PETPOOJA

CHECKLIST

Employee Onboarding Checklist

A complete onboarding workflow for Indian businesses. From offer letter to 90-day confirmation, with every compliance step, document, and deadline in one printable checklist.

Updated May 2026 8 Pages FY 2025-26

What's Inside

01 Pre-Joining Preparation

02 Day 1 Essentials

03 Compliance Documentation

04 Role-Specific Training

05 Payroll & Benefits Setup

06 30-60-90 Day Review Checkpoints

07 Document Checklist (Quick Reference)

08 7 Common Onboarding Mistakes

70+
Checklist Items
Pre-joining to 90-day review

8
Sections
Compliance, training, payroll, reviews

16
Documents Tracked
Complete document checklist

90
Day Review Plan
30-60-90 day milestones

6+
Industries Covered
Restaurant, retail, manufacturing, more

01 Pre-Joining Preparation

Complete these tasks before the employee's first day. Ideally 3-5 days in advance.

Offer, Documentation & Setup

- [ ] **Send formal offer letter with compensation details, joining date, and reporting location** — Pre-Day 1
  Include CTC breakup, probation period, notice period, and any joining bonus terms. Keep a signed copy for records.
  Shops & Establishments Act (appointment letter mandatory in most states)

- [ ] **Send appointment letter and collect signed copy before or on Day 1** — Pre-Day 1
  Appointment letter is legally required in most states under the respective Shops & Establishments Act. It protects both employer and employee.
  Shops & Establishments Act (state-specific)

- [ ] **Prepare workstation, uniform, tools, or equipment for the role**
  Restaurant: uniform, apron, name badge. Retail: billing counter access, uniform. Office: desk, laptop, ID card. Manufacturing: PPE, safety gear, locker.

- [ ] **Create employee ID and access credentials**
  Generate employee code in your HR/payroll system. Set up biometric or app-based attendance access. Create email ID if applicable.

- [ ] **Set up payroll: add employee to PF and ESI registration queue** — Compliance
  UAN must be generated within 7 days of joining. ESI registration within 10 days if gross salary is ₹21,000 or below.
  EPF Act 1952 (UAN within 7 days); ESIC Regulation 10B (10 days)

- [ ] **Assign a buddy or mentor from the same department**
  New hires who get a buddy are far more likely to stay past 90 days. Pick someone who's been around at least 6 months.

- [ ] **Prepare Day 1 schedule and share with the new hire via WhatsApp or email**
  Include: reporting time, whom to meet, what to bring (documents, photos), dress code, lunch arrangements.

- [ ] **Inform the team about the new hire: name, role, start date**
  A quick WhatsApp message to the team prevents awkward 'who are you?' moments on Day 1.

Why Pre-Joining Matters

Most Indian SMEs skip pre-joining prep entirely. The result: new hires show up to no workstation, no uniform, and a manager who forgot they were starting. First impressions set the tone for the entire employment.

02 Day 1 Essentials

Everything that must happen on the employee's first day. Block 2-3 hours for this.

Welcome & Orientation

- ✓ **Welcome the new hire and give a full office/site tour** — Day 1
  Cover: work areas, restrooms, pantry/canteen, emergency exits, fire extinguisher locations, parking, attendance device location.
- ✓ **Introduce to immediate team, supervisor, and key contacts (HR, admin, IT)** — Day 1
  In smaller businesses, a round of introductions takes 10 minutes but makes the new hire feel welcome immediately.
- ✓ **Hand over ID card, uniform, equipment, keys, or access cards**
  Document everything handed over in a handover register. Get the employee's signature on the list.

Document Collection

- ✓ **Collect Aadhaar card (photocopy + original for verification)** — Day 1
  Required for PF (UAN generation), ESI registration, and KYC. Original returned after verification.
- ✓ **Collect PAN card** — Day 1
  Required for TDS compliance. If employee doesn't have PAN, TDS is deducted at higher rate (20%).
- ✓ **Collect bank account details and cancelled cheque or passbook copy** — Day 1
  For salary credit via NEFT/IMPS. Verify account holder name matches employee name exactly.
- ✓ **Collect 4 passport-size photographs**
  Used for: ID card, ESI Pehchan card, employee file, and one spare.
- ✓ **Collect address proof (Aadhaar back, utility bill, or rent agreement)**
  Current address required for PF and ESI records. If address differs from Aadhaar, collect both.
- ✓ **Collect educational certificates and mark sheets**
  Verify highest qualification against what was declared during hiring.
- ✓ **Collect previous employer relieving letter**
  Confirms the employee has formally resigned from the last job. Critical for PF transfer and background verification.
- ✓ **Collect experience certificates from previous employers**
  Validates work history. For experienced hires, this also determines salary benchmarking.

Policies & Systems

- ✓ **Explain and demonstrate the attendance system (biometric, app, or register)**
  Show how to punch in/out, how to apply for leave, and what happens if they forget to mark attendance.
- ✓ **Explain leave policy: types of leave, how to apply, approval process**
  Cover: casual leave, sick leave, earned leave, national holidays, weekly off. Clarity here prevents 80% of leave disputes.
- ✓ **Collect emergency contact form (name, relation, phone number)** — Day 1
  Mandatory. Store in employee file and keep a digital copy accessible to the manager.
- ✓ **Get signed acknowledgment of employee handbook or company policies**
  If you don't have a formal handbook, at minimum get signed acknowledgment of: work timings, dress code, leave policy, and code of conduct.

Pro Tip: Collect Documents on Day 1

If you don't collect documents on Day 1, it drags on for weeks. Employees keep 'forgetting' to bring them. Set a firm rule: no documents by Day 3, no salary processing until documents are submitted.

03 Compliance Documentation

Complete all statutory registrations within the first week. Delays attract penalties.

PF, ESI & Statutory Setup

- ✓ **Generate UAN on EPFO Unified Portal (or link existing UAN from previous employer)** — 7 days
  Login at unifiedportal-emp.epfindia.gov.in. If employee has an existing UAN, link it to your establishment code.
  EPF & MP Act 1952

- ✓ **Register employee on ESIC portal (if gross salary ≤ ₹21,000/month)** — 10 days
  Login at esic.nic.in. Upload photo, Aadhaar, and bank details. Generate IP number.
  ESI Act 1948, S.2(9)

- ✓ **Collect PF nomination form (Form 2, revised)**
  Employee nominates family members for PF balance in case of death. Mandatory for every PF-enrolled employee.
  EPF Scheme 1952, Para 61

- ✓ **Collect gratuity nomination (Form F)**
  Even though gratuity vests after 5 years, nomination must be collected at joining.
  Payment of Gratuity Act 1972, S.6

- ✓ **Collect ESI nomination (Form 1) if ESI-applicable**
  Nominate family members for ESI medical benefits. Spouse and children are automatically covered.
  ESI Act 1948, S.56

- ✓ **Verify Professional Tax registration and deduction applicability**
  PT rates and thresholds vary by state. Maximum ₹2,500/year. Some states (like Rajasthan, Delhi) don't levy PT.
  Article 276(2), Constitution of India

- ✓ **Collect TDS declaration (Form 12BB for investment proof)**
  Employee declares investments under Section 80C, HRA exemption, home loan interest, etc. Provisional declaration at joining, final proof by January.
  Income Tax Act 1961, Section 192

- ✓ **Execute NDA or confidentiality agreement (if applicable to the role)**
  Relevant for: managers handling trade secrets, chefs with proprietary recipes, IT staff with system access, sales staff with client data.

- ✓ **Get POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) policy acknowledgment signed** — Mandatory
  Mandatory for all establishments with 10 or more employees. New hires must be made aware of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and complaint process.
  POSH Act 2013, S.4 (ICC mandatory for 10+ employees)

Statutory Deadlines Are Non-Negotiable

PF registration: within 7 days of joining. ESI registration: within 10 days. Missing these deadlines means penalties and, more importantly, your employee has no social security coverage during the gap period. If something happens to them, the employer is liable.

04 Role-Specific Training

Customise this section based on your industry. Core items apply to all businesses.

Core Training (All Industries)

- ✓ **Walk through the job description and clarify expectations**
  Don't assume they read it during hiring. Go point by point. Ask if they have questions. A 30-minute conversation here prevents months of misalignment.

- ✓ **Discuss KRAs (Key Result Areas) and KPIs for the probation period**
  Set 3-5 measurable goals for the first 90 days. Write them down. Both manager and employee should have a copy.

- ✓ **Review standard operating procedures relevant to the role**
  If you don't have written SOPs, use the first week to document what the new hire learns. They see it with fresh eyes.

- ✓ **Explain reporting structure and escalation paths**
  Who do they report to daily? Who handles leave approvals? Who do they go to for HR issues? Draw it out if needed.

- ✓ **Train on all software and tools used in the role**
  POS system, billing software, inventory tools, attendance app, internal communication (WhatsApp groups, etc.).

Industry-Specific Training

- ✓ **Restaurant: FSSAI Schedule 4 hygiene standards, food handling, kitchen safety, fire safety**
  Cover: handwashing protocol, colour-coded cutting boards, temperature logging, pest control awareness, gas safety. FSSAI inspectors can ask any staff member about these.
  FSSAI Schedule 4, FSS (Licensing & Registration) Regulations 2011

- ✓ **Manufacturing: safety training as mandated by the Factories Act**
  Mandatory for all factory workers. Covers: machine guarding, PPE usage, chemical handling, emergency procedures, first aid.
  Factories Act 1948, Section 7A

- ✓ **Healthcare: biomedical waste handling, patient data confidentiality, infection control**
  BMW training is mandatory under Biomedical Waste Management Rules 2016. Patient data handling falls under clinic/hospital policy.
  BMW Management Rules 2016

- ✓ **Retail: billing procedures, inventory management, theft prevention, customer service standards**
  Train on: GST invoice generation, barcode scanning, stock receiving process, return/exchange policy, shrinkage control.

- ✓ **Salon: hygiene and sterilisation protocols, customer consultation process, product knowledge**
  Equipment sterilisation between clients is non-negotiable. Train on: tool cleaning schedule, allergic reaction protocol, upselling etiquette.

- ✓ **Construction: site safety induction, PPE compliance, height work protocols**
  Safety induction on Day 1 before the worker enters the site. Cover: hard hat, safety shoes, harness for height work, emergency assembly point.
  Building and Other Construction Workers Act 1996

Training Documentation

Keep a signed training attendance sheet for each session. This is your proof that the employee was trained. Useful during: FSSAI audits, factory inspections, labour department inquiries, and wrongful termination disputes.

05 Payroll & Benefits Setup

Get salary structure, bank account, and statutory enrolments done in Week 1.

- [ ] **Verify and confirm salary structure: CTC, Basic, HRA, Special Allowance, deductions** — Week 1
  Walk the employee through their CTC breakup so they understand what they'll receive in hand vs. what goes to PF, ESI, and PT.

- [ ] **Confirm PF contribution basis: full basic or capped at ₹15,000**
  If basic exceeds ₹15,000, employer can contribute PF on full basic or cap at ₹15,000 (employer's choice, but must be consistent across the establishment).
  EPF Scheme 1952, Para 26A

- [ ] **Set up salary bank account: collect cancelled cheque or passbook copy**
  Verify: account holder name matches exactly, IFSC code is correct, account type is Savings. Test with a small amount if possible.

- [ ] **Enrol in group medical insurance if applicable**
  If your company offers group health cover beyond ESI, add the new employee. Collect family member details for family floater plans.

- [ ] **Explain bonus eligibility under the Payment of Bonus Act 1965**
  Every employee earning ₹21,000/month or less is eligible. Minimum bonus: 8.33% of basic. Maximum: 20%. Payable within 8 months of the accounting year close.
  Payment of Bonus Act 1965, S.10-11

- [ ] **Explain gratuity eligibility: 5 years of continuous service**
  Gratuity = (Last drawn salary x 15 x years of service) / 26. Applicable to establishments with 10+ employees.
  Payment of Gratuity Act 1972, S.4

- [ ] **Issue first payslip format walkthrough**
  Show the employee a sample payslip. Explain each line item: basic, HRA, allowances, PF deduction, ESI deduction, PT, TDS, net pay.

- [ ] **Set up salary slip delivery employees will actually open**
  Employee app, email, or HRMS portal. Confirm the employee's contact details and show them where to find their payslip each month.

Bonus Eligibility Reference

Payment of Bonus Act 1965: every employee earning ₹21,000/month or less is eligible. Minimum 8.33%, maximum 20% of basic salary. This applies to all establishments with 20+ employees (10+ in some states).

06 30-60-90 Day Review Checkpoints

Structured milestones to track probation progress and confirm the hire.

30-Day Check

- ✓ **Confirm attendance regularity and punctuality over the first month** — 30 days
  Check: number of lates, unplanned absences, pattern of leave requests. Red flag: 3+ unplanned absences in the first month.
- ✓ **Provide initial performance feedback: what's going well, what needs improvement** — 30 days
  Be specific. 'You're doing well' is not feedback. 'Your billing accuracy is 95%, target is 99%' is feedback.
- ✓ **Resolve any pending document gaps from Day 1**
  If any documents are still missing, set a hard deadline. No further extensions after 30 days.
- ✓ **Verify PF and ESI registration is completed on the portal**
  Check UAN is active, Aadhaar and bank account are linked, ESI IP number is generated. These should have been done in Week 1.
- ✓ **Check if the employee is settling in: ask about challenges, team dynamics, role clarity**
  A 15-minute informal conversation. Employees who feel heard in the first month are significantly more likely to stay.

60-Day Check

- ✓ **Conduct first formal performance review against KRAs set on Day 1** — 60 days
  Review each KRA with evidence. Document the review. Both parties sign off.
- ✓ **Verify all assigned training modules are completed** — 60 days
  Check training register. If any training is pending, schedule it before the 90-day mark.
- ✓ **Identify skill gaps and plan additional training if needed**
  Is the employee struggling with any specific task? Pair them with a senior colleague or arrange targeted training.
- ✓ **Discuss probation progress: on track, needs improvement, or at risk**
  Be transparent. If the employee is at risk of not being confirmed, they deserve to know at 60 days, not at 90.

90-Day Check

- ✓ **Make probation confirmation decision: confirm, extend, or exit** — 90 days
  Based on 30-day and 60-day reviews. If performance is satisfactory, confirm. If borderline, extend probation by 30-60 days with clear targets.
- ✓ **Issue permanent employee confirmation letter if confirmed** — 90 days
  Letter should reference: date of joining, probation period completed, designation confirmed, revised terms (if any).
- ✓ **Update HR records: change status from probationer to confirmed**
  Update in payroll system, attendance records, and employee master file.
- ✓ **Set annual goals and KPIs for the remainder of the year**
  Now that probation is over, set longer-term targets. Align with team and business objectives.

Why 30-60-90 Reviews Matter

Indian SMEs rarely do structured probation reviews. The result: underperformers stay too long, good hires leave because nobody noticed their work. Three short conversations over 90 days fix both problems.

07 Document Checklist (Quick Reference)

Print this page separately and attach to every new employee's file.

Document	Required By	Collected?	Notes
Aadhaar card (photocopy)	Day 1		Mandatory for UAN and ESI
PAN card	Day 1		TDS at 20% without PAN
Passport-size photos (4)	Day 1		ID card, ESI, file, spare
Bank account details + cancelled cheque	Day 1		For salary NEFT/IMPS
Educational certificates	Day 1		Verify highest qualification
Previous employer relieving letter	Day 1		Confirms formal exit
Experience certificates	Day 1		Validates work history
Medical fitness certificate	Week 1		Required for factories, food businesses
Address proof	Day 1		If different from Aadhaar address
PF nomination (Form 2, revised)	Week 1		EPF Scheme 1952, Para 61
ESI nomination (Form 1)	Week 1		If gross ≤ ₹21,000/month
Gratuity nomination (Form F)	Week 1		Payment of Gratuity Act 1972
POSH policy acknowledgment	Week 1		Mandatory for 10+ employee establishments
NDA / confidentiality agreement	Week 1		If applicable to the role
Emergency contact form	Day 1		Name, relation, phone number
Employee handbook acknowledgment	Day 1		Signed copy in employee file

Keep a Master Tracker

Maintain a simple Excel sheet listing all employees and which documents are collected. Review it monthly. Incomplete files create problems during audits, PF inspections, and employee exits.

08 7 Common Onboarding Mistakes

And how to avoid each one

Mistakes to Avoid

- ✓ **Not collecting documents on Day 1** — Common
  Every day of delay pushes PF and ESI registration further. After a week, employees stop caring about bringing documents. Set a firm Day 1 deadline.

- ✓ **Skipping POSH policy acknowledgment** — Legal
  Mandatory under the POSH Act 2013 for every establishment with 10 or more employees. Without signed acknowledgment, the employer has no proof that the employee was informed about the complaint process.
  POSH Act 2013, S.4

- ✓ **No written job description shared with the employee** — Common
  Creates disputes during appraisals and termination. 'That was never part of my job' is impossible to counter without a written, signed JD.

- ✓ **Not explaining leave policy clearly on Day 1**
  The #1 source of HR complaints in the first month. How many casual leaves? Can they carry forward? What's the approval process? Cover this on Day 1.

- ✓ **Skipping probation review milestones (30-60-90 days)** — Legal
  Without documented reviews, confirming or terminating an employee during probation becomes legally tricky. Courts look for evidence of fair process.

- ✓ **Not assigning a buddy or mentor to the new hire**
  New employees without a go-to person feel lost and isolated. Attrition in the first 90 days is highest when nobody actively helps the new hire settle in.

- ✓ **Delaying salary bank account setup**
  If the bank account isn't verified by the first payroll cycle, the employee gets paid via cash or cheque. This creates payroll reconciliation headaches and leaves no digital audit trail.

PETPOOJA

This checklist is provided by Petpooja for informational purposes. Verify all compliance details with official sources before acting.

www.petpooja.com

PETPOOJA

AUTOMATE ONBOARDING

Stop managing onboarding on *paper*

Attendo handles PF/ESI registration, salary setup, and attendance tracking from Day 1. Petpooja Tasks assigns onboarding checklists to managers with deadline reminders. Used by 30,000+ businesses.

Book a Free Demo

+91-72280 34343 | getpayroll@petpooja.com | attendohr.com