



**JACKSON WATERING HOLE**

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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**WELCOME TO THE FAMILY**

**2025-2026**

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## **We're so glad you're here!**

At Jackson Watering Hole, we're more than a team—we're family. This handbook will help you feel confident, supported, and ready to grow with us.

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This handbook is here to help you feel **confident in your role**. It covers everything from schedules and safety to communication and benefits—so you can focus on doing your best every day.



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# WELCOME MESSAGE

Before Jackson Watering Hole, Ben Cohen was a bassist in a soul-funk band that played smoky clubs from Brooklyn to Bangkok. Between gigs, he washed dishes, flipped burgers, and fell in love—with food and people.



**BEN COHEN**  
Founder

He once traded his bass for a wok in Bangkok and learned to stir-fry over open flame. In Spain, he served tapas at sunset. In Tel Aviv, he danced with chefs after midnight.

To Ben, a great restaurant had rhythm—like a band. Service, food, vibe: all in sync. He didn't just want guests to eat well; he wanted them to feel part of something alive.

After years on the road, he returned home with a passport full of flavor and a notebook of half-recipes, half-poems. That's when Jackson Watering Hole was born—named after his granddad and full of soul.

Ben's rule is gospel: cook like you mean it, serve like it matters, and never fake the welcome.



# COMPANY BACKGROUND

**In the early 2000s**, Ben Jackson left his finance job in Atlanta, tired of boardrooms and bottled smiles. He dreamed of building a place where stories flowed as freely as the drinks.

**He hit the road** with a notebook and a backpack, working odd jobs in kitchens, learning regional dishes, and listening. From Texas BBQ pits to New Orleans jazz dives, inspiration struck.



**In 2004**, he opened the first Jackson Watering Hole in a reclaimed train depot. The vibe was simple: good food, real people, and music that made you want to stay awhile.

**Word spread.** Locals felt at home, travelers found something familiar, and the staff became family. Ben always said, "We don't just serve meals—we hold space for memories." That mission still guides us.



# “YOUR THIRD PLACE BEYOND HOME AND WORK”

**Jackson Watering Hole** isn't just a restaurant—it's your third place. A space between home and work where people feel seen, heard, and welcomed. We exist to make ordinary days feel special.

**We lead with heart**—hospitality isn't a script here. It's a mindset. Clean spaces, warm smiles, loyal teams, and real conversations make our guests return. We treat everyone like they already belong.



**Whether it's a busy lunch or a late-night drink**, we show up with consistency, pride, and care. Because every moment—every guest interaction—is a chance to be someone's favorite part of the day.

**You're not just clocking in.** You're shaping a space that matters. As part of our family, your presence, effort, and attitude help turn our brand into something people remember and love.



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

## COMMITMENT



**Jackson Watering Hole** values every individual regardless of race, gender, age, religion, disability, or background. We fully comply with federal laws like the Civil Rights Act and Florida Civil Rights Act, ensuring equal opportunity and accommodations.

**We maintain** a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment. By embracing diverse perspectives and removing barriers, we foster innovation, respect, and collaboration—creating a workplace where all employees and guests feel safe, valued, and included.

## INCLUSION



**We promote** open communication, respect, and fairness at every level. Through ongoing training and awareness, we actively reduce bias and cultivate a safe environment where everyone's voice is heard and appreciated.

**Celebrating our differences** enriches our culture and service. We encourage sharing experiences, supporting one another, and building meaningful connections—ensuring every team member and guest feels respected, welcomed, and part of our community.

# POLICIES AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE



## EMPLOYMENT


**2.1** Employment at Jackson Watering Hole is at-will. This means either the employee or the company may end the working relationship at any time, with or without notice or cause, as Florida law allows.

**2.2** Jackson Watering Hole is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate based on race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, or other protected categories under federal or Florida law.

## CONDUCT

**2.3** At Jackson Watering Hole, we uphold a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, racism, or bias. Every employee deserves a safe, respectful workplace where all backgrounds are valued and dignity is always protected.

**2.4** Employees at Jackson Watering Hole are encouraged to report harassment or discrimination immediately to a manager, assistant manager, or HR. Reports are handled seriously, promptly, and without retaliation. Your voice matters here.





# POLICIES AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE

## COMPLIANCE



**2.5** Jackson Watering Hole prohibits retaliation against any employee who reports discrimination, harassment, safety concerns, or policy violations in good faith. Speaking up is protected, encouraged, and never penalized—your voice is always safe here.

**2.6** To ensure a safe and reliable workplace, Jackson Watering Hole may conduct background checks and contact past employers. All screenings comply with Florida law and are performed fairly, with written consent from each applicant.

## VERIFICATION



**2.7** Jackson Watering Hole follows federal I-9 requirements. All employees must present valid documents confirming their identity and authorization to work in the U.S. within three days of starting employment, without exception or delay.

**2.8** We follow Florida and federal child labor laws regarding age, hours, and permitted duties for minors. All minor employees must have proper documentation and parental consent before beginning work at Jackson Watering Hole.

# ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES



## ACCESS



Jackson Watering Hole complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable Florida laws. We are committed to providing equal employment opportunities and a workplace that accommodates qualified individuals with disabilities.


Employees or applicants who require a reasonable accommodation to perform essential job duties should notify a manager or designated representative. Requests will be handled promptly, confidentially, and in accordance with federal and state law.

## PROTECTION



Accommodations are assessed on a case-by-case basis and must not create an undue hardship on restaurant operations. Documentation may be requested to support a disability-related accommodation request, as allowed by law

Retaliation, harassment, or discrimination against individuals who request or receive accommodations is strictly prohibited. Jackson Watering Hole takes these matters seriously and will investigate all concerns in a timely, respectful, and fair manner.





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