



# 8 Reasons to Update Your Employee Handbook Now

Best Practices for this  
Critical Workplace Tool

*November 12, 2019*



# Before We Begin





# Today's Speakers



Laura Kerekes, SPHR, SRHM-SCP  
Human Resources Consultant and  
Adjunct Professor

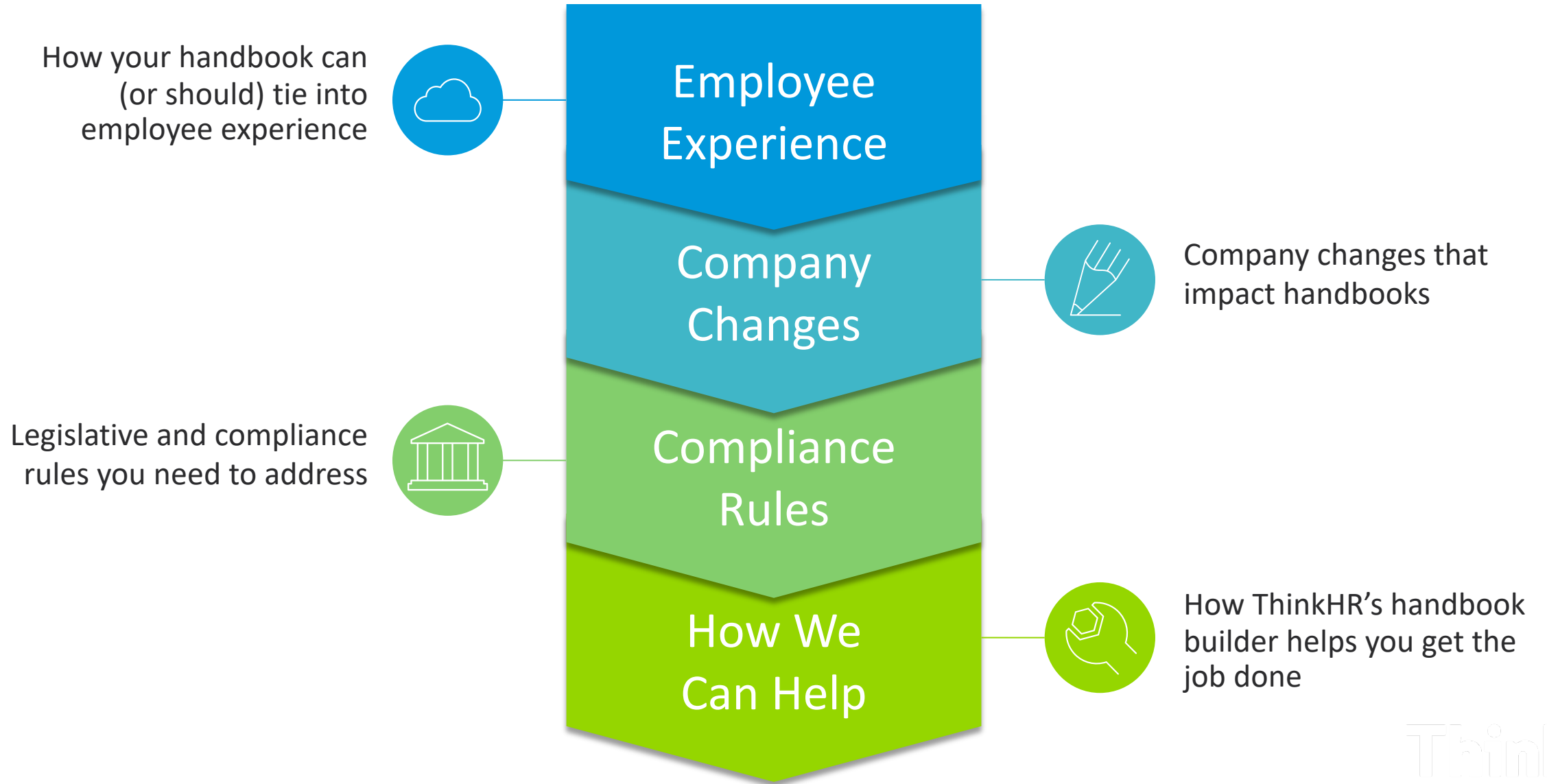


Lisa Leahy, PHR  
Human Resources Administrator  
at ThinkHR



Rachel Sobel  
Senior Content Marketing Strategist  
at ThinkHR

# What We'll Be Discussing



# Poll #1

The #1 reason we haven't updated our handbook this year is:

- No time or resources
- It's too much work
- Afraid we'll miss important compliance/law changes
- Not a company priority
- Don't think a handbook is necessary for our business
- We've already finished our updates this year

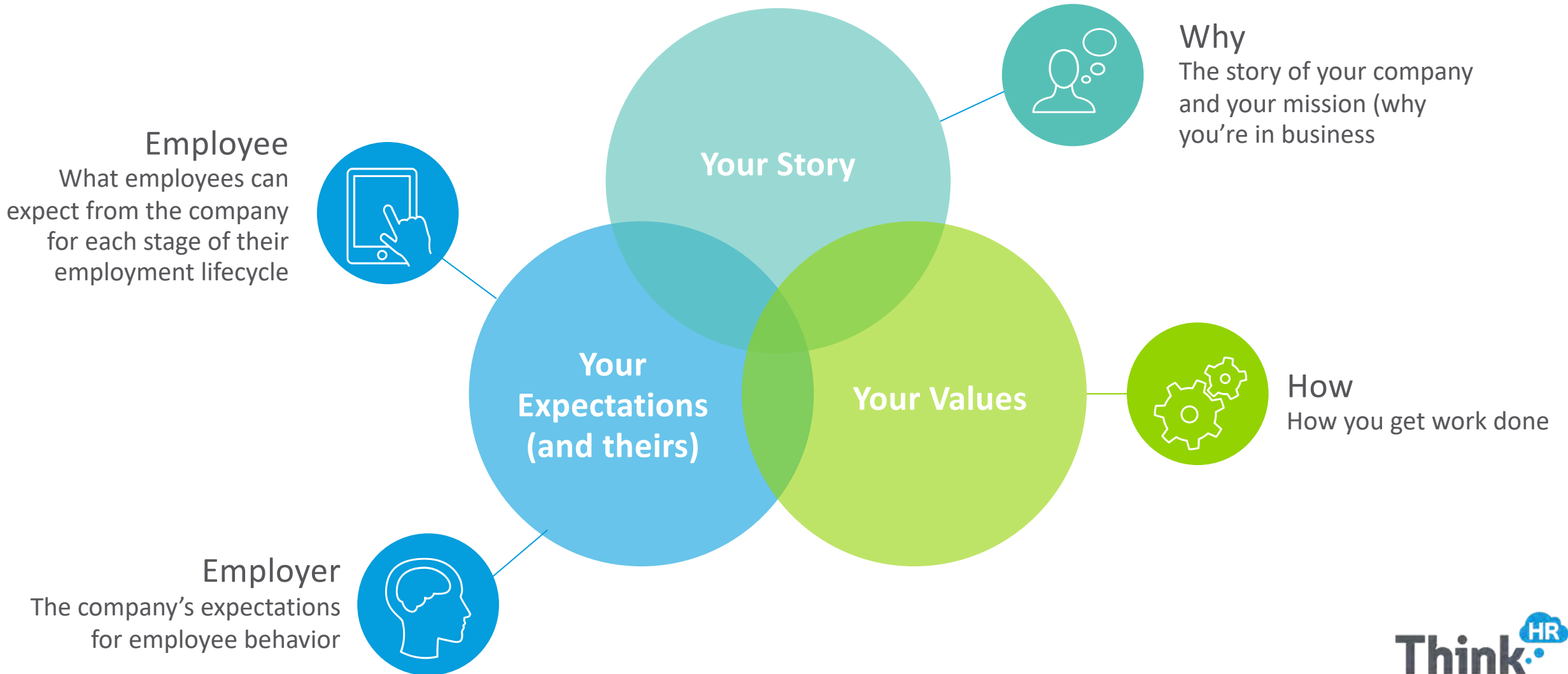


# Reason 1

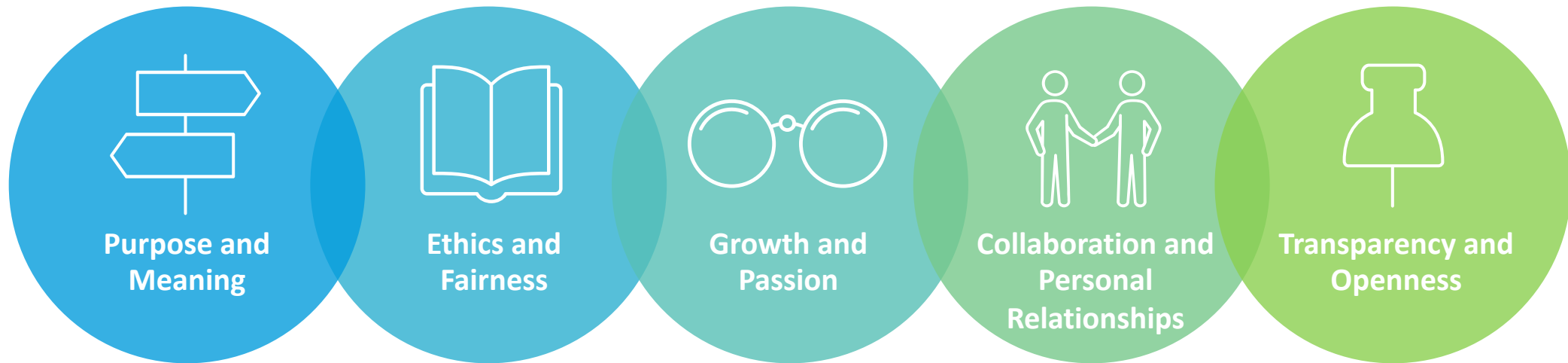
## Employee Experience and Cultural Cues

# Your Handbook Shows What Your Company Values

*Compliance is a culture issue*



# Human Focus



- Giving a sense of purpose at work
- Moving beyond profit to a focus on doing good things

- Using data, systems, and technology in an ethical, fair, and trusted way
- Monitoring decisions to make sure they are fair

- Nurturing passion and a sense of personal growth
- Affording people the opportunity to create and add their own personal touch

- Building and developing teams, focusing on personal relationships
- Moving beyond digital to build human relationships at work

- Sharing information openly
- Discussing challenges and mistakes
- Leading with a growth mindset



# Reason 2

## Your Brand



## Poll #2

This year my company added new locations, eliminated locations, acquired other companies or was acquired, and/or had changes in products or services:

- Yes
- No
- Not sure



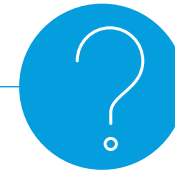
# Reason 3

## Company Changes



# 3 Questions

**When?**  
When should I  
update my  
handbook?



**What?**  
What changes affect  
our handbook?



**Why?**  
Why should we  
update our  
handbook due to  
company changes?

# Reason 4

## Missing or Incorrect Information

# Consequences of Missing or Inaccurate Policies

01

## Guidance

Removes a reference point managers and supervisors need when faced with issues

+

02

## Risk

Leads to confusion (and lawsuits!)

+

03

## Investigations

Problems if company actions are challenged and handbook doesn't accurately reflect policies

+

04

## Reporting

Discomfort in turning to management for help because employees don't know who to go to

+

# Reason 5

## Alignment Between Policies and Practices



# What Can Go Wrong



Overly detailed disciplinary policies resulting in challenges when practice and policy don't align



Handbooks added to in a piecemeal fashion resulting in repetitive or contradictory policies

# Reason 6

## Inclusive Language



# Diverse and Inclusive Workplaces Win

- Companies with more workplace diversity (Harvard Business School report):
  - 60 percent more revenue
  - 91 percent report greater customer satisfaction
- 75 percent of millennials believe company is more innovative when it fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion (Deloitte 2019 inclusion survey)
- Same group of millennials are more likely to leave if a company does not meet their standards
- Communicating with inclusive language creates a more respectful workplace



## Poll #3

When there are federal, state, and local laws on the same subject, an employer should follow:

- Federal law first
- State law first
- Local law first
- The one that is most employee-friendly
- It depends





# State Laws Complicate Policies

*51 employees in each state (204 total employees)*

- 7.0 BENEFITS
- 7.1 401(k) Plan
- 7.2 Bereavement Leave
- 7.3 Dental Insurance
- 7.4 Disability Insurance
- 7.5 Exempt Personnel
- 7.6 Health Insurance Policy
- 7.7 Holidays
- 7.8 Leaves of Absence
- 7.9 Life Insurance
- 7.10 Pension and Profit Sharing Plan
- 7.11 Regular Full-Time Personnel
- 7.12 Regular Part-Time Personnel
- 7.13 Sick Pay
- 7.14 Temporary Personnel
- 7.15 Unemployment Compensation Insurance Policy
- 7.16 Vision Care Insurance
- 7.17 Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy
- 7.18 COBRA
- 7.19 Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) Policy
- 7.20 Military Leave (USERRA)
- 7.15 Unemployment Compensation Insurance Policy
- 7.16 Vision Care Insurance
- 7.17 Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy
- 7.18 COBRA
- 7.19 Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) Policy
- 7.20 Military Leave (USERRA)

## CALIFORNIA:

Bone Marrow and Organ Donor Leave  
California Family Rights Act (CFRA) Leave  
Crime Victim Leave  
Disability Insurance  
Jury Duty Leave  
Leave for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking  
Military Spouse Leave Policy  
New Parent Leave  
Paid Family Leave Insurance  
Paid Sick Leave (Accrual Method)  
Paid Sick Leave (Lump Sum Method)  
Paid Time Off (PTO) Policy  
Pregnancy Disability Leave  
School and Child Care Activities Leave  
Vacation Policy  
Voting Leave  
Witness Leave

## GEORGIA:

Court Attendance and Witness Leave  
Jury Duty Leave  
Paid Time Off (PTO) Policy  
Vacation Policy  
Voting Leave

## INDIANA:

Court Attendance and Witness Leave  
Jury Duty Leave  
Military Family Leave Policy  
Paid Time Off (PTO) Policy  
Vacation Policy  
Voting Leave

## NEW YORK:

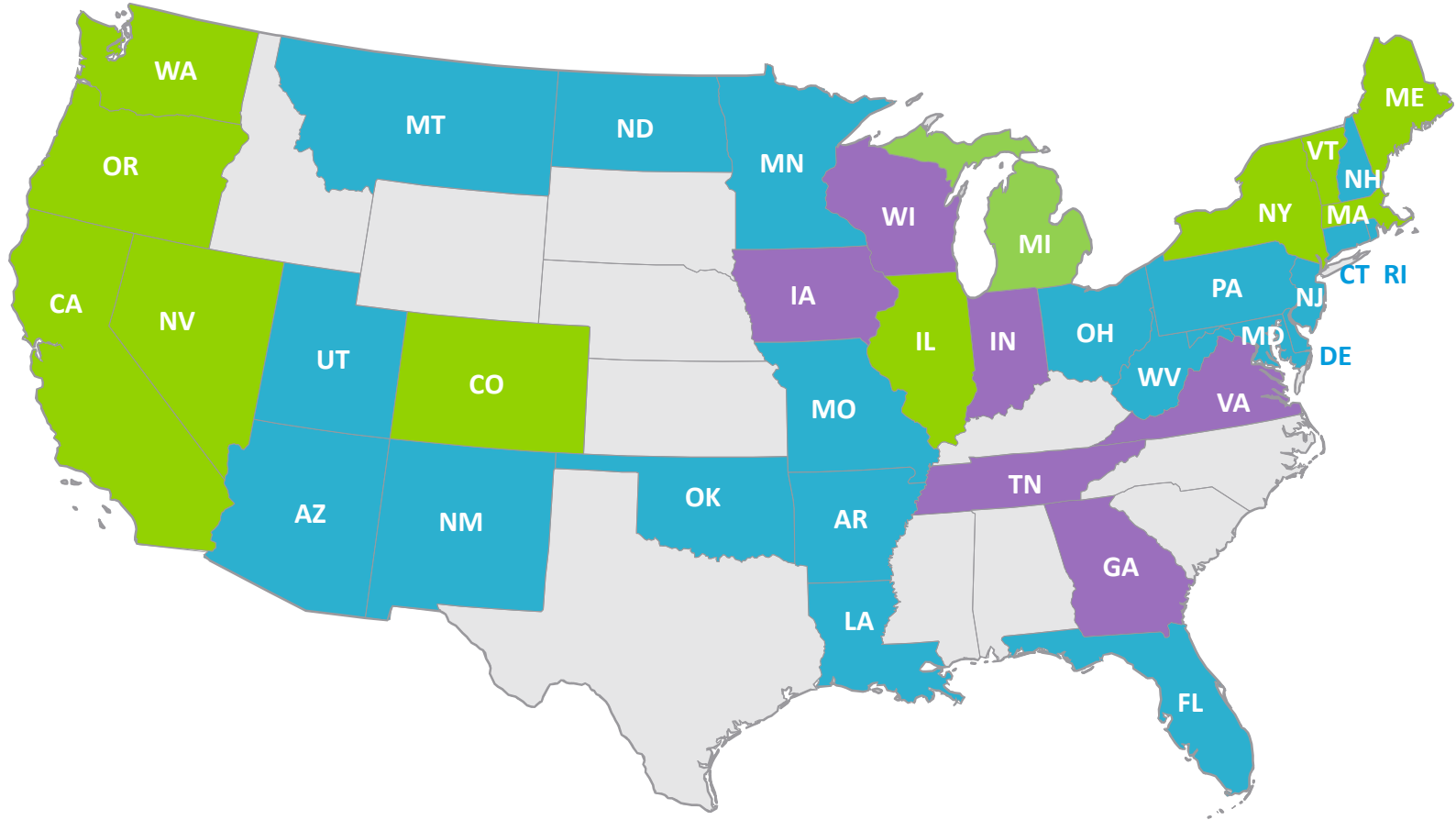
Blood and Bone Marrow Donation Leave Policy  
Crime Victim and Witness Leave  
Disability Benefits  
Jury Duty Leave  
Military Spouse Leave Policy  
Paid Family Leave  
Paid Time Off (PTO) Policy  
Vacation Policy  
Voting Leave

# Reasons 7 and 8

## Law Changes Affecting Existing Policies and Requiring New Policies

# Marijuana Legalization

*Legal states as of November 1, 2019*



Medical

Hawaii (not shown)

Limited Medical

Medical + Recreational

Alaska (not shown)

District of Columbia (not shown)

# Harassment

- Policy implications include:
  - Non-retaliation
  - Reporting
  - Investigation
  - Nondisclosure

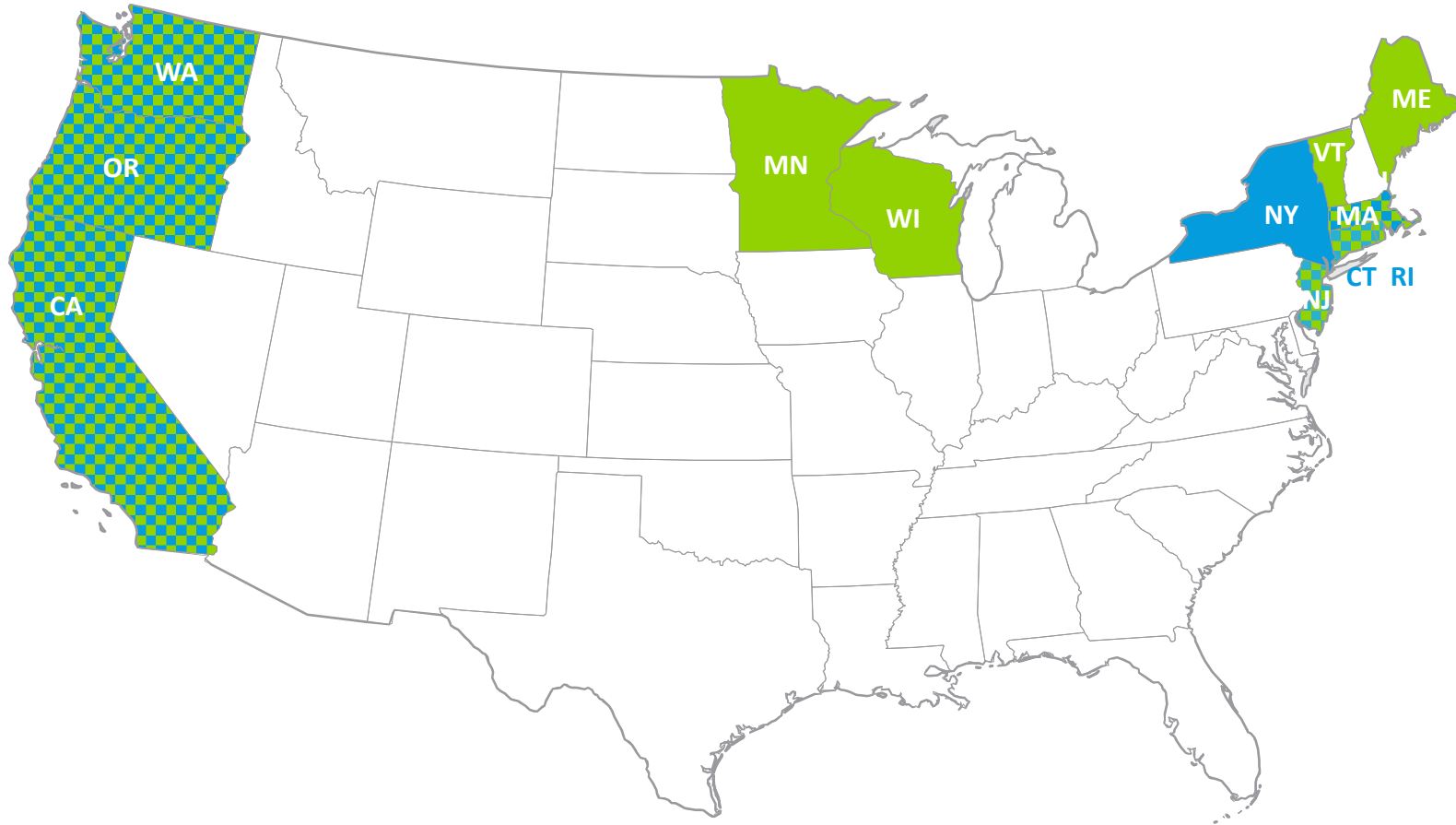


Gender and  
bullying  
harassment  
broadening the  
scope



# Family and Medical Leave Laws

*As of November 1, 2019*



Paid State Leave

Paid AND Unpaid Leave

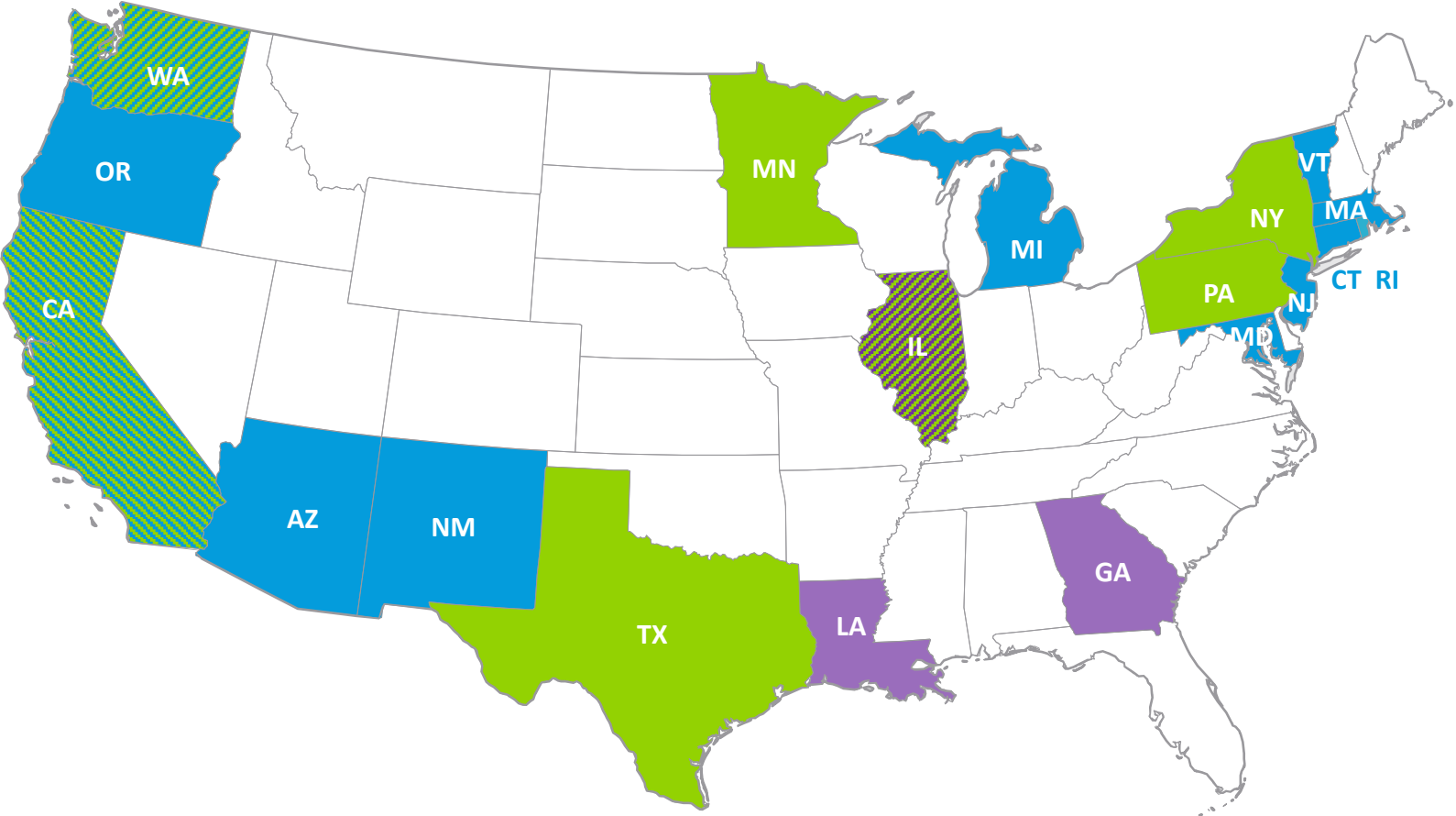
District of Columbia (not shown)

Unpaid State Leave

Hawaii (not shown)

# Paid Sick Leave Laws

*As of November 1, 2019*



Paid Sick Leave Statewide

District of Columbia (not shown)

Paid Sick Leave Statewide Plus Local Laws

Paid Sick Leave Locally

Limited Paid Sick Leave

Paid Sick Leave Locally Plus Limited Statewide



## More State Changes to Handbook Policies

- Pregnancy and lactation protections at state and local levels
  - Some jurisdictions require employer policies
  - Pregnancy accommodations
  - Specified private facilities for expressing breast milk
  - Special break time rules
- Gender identity
- Protected classes
- “Traits associated with race” (natural hair)

# 8 Reasons to Update Your Handbook This Year





**Bonus!**

# Reason 9

## ThinkHR Makes it Easy





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LL

Pacific Gold  
ABC Company Employee Handbook [Settings](#)

Handbook Information

Handbook Name

ABC Company Employee Handbook

This name will appear on the cover page of the handbook upon download and is a searchable field within the Handbook Library.

Handbook Type

Federal + Multi-State

The handbook type may not be changed after the handbook has been created.

Company Information

Company Name

ABC Company

This text will replace the {{COMPANY-NAME}} entry in applicable policies.

How do you refer to your Company?

Organization

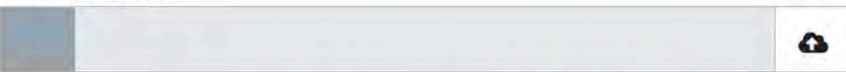
This text will replace the {{COMPANY-TERM}} entry in applicable policies.

Head of Company

Jeff Green

This text will replace the {{HEAD-OF-COMPANY}} entry in applicable policies. Include first and last name.

Company Logo



The company logo will appear on the cover page for the handbook upon download. Please upload either a JPEG, PNG, or GIF formatted file.

How do you refer to your Employees?

Associates

This text will replace the {{EMPLOYEE-TERM}} entry in applicable policies.

Head of Company Title

CEO

This text will replace the {{HEAD-OF-COMPANY-TITLE}} entry in applicable policies.

**DISCLAIMER**

By building a handbook, you are accepting our [TERMS OF SERVICE](#).

[Save & Review Policies](#)

A new handbook will be created with applicable policies and you will be able to review the table of contents.

[Save Handbook & Exit](#)

A new handbook will be created with all applicable policies. You will be able to edit this handbook later at any time.

**Subscribe to email alerts for this handbook**

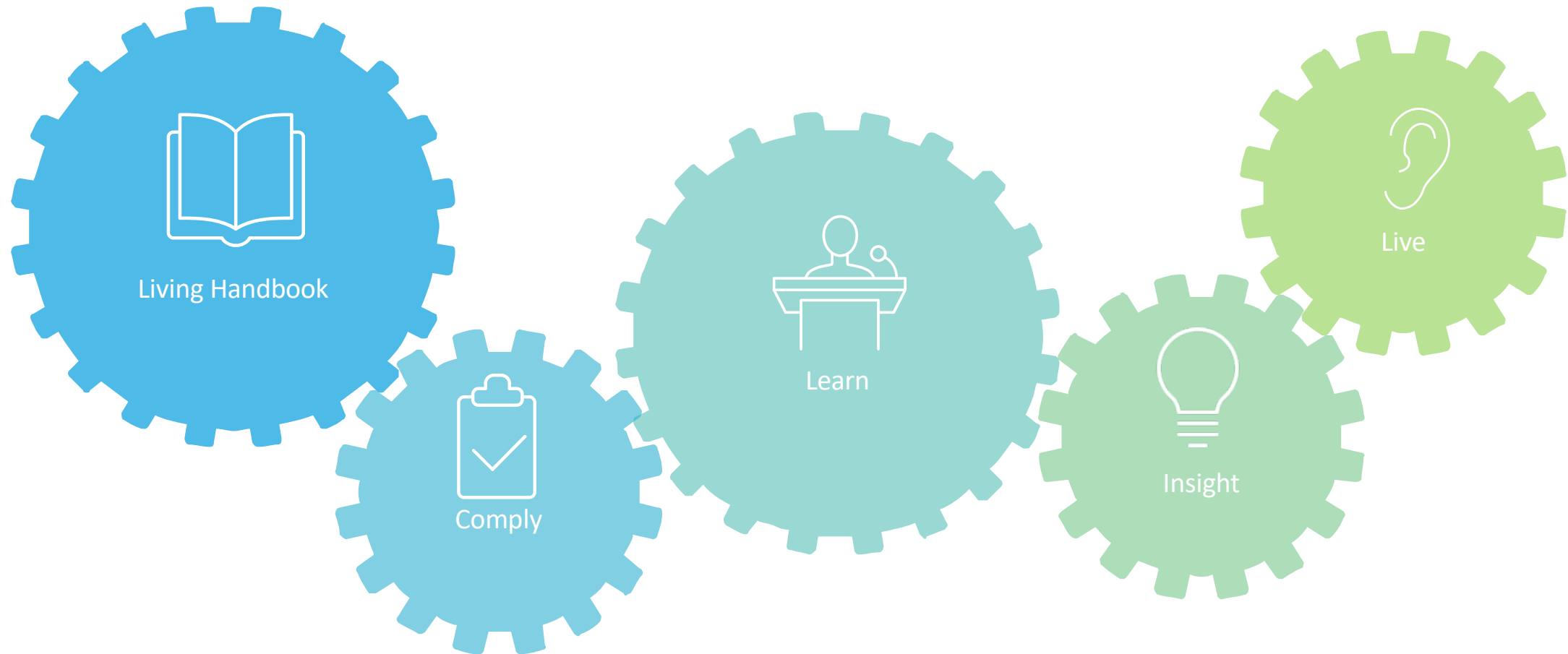
Be notified when policy language changes and updates to this handbook are recommended.



## The Living Handbook Builder

- Policy updates
- State-specific policies
- Customizable
- Compliant

# People Risk Management from ThinkHR







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on today's topics.*

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