HR Foundations
The Minimum Requirements Employers Should Have

At a minimum, every employer should have these core HR elements in place to meet compliance and set their business up for success.

1: Employment Contracts

- Every employee must receive a written employment agreement.
- Contracts must include: hours, pay, leave entitlements, notice periods, and termination clauses.
- Contracts must comply with the National Employment Standards (NES) and relevant Modern Awards or enterprise agreements.
- A separate position description should outline the role's responsibilities, reporting lines, and required skills.

2: Core HR Policies

Employers should have these minimum workplace policies documented and shared with staff, ideally within an Employee Handbook:

- Code of Conduct
- Anti-Discrimination, Bullying & Harassment
- Workplace Health & Safety (WHS)
- Leave Management
- Performance & Misconduct
- Grievance & Complaints Handling
- Flexible Work & Hybrid Arrangements
- Social Media & IT Use
- Psychosocial Safety & Employee Wellbeing

3: National Employment Standards (NES)

Ensure compliance with the 12 NES entitlements for all staff:

- Maximum weekly hours
- Requests for flexible working arrangements
- Casual employment rights (including CEIS)
- Parental leave and related entitlements
- Annual leave
- Personal/carer's, compassionate, and family/domestic violence leave
- Community service leave
- Long service leave
- Public holidays
- Superannuation contributions
- Notice of termination and redundancy pay
- Provide the Fair Work Information Statement (FWIS) to all new employees

4: Record-Keeping

You must maintain up-to-date records of:
- Employee details, pay, leave, hours worked
- Superannuation contributions
- Issued payslips (must be compliant and timely)
- Policy acknowledgements

5: Work, Health, and Safety (WHS) obligations

- Identify and manage risks through regular assessments
- Provide WHS training and clear emergency procedures
- Foster a safe, supportive workplace for all team members

6: Onboarding & Offboarding

Build clear processes to manage the employee lifecycle:
- Deliver a structured induction aligned to your culture and compliance
- Set up regular check-ins and probation reviews
- Follow fair processes for terminations and redundancies
- Collect feedback through exit interviews to support improvement

Need help getting the essentials in place?

At Now Actually, we help businesses build compliant, people-first HR foundations without the overwhelm.

Whether you're just getting started or ready to level up, our outsourced HR team can guide you through every step.

Contact Us