cover every application for sick-leave above two consecutive days. Leave for illness will be granted according to the nature of the illness and the doctor's advice, at the discretion of the management.

Maternity Leave

The entitlement is eighty-four (84) working days for the confinement of the first two children; after that, the entitlement is Forty-Two (42) working days. Annual leave may be taken along with maternity leave, provided the Head of the function approves this arrangement.

Associate Grade Procedure

Annual Leave

The entitlement is as per the Biscuits and Confectionery Wages Board.

New Recruit

On completing one year of service, the employee will be entitled to Annual Leave. Employees who have completed 232 days are entitled to Annual Leaves. A recruit will not be allowed to leave when he commences employment.

Working Days	Number of Leave Entitlement
Less than 232 days	0
232 days to 236 days	01
236 days to 240 days	02
240 days to 244 days	03
244 days to 248 days	04
248 days to 252 days	05
252 days to 256 days	06
256 days to 260 days	07
260 days to 264 days	08
264 days to 268 days	09
268 days to 272 days	10
272 days to 276 days	11
276 days to 280 days	12
280 days to 284 days	13
284 days to 288 days	14

Casual Leave

Any employee who keeps away from work on account of illness for up to two days should submit a medical certificate to their departmental manager/executive. Their previous and current leave records should not follow immediately after another leave or a available holiday. Such leaves will be approved at the discretion of the management, taking into account the bonafide of such an application.

The entitlement of casual leave is seven days for every calendar year. Casual leave must be applied for in advance when the reason for the absence cannot be foreseen. Such leave can be approved at the management's discretion.

Sick Leave

Entitlement for sick leave is seven days every calendar year. Leave for illnesses will be granted according to the nature of the illness and the doctor's advice at the discretion of the management. A medical certificate must accompany every application for sick leave for more than two consecutive days.

Maternity Leave

The entitlement is eighty-four (84) calendar days for the confinement of the first two children; thereafter, the entitlement is forty-two (42) calendar days.

Special Leave

According to the Shop, Office & Wages Board Act, special paid leave may be granted at the discretion of the management for the following instances supported by a Gramaseva Certificate or medical certificate acceptable to the management. The Head shall approve the next of the HR Department on the recommendation of the Head of Function.

- Special leave for employees unable to come to work due to natural disasters (e.g.:- flood, landslide, cyclone /stormy weather)
- Communicable disease; Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Sore Eyes

The management may also grant paid leave in genuine cases where hospitalisation or a severe illness hampers the execution of regular duties. This will be on the recommendation of a doctor acceptable to the company, and the Head will approve this of HR/CEO.

Leave on Termination

When the employee is terminated/resigned from the post, they are entitled to the annual leave they earned concerning the previous year plus the days made during the year of termination.

Suppose the employee is not in a position to avail of the above annual leave due to the business needs, provided that sufficient notice has been given. In that case, the employee shall request equivalent payment of the same, which the management shall decide considering the facts of the case. i.e. One day for every month of work for a period less than ten months and 14 days if he has worked for more than ten months.

However, the employee cannot demand earned and balanced annual leave encashment.

Discipline

Like any other successful company, EPP gives much attention to the discipline of the employees. There are punishable offences, a list of possible offences acts that need disciplinary inquiry, investigations, show cause notices, and the course of the procedure, acknowledged by the company as both a corrective and punitive concept; the rules set by the company bind all employees of all grades. Therefore, this chapter deals with 'Discipline', explaining it as viewed from all aspects of the company.

Background

Employees of all grades and positions are equally responsible for creating and maintaining acceptable behaviour within and outside the workplace. The company acknowledges that discipline is both a corrective and regulatory concept. Discipline is viewed as part of the learning process in the company's training and development of human resources. It is also a condition of employment with the company.

It is the responsibility of every manager to ensure that the discipline is maintained in the section or department under their purview.

Policy

The company acknowledges two aspects of the discipline: the corrective and the punitive. The former involves mainly coaching, counselling, mentoring, and disciplinary action.

Proactive/Corrective Measures

All the recruits of EPP start work with a comprehensive orientation where they are made aware of the company standards, orders, values norms, dos and don'ts at work. Further, the HODs, Supervisors, Executives and managers play the role of mentors and connectives in educating and making the employees aware.

Punishable Offences

Any act of omission or commission, within or outside the company's premises, which is in breach of the company rules or may cause loss or damage or inquiry or disrepute to the company's business, operations, personnel or property, shall be considered as a punishable offence.

The punishment meted out will match the severity of the offence or the frequency of commission of that offence or a series of offences.

However, EPP mostly goes by the act than the incident where a strong sense of empathy amongst the team is built up.

Possible Offences

1. Continued tardiness
2. Failure to wear Personnel protective equipment

3. Failure to observe safety precautions
4. Failure to report an accident
5. Failure to maintain essential records
6. Alcohol
 - Reporting for work under the influence of liquor
 - Consuming alcohol on company premises/or with company vehicles
 - Smelling of liquor whilst on duty
7. Absence without informing/leave
8. Abuse by offensive language on a company employee or person connected with company business.
9. Violation of The Security Policy
10. Assault
 - Attempted assault or threat of assault
11. Bribery
 - Soliciting or accepting a consideration in cash or kind
12. Canvassing or influencing to obtain any advantage prejudicial to the company's interests
13. Cheating confidentiality
 - Any breach of confidence reposed or release of confidential information
14. Damage to Company property or interest
15. Desertion
 - Leaving a work location without adequate cover or replacement Distributing any printed or written material without appropriate authority
16. Use of illegal narcotics on the Company premises
17. Evidence Giving false evidence
18. Fighting, provoking and inciting a fight
19. Gambling
20. Harassment of any kind inflicted on another employee or person
21. Impersonation
22. Incitement
 - Encouraging another employee to misbehave / misconduct.
23. Insubordination
 - Failure to carry out instructions
24. Insult
 - Use of unacceptable language on another employee
25. Malingering
26. Pretending some illness or incapacity as an excuse for absence/non-performance misconduct.
 - Any act of unacceptable conduct within or outside the Company
27. Notices
 - Posting or removing notices without Company approval.
28. Neglect of Duty
29. Output

Preliminary Investigation

Any complaint should be made to the Head of Department. If the complaint warrants disciplinary action, he will instruct the HR department to make a preliminary investigation. The HR Department will then record statements from;

- The complainant

- Witness/es
- The accused employee and their witness/es
- Such other person(s) whom the HR department considers necessary

Where there are items for production, these should be carefully preserved.
The HR department will then forward such papers and a report to the Head of Department.

Show Cause Notice

The HR department will prepare the show cause notice and forward it to the Head of the function for approval.

If the offence warrants dismissal, if proved, the employee may be suspended with a pending investigation.

The Department Manager or Assistant will deliver the show-cause notice to the employee.

If the employee refuses to accept the letter, it should be sent under registered post with an additional charge for refusing to accept the show cause letter. The employee will be allowed three working days to reply.

If the employee requests to examine the documents, an opportunity is typically given, which is allowed in the presence of the HR manager.

If the reply from the employee is unsatisfactory, or if the employee denies the charges, an inquiry will be held of receipt of the letter.

Domestic Inquiry

The Head of HR or representative to him will make necessary arrangements for the inquiry and inform the accused employee. The employee can nominate any union representative to watch their interest in the inquiry.

Grievance Handling

Intending to maintain & foster excellent employee & industrial relations, EPP has established an effective procedure to address employee grievances.

This chapter elaborates on the responsibility, procedure and the definition of the said)

Definition

A grievance connotes any discontent or dissatisfaction from anything connected with the employer that an employee believes is unfair, unjust or inequitable.

Responsibility

This is one of the management's most important responsibilities as leaders of the people.

The management must determine whether a genuine problem exists

If a problem does exist and if he is unable to provide a solution himself, then

he should discuss it with their superior, their analysis of the problem and what measures are recommended to resolve the issue.

The manager with whom the problem was first raised must ensure that the agreed response is provided to the employee within a reasonably short period.

Even if it is believed that there is no justification or basis to believe that a genuine problem exists, then such facts and the basis for such a conclusion must be communicated to the employee.

Procedure

1. Whenever an employee wishes to make a representation to the management in respect of an individual grievance, dispute or other matter, such an employee, in the first instance, will discuss the issue with their immediate supervisor. However, if the grievance involves the immediate supervisor, the case should be referred to the Managers and eventually the Head of the Department if the issue is not resolved.
2. Suppose the immediate departmental supervisor does not satisfactorily settle the matter within three working days. The issue may be discussed with the departmental manager, who may discuss or refer the topic to the Human Resource Manager if he thinks it is desirable. However, if the grievance involves the Department Manager, the matter should be directed to the Human Resource Manager.
3. Suppose the matter is not satisfactorily settled at stage (2) within three working days. If they so desire, such employees will discuss the issue further with the Departmental Manager and the Human Resource Manager. However, if the grievance involves the Human Resource Manager, the matter should be referred to the CEO.
4. If the matter is not satisfactorily dealt with at stage (3) within three working days, such employees, if they desire, will discuss the matter with the respective CEO or their nominee together with the Human Resource Manager. However, if the grievance involves the Respective CEO, the case should be referred to be Managing Director or Chairman.

Unsatisfactory Performance

(The procedure for handling a case of unsatisfactory performance is given in six points.)

Introduction

If an employee is performing unsatisfactorily, the following procedure should be adhered to.

Procedure

The procedure is as follows:

1. The respective employee's immediate superior will verbally inform him that their performance is unsatisfactory. There will be a discussion with the employee, and their agreement sought to improve performance in the coming month. A note of this discussion should be forwarded to the HR Department [through the respective Head of department] to be included in the employee's file (only if needed).

After one month's review following the above verbal warning, if the performance has not improved, the goals to be achieved [as agreed earlier] should be written down along with the timelines and signed off by the employee concerned. A copy of this too should be forwarded to the HR department.

2. The employee's performance should be reviewed periodically, and the discussion documented above. This should be done, even if there is an improvement in their performance. A note should be forwarded to the HR department for inclusion in their file.
3. Suppose the employee is still on probation and the unsatisfactory performance continues. In that case, they should be informed that there will be an extension of their probation period, or they may not be made permanent.
4. After the fourth discussion, an HR representative, the respective Head of Department, the immediate superior, and the employee should be present when the performance is reviewed.
5. After the 7th monthly review, the employee will be issued a show-cause notice if the unsatisfactory performance continues. Thereafter the HR department will take the necessary disciplinary action.

Note

Depending on the gravity of the inability to perform, the said process may be expedited or shortened to mitigate the negative impact in general on the company

Company Communication

(Communication is one of the essential tools in any successful company. EPP, too, acknowledges and encourages the communication process among all employees. The company invests in each communication method to ensure that each event yields a beneficial outcome. The policy is explained along with the responsibilities. The communication medium is explained, and a list of company communication resources is given).

Company Policy

EPP emphasises the need for a practical and interactive communication process across all levels. It is the responsibility of the senior team and the respective functional heads to ensure that effective communication is carried out and make sure that the process is interactive enough to obtain feedback from all levels.

This enables the sharing of relevant information amongst the employees' concerns. It enhances the employees' understanding of business and functional realities, which would subsequently help them make collective decisions.

The company acknowledges and encourages the communication process among all functions and grades of employees. This promotes understanding and co-operation and leads to the committed achievement of corporate objectives, which is a key to employee relations.

The company appreciates the need to share information with its employees, enabling them to identify their personal goals within the framework of the corporate objectives.

Responsibility

All employees' responsibility, especially in the management and executive grades, use methods, instruments, and events to talk to one another beneficially and create a mutually supportive and cohesive work environment.

In all communication methods, managers and executives should encourage their colleagues and subordinates to open dialogue, teamwork and positive attitudes towards initiatives, inquiry and responsibility. They should also promote the creation of an alert willingness to change for the better whilst understanding their social, economic and political aspirations in varying circumstances.

Good objectives must at all times take precedence over procedures. Procedures must not be evolved for their own sake or defeat beneficial employee relations and company productivity and growth.

The company invests in each of these communication methods, and it is the responsibility of all grades of employees to ensure that each event yields a beneficial outcome.

Communication methods of the company should not be used to communicate ideas & views that can be controversial, abusive, derogatory, and offensive.

Communication Media

There are several methods by which the company attempts to make an exchange of views and understanding amongst employees at all levels possible.

Each of these is used with a clear definition of purpose, good time keeping, fixing of responsibility and follow up action. The list given below is not exhaustive, but each of these methods offers an opportunity for effective communication.

CEO General Address At the Monthly COM-Meeting

Leading by example is the uniqueness of EPP. Hence Managing Director/ CEO addresses the employees at the COM-Meeting, covering all monthly. This is to ensure the sharing of the business climate, celebrate and share the company's remarkable achievements made by the Company/individual employee/team, appreciate the team performances, etc.

Further, it also allows employees to share their success stories with others by delivering inspirational and motivational speeches.

- Divisional Meeting

This will be held Monthly/weekly with the members of the respective division and the HOD to discuss their issues and/or concerns weekly. Further, this will be used as a forum to communicate to the members about the management's decisions. The minutes will be displaced and circulated among the respective team members. However, any unresolved issues will be forwarded to the monthly meeting.

- Intranet

HR and other authorised officers will update the Company announcements and provide information on new events, projects, CSR activity, announcements (recruits/ death notice), special awards, and achievements to give awareness to all employees (Staff and above).

- E-mail

The Company policy is that any mail received should be answered within 24 hours. Suppose an employee is not in a position to answer immediately with facts and figures. In that case, he should still respond immediately, acknowledging the mail and giving the expected response time with complete details.

Employees who need to be away from the office on duty leave or for official work should activate the "out of office assistant" in Microsoft Outlook.

List of Company Communication Resources

1. Appraisal of Employee Performance
2. Committees
3. Conferences
4. Correspondence
5. Counselling
6. Discussions

7. Excursions and picnics
8. Functions and get-together events
9. Grievance handling
10. Interviews
 - Selection
 - Induction
 - Confirmation
 - Appraisal
 - Promotion
 - Exit
 - One-to-one and personal
11. Meetings
 - Inter-level
 - Inter-functional
 - Planning and Review
 - Quality Assurance
 - Safety
 - Corporate Strategy
 - Union
12. Notices and Notice Boards
13. Team Briefings and Small Group Meetings
14. Training and Development programmes
 - In-house
 - On-the-Job
 - Residential and non-residential
 - External