

Worker won't sign off on handbook: Can we fire her?

Q. We just updated our policy manual and are asking employees to sign a standard acknowledgment of receipt form. If an employee refuses to sign it, is that grounds for termination? Or should we just document that they refused to sign? — Jay, California

A. Either approach is going to be fine, and legal. I have known a few employers that will terminate an individual who refuses to sign a basic acknowledgment of receipt. Often, however, employers will accept the fact that the employee has refused to sign. When this happens, I typically advise the employer to notify the employee (and document the notification) that the policies and procedures still apply to the individual.

Employees may refuse to sign for a variety of reasons. If you feel the individual seems to be refusing to sign because of an unwillingness to commit to complying with those policies, you may not want to continue working with that individual.

However, if someone is refusing to sign because he or she can't read or understand the policies, I'd suggest a different approach.