GENERAL

jcpenney employee handbook 2019

Published: September 3, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Understanding the JC Penney Employee Handbook 2019: A Complete Guide

When you start a new role at a major retailer like JC Penney, the first thing you'll encounter is the employee handbook. It's more than just a set of rules; it's a roadmap that outlines your rights, responsibilities, and the culture you'll be a part of. The 2019 edition of the JC Penney Employee Handbook was a pivotal update that reflected changes in corporate policy, legal compliance, and the evolving retail landscape. This guide will walk you through the key sections of the handbook, explain why they matter, and help you navigate your new workplace with confidence.

Why the 2019 Handbook Matters

Retail environments are dynamic. In 2019, JC Penney introduced new initiatives to strengthen customer experience, improve workplace safety, and align with federal labor regulations. The handbook served as the official communication channel for these changes, ensuring every employee understood the expectations and benefits. Whether you're a sales associate, a manager, or an administrative staff member, the handbook is a living document that shapes your day-to-day interactions and long-term career path.

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Company Overview

The handbook opens with a brief history of JC Penney, emphasizing its legacy as a household name in American retail. It highlights the company's mission to "make the world a better place by providing quality, affordable products." The 2019 edition also underscores JC Penney's commitment to sustainability, community outreach, and inclusive hiring practices.

Corporate Vision and Values

JC Penney's vision is to be the "go-to destination for fashion, home goods, and everyday essentials." The handbook lists core values such as:

- Customer Focus: Prioritizing the needs and satisfaction of shoppers.
- Integrity: Conducting business honestly and transparently.
- Diversity & Inclusion: Valuing diverse perspectives and fostering an inclusive workplace.
- Innovation: Embracing new ideas to improve the customer experience.

- Community Engagement: Supporting local communities through volunteering and charitable initiatives.

These values are woven throughout the handbook, serving as a compass for employee behavior and decision-making.

Employment Policies

The 2019 handbook lays out a comprehensive set of employment policies that govern everything from hiring to termination. These policies ensure compliance with federal and state laws while maintaining a fair, respectful environment.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

JC Penney is an equal opportunity employer. The handbook outlines strict anti-discrimination policies, covering race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, and other protected categories. Employees are encouraged to report any incidents of bias or harassment.

Harassment & Discrimination

Harassment is defined as any unwanted conduct that creates a hostile work environment. The handbook provides examples—such as offensive jokes, unwelcome physical contact, or discriminatory remarks—and explains the reporting process. Employees can file a complaint with Human Resources or through the anonymous hotline.

Attendance & Punctuality

Reliability is critical in retail. The handbook specifies expected attendance patterns, timekeeping procedures, and the consequences of repeated tardiness or absenteeism. It also explains the process for requesting time off, including vacation, sick leave, and personal days.

Work Schedule & Shift Flexibility

JC Penney offers flexible scheduling options to accommodate employees' personal needs. The handbook explains how shift changes are requested, the role of store managers in approving requests, and the impact on pay and benefits.

Termination and Resignation

Both voluntary and involuntary terminations are addressed. The handbook outlines the steps for resignation, the notice period, and final pay. For involuntary terminations, it explains the reasons that may lead to dismissal and the appeal process.

Workplace Conduct & Ethics

Maintaining a professional, respectful workplace is paramount. The 2019 handbook includes detailed guidelines on acceptable behavior, dress code, and the use of company resources.

Code of Conduct

Employees are expected to act with honesty, respect, and integrity. The code covers:

- Customer Interaction: Polite, helpful, and customer-centric service.
- Co-worker Relationships: Collaboration, open communication, and mutual respect.
- Conflict Resolution: Steps to address disagreements constructively.

Dress Code & Grooming

The handbook details the dress code for different positions. For example, sales associates must wear the store's

uniform, including name tags and clean, polished shoes. Managers may wear business casual attire. Grooming standards emphasize neatness, professionalism, and safety.

Use of Company Property

Employees may use company devices—such as point-of-sale terminals, computers, and mobile phones—for work-related tasks only. The handbook clarifies the policy on personal use, data security, and the prohibition of downloading or installing unauthorized software.

Social Media & Public Representation

Representing JC Penney in public or on social media requires adherence to brand guidelines. The handbook advises employees to disclose their affiliation when posting about the company and to avoid sharing confidential information.

Compensation & Benefits

The 2019 edition of the handbook provides a clear breakdown of pay structures, overtime rules, and benefits. Understanding these details is essential for budgeting and career planning.

Wages & Overtime

Hourly employees receive base wages, with overtime paid at 1.5 times the regular rate for hours exceeding 40 in a workweek. The handbook outlines the conditions for overtime eligibility, including part-time vs. full-time status.

Salary and Commission Structures

For salaried positions, the handbook lists salary ranges and performance metrics. Commission plans for sales associates are also described, detailing how commissions are calculated, paid, and tracked.

Benefits Overview

JC /Penney offers a suite of benefits for eligible employees:

- Health Insurance: Medical, dental, and vision plans with varying employee contributions.
- Retirement Plans: 401(k) with company match for qualifying employees.
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP): Counseling and support services.
- Paid Time Off (PTO): Vacation, sick leave, and personal days.
- Employee Discounts: Store discounts on merchandise and services.

Payroll Information

The handbook explains payroll schedules, direct deposit options, and the process for correcting payroll errors. Employees are advised to review their pay stubs and report discrepancies promptly.

Safety & Emergency Procedures

Retail environments can present safety hazards. The 2019 handbook outlines protocols for maintaining a safe workplace, including emergency response, incident reporting, and first-aid procedures.

Workplace Safety Policies

Employees are required to follow safety guidelines such as wearing appropriate footwear, keeping aisles clear, and reporting spills. The handbook also addresses ergonomics to prevent repetitive strain injuries.

Emergency Response Plans

The handbook details evacuation routes, assembly points, and the roles of store managers during emergencies like fires, natural disasters, or active shooter situations. Employees are encouraged to participate in regular drills.

Incident Reporting

Any workplace injury or incident must be reported immediately to a supervisor or HR. The handbook provides forms and timelines for filing incident reports and outlines the process for medical treatment and workers' compensation claims.

Training & Development

Continuous learning is a cornerstone of JC Penney's success. The 2019 handbook describes the training programs available to employees at all levels.

New Employee Orientation

Orientation covers company history, policies, safety procedures, and job-specific training. Employees complete a series of modules within the first week and receive mentorship from experienced staff.

Product Knowledge Training

Sales associates undergo comprehensive training on product lines, seasonal promotions, and inventory management. This training helps staff provide accurate information and upsell effectively.

Leadership Development

Store managers and supervisors receive leadership training covering team management, conflict resolution, and performance evaluation. JC /Penney also offers internal promotion pathways for high-performing employees.

Professional Growth Opportunities

Employees can enroll in workshops, webinars, and online courses. The handbook encourages employees to pursue certifications that align with their career goals, such as retail management or customer service excellence.

Employee Rights & Protections

The 2019 handbook emphasizes employees' legal rights and the company's commitment to a fair, supportive workplace.

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Compliance

Employees receive clear information on minimum wage, overtime, and child labor laws. The handbook includes a section on how JC /Penney complies with the FLSA and how employees can verify their compliance.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for certain medical and family reasons. The handbook outlines eligibility criteria, application procedures, and job protection guarantees.

Whistleblower Protection

Employees who report illegal or unethical behavior are protected from retaliation. The handbook details how to file a whistleblower complaint and the steps taken to investigate.

Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Protections

Reiterating earlier sections, the handbook confirms that discrimination and harassment are not tolerated and explains the reporting mechanisms, investigations, and potential remedies.

FAQs & Contact Information

The handbook concludes with a list of frequently asked questions and contact details for key departments.

Frequently Asked Questions

- What is the process for requesting a schedule change? Employees should submit a request through the store's scheduling system at least 48 hours in advance.
- How do I apply for a promotion? Employees must meet performance benchmarks and submit a written application to HR.
- What are the steps to report a safety concern? Notify your supervisor immediately and complete the incident report form.
- Where can I find my employee handbook online? Access the portal at company.intranet.jcpenney.com/handbook.

Contact Information

Human Resources: hr@jcpenney.com | 1 800 JC PENNY (1 800 532 7369) **Payroll:** payroll@jcpenney.com | 1 800 JC PAY (1 800 532 7299) **Safety Officer:** safety@jcpenney.com | 1 800 JC SAFE (1 800 532 7333)

Conclusion

Understanding the JC Penney Employee Handbook 2019 is more than a compliance exercise—it's an investment in your professional journey. The handbook equips you with the knowledge to navigate workplace policies, safeguard your rights, and thrive in a dynamic retail environment. By familiarizing yourself with its sections—from employment policies to safety procedures—you'll be better prepared to deliver exceptional service, contribute to a positive culture, and advance your career within JC /Penney.

Remember, the handbook is a living document. Stay updated on any revisions, and never hesitate to reach out to HR or your manager with questions. Your success at JC /Penney starts with understanding the rules that guide us all.

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