

The CORE 5 Policy Framework Test

A structured approach for HR professionals to build, evaluate, and strengthen workplace policies

A strong policy doesn't just document expectations — it reduces risk, enables consistent execution, and holds up under scrutiny.

01 Purpose & Scope

Why does this policy exist — and who does it cover?

- States the business or legal reason the policy exists
- Defines which employees, roles, or locations are covered
- Connects the policy to a specific organizational risk or value
- Written for the reader — not for legal protection alone

Can every covered employee understand why this policy applies to them?

02 Clarity & Enforceability

Can leaders actually apply this policy consistently?

- Uses plain language — no vague terms like 'excessive'
- Defines behaviors that are required, permitted, or prohibited
- Sets realistic expectations that can be monitored and enforced
- Avoids overreach — doesn't restrict more than necessary

Would two different managers apply this policy the same way?

03 Process & Accountability

Who does what — and what happens when the policy is violated?

- Identifies who owns enforcement, escalation, and documentation
- Describes the steps leaders must follow when a violation occurs
- Specifies what records must be created and where they are kept
- Outlines consequences that are proportional and defensible

If a leader had to act on this policy today, would they know exactly what to do?

04 Legal Compliance

Is this policy legally sound and operationally current?

- Reflects current federal, state, and local legal requirements
- Has been reviewed within the last 12–18 months
- Aligns with actual workplace practices — not aspirational standards
- Has been reviewed by legal counsel or a compliance professional

Would this policy hold up in an agency investigation or litigation today?

05 Communication & Training

Do the people responsible for this policy actually understand it?

- Has been communicated to all covered employees in writing
- Leaders have received guidance on how to apply and enforce it
- Employees know how to report concerns or request clarification
- Acknowledgment or training completion is documented

Could your managers explain this policy clearly without the document?

Policy Audit Trigger:

If a policy fails any one of these five pillars, it is creating risk — not reducing it.

Use this framework to audit existing policies, or as a build checklist before any new policy goes into effect.