

Policy update announcement email template

Announce a new or changed workplace policy with what changed, why, when, and what employees need to do.

Updated October 15, 2026. Written and reviewed by the HRTally Research Team.

When to use this template

Use this when you introduce a new policy or change an existing one, such as a revised PTO policy, a new remote work rule, updated expense limits, or a change to the code of conduct. Employees read policy emails looking for one thing: how does this affect me? Put the answer near the top.

Good policy emails follow a simple order: what's changing, when it takes effect, why, what employees need to do, and where to ask questions. Link to the full policy rather than pasting it in. If the change requires a signature, follow up with the handbook acknowledgment request. Our employee handbook guide covers which policies most US employers need.

Version 1: Changed policy

SUBJECT Update to our [Policy name], effective [Date]

Hi everyone,

We are updating our [Policy name], effective [Date]. Here is what you need to know.

What's changing:

- [Change 1, in one plain sentence]
- [Change 2]

What isn't changing: [The parts people might worry about, such as your current PTO balance carries over].

Why: [One or two honest sentences on the reason, such as feedback from employees or a new state law].

What you need to do: [Nothing, or a specific action and deadline].

The full updated policy is here: [Link]. If you have questions, reply to this email, ask your manager, or join a short Q&A on [Date and time]: [Link].

[HR leader name]
[Title], [Company]

Version 2: New policy required by law

SUBJECT New: [Policy name] for [State] employees

Hi [State] team,

Starting [Date], [State] law requires [brief description, such as paid sick leave for all employees]. We are adding a [Policy name] to meet this requirement.

What it means for you:

- [Key benefit or rule, for example, you earn 1 hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked]
- [How to use it]
- [Where to see your balance]

The full policy is here: [Link]. The updated required workplace poster is posted at [Location] and on [Intranet link].

Questions? Contact [HR contact].

[HR contact]
[Company]

Subject lines to try

- Update to our [Policy name], effective [Date]
- New: [Policy name] for [State] employees
- What's changing in our [Policy name]
- Policy update: action needed by [Date]
- Heads up: [Policy name] changes on [Date]

How to personalize it

- Put the effective date in the subject line.
- State what isn't changing to head off worry.
- Explain the reason in plain words, not legal language.
- Brief managers a day before so they can answer questions.

Mistakes to avoid

- Sending a policy change on a Friday afternoon or right before a holiday.

- Pasting the entire policy into the email.
- Announcing changes that reduce a benefit without explaining why.
- Rolling out rules that restrict employees from discussing pay or working conditions.

| Legal and compliance notes

Some changes require advance notice. Several states require written notice before changing paydays or reducing vacation accrual, and benefit plan changes may require a Summary of Material Modifications under ERISA. Work rules are also reviewed under the National Labor Relations Act, which protects employees' right to discuss pay and working conditions, union or not. Since the NLRB's 2023 Stericycle decision, broad rules that could chill those rights face closer scrutiny. Have counsel review new conduct, social media, and confidentiality rules.

| When to send it

At least two weeks before the effective date for most changes, and 30 days or more for changes to pay, benefits, or schedules. Tuesday to Thursday mornings get the most attention. Hold a short Q&A session for big changes.

| Before you hit send

- The subject line says what changed and when, and it reads well on a phone.
- Managers were briefed and can answer questions the same day.
- Anyone personally affected heard the news privately first.
- The effective date and any action required appear in the first three lines.
- Employees without company email will get it through managers, texts, or posters.

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