Shiftbase Template

Employee data & privacy basics policy + checklist

Created by

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About this template

This template is for **SME owners, managers, HR, and anyone who handles employee data** (schedules, time tracking, leave records, payroll info, performance notes, recruitment files).

What it's for

- Set clear, practical rules for handling employee data day to day
- Reduce "accidental leaks" (wrong link, wrong recipient, shared spreadsheet chaos)
- Make access, storage, retention, and incident response consistent

How to use it (20-minute setup)

1. Fill in the placeholders: **privacy contact, approved tools, storage locations, retention basics**

2. Decide your **system of record** for scheduling, time tracking, and absence (one source of truth)

3. Review access: who needs what, who shouldn't have it, and how offboarding removes access

4. Add this to onboarding + manager training (5 minutes is enough)

⚠️**Important note:**
Privacy laws vary by country (GDPR in the EU/UK, different rules in the US and elsewhere). This is a global-friendly baseline. Add a local addendum where required.

Policy: Employee data & privacy basics

Purpose	Protect employee personal data and handle it legally, securely, and respectfully.
Scope	Applies to any employee data we collect, store, access, share, or delete; including HR files, scheduling/time data, leave/absence records, payroll details, performance notes, and recruitment records.

What counts as employee data (examples)

- Identity/contact details
- Work schedules and hours worked
- Absence/leave records
- Payroll and compensation data
- Performance and disciplinary records
- Recruitment materials (CVs, interview notes, reference checks)
- Training records and certifications

‼ Core rules

- **Collect the minimum:** Only data we actually need for a clear purpose.
- **Limit access:** Only people who need the data to do their job get access.
- **Use approved systems:** Don't store employee data in personal email, WhatsApp, or random files.
- **Keep it accurate:** Update outdated info and correct obvious errors quickly.
- **Don't keep data forever:** Follow retention rules and delete when no longer needed.
- **Report incidents immediately:** If you think data may be exposed, say something fast.

Where data is allowed to live (your “approved tools” list)

System of record (one source of truth)

Data Type:	Tool/ system:
Scheduling	
Time tracking:	
Time tracking:	
Payroll:	

Approved storage

- **HR documents:** [tool/system + folder/path]
- **Recruitment files:** [ATS/tool + folder/path]
- Signed documents (contracts, policy acknowledgements): [tool/system]

❌Not allowed

- Personal drives, personal email, open-access folders, publicly shareable links.

Access rules (role-based, simple)

- **HR access:** [roles]
- **Manager access:** only direct-report data that’s needed for scheduling, approvals, and performance
- **Payroll access:** what’s needed to run payroll
- **Admin access:** limited to named individuals; reviewed quarterly

Access review

- Review access quarterly or after any org restructure.

- Remove access immediately when someone changes roles or leaves.

Sharing rules (avoid accidental leaks)

Before sharing employee data, ask:

- Do they need this to do their job?
- Can I share less (summary instead of full file)?
- Is the link restricted (not “anyone with link”)?
- Am I sharing the correct person’s data?

❌Never share

- Sensitive data (health details, disciplinary details, ID documents) in group chats or wide email lists.

Retention (simple baseline)

Keep employee data only as long as needed for:

- Employment administration
- Legal/compliance requirements
- Legitimate business purposes

Set retention rules by category (example placeholders):

- Recruitment: [X months/years]
- Payroll: [X years]
- Disciplinary records: [X months/years]
- Time and attendance: [X years]

⚠️ (Adjust based on local law.)

Employee requests (access/correction/deletion)

Employees may request access to or correction of their personal data according to local laws.
Route all requests to: **[privacy contact name + email]**.

Data incidents (what to do immediately)

A data incident can be: wrong recipient email, lost device, leaked spreadsheet link, compromised password, etc.

Step-by-step

1. **Stop the spread:** remove access, revoke link, recall email (if possible), change passwords

2. **Notify the privacy contact immediately**: [name/contact]

3. **Record what happened:** what data, who was affected, when, how it happened

4. **Follow-up actions:** fix root cause, update training/process, document closure

➕ Add-ons

(copy/paste tools to make this operational)

The “privacy quick check” (10 seconds before sharing)

- ☐ Is this the minimum amount of info needed?
- ☐ Is the link restricted to specific people?
- ☐ Did I double-check the recipient(s)?
- ☐ Would I be comfortable if this file was accidentally forwarded?

Employee data map (copy/paste table)

Use this to clean up your HR tech and storage fast.

Data type	System of record	Owner	Who has access	Retention rule	Notes
Scheduling					
Time Tracking					
Absence/leave					
Payroll					
Contracts					
Recruitment					
Performance/ Discipline					

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Manager “do/don’t” list (super practical)

✅Do’s	❌Dont’s
Use approved systems	Store employee info in personal tools
Keep notes factual and work-related	Share sensitive details in group chats
Restrict links and folders	Keep private spreadsheets with open links
Remove access when someone leaves or changes roles	Write subjective labels (“untrustworthy”, “lazy”) in notes

Copy/paste incident report (internal)

Subject:	**Data incident report**
Date/time discovered:	
Reporter:	
What happened:	
Data involved:	
People affected:	
Immediate containment actions taken:	
Next steps + owner:	
Status: Open / Contained / Closed	

⚠️ **Important note:**

If you operate in the EU/UK, GDPR introduces specific requirements (lawful basis, rights, retention discipline, and breach handling). Add a local addendum and point employees to the privacy contact for requests.

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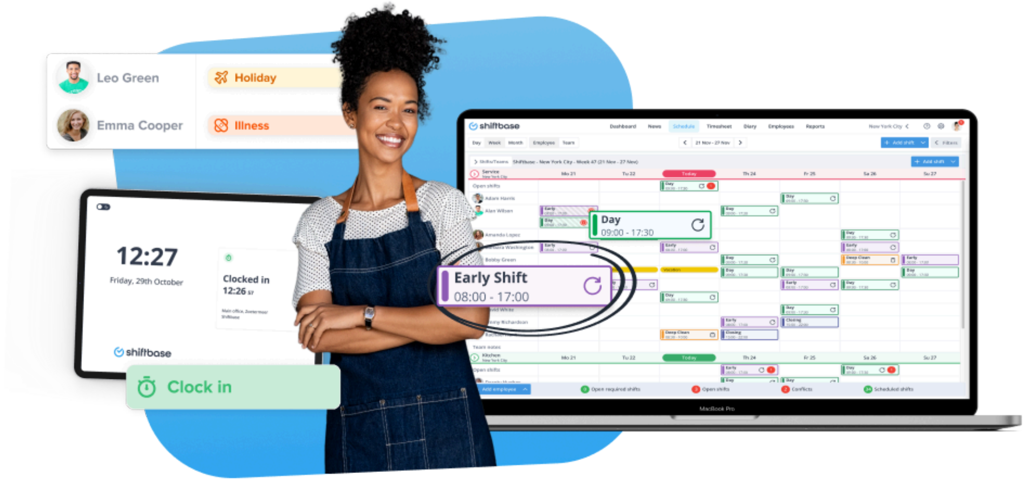

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