

# Sample Policy: Access to Personnel Files

*The following sample policies were excerpted from [The Book of Company Policies](#), published by HR Specialist, © 2007. Edit for your organization's purposes.*

State law governs whether employers are required to provide employee access to their own personnel files. Check with your attorney to find out the laws in your state.

Various state laws:

- Limit how often employees may access their files
- Require employees to request access in advance
- Place limits on where and when employees may view their files
- Allow someone from HR or another employer representative to be present while employees review their files
- Limit the kind of information employees may see

The following sample policies cover many of those restrictions..

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## Sample Policy 1:

“XYZ maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee’s job application, résumé, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases and other employment records.

“Personnel files are the property of XYZ, and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only supervisors and management personnel of XYZ who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are allowed to do so.

“Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the Personnel Department. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their personnel files in the presence of an individual appointed by XYZ to maintain the files.”

## Sample Policy 2:

“Employees have the right to access their personnel files, and they may submit written corrections to or comments on any material in their files that they consider inaccurate or with which they disagree. To do so, employees must make two copies of their comments or corrections and give one to the personnel office and the other to their immediate supervisor.”

### **Sample Policy 3:**

“The company will maintain only those employee records necessary for job and benefit-related purposes and as required by law. To ensure that your personnel file is up to date at all times, please notify the office manager of any changes in your name, telephone number, home address, marital status, number of dependents, beneficiary designations, the individuals to notify in case of emergency and so forth.

“Access to personnel files is restricted to individuals with a legitimate business need for specific information. Such individuals may include personnel staff, supervisors, department heads, the company’s legal counsel, and those who are permitted by law to have access.

“Current employees may see their files under the following conditions:

1. Requests for the review of a personnel file must be made in writing by completing a file-request form, which is available from the office manager, and obtaining the approval of the company president.
2. The file must be reviewed in the presence of a manager or other person designated by the company president.
3. Employees may not mark or make any changes to any information contained in their personnel file. Employees may submit a written statement of disagreement with items in their files.”