



Lynn Schofield, HR Insight
First Line Response

Is it Party Time Already?

December 2011

Introduction

Is it really December? This year seems to have passed by so quickly that even the weather doesn't appear to have caught up!

However, the party season has commenced with or without the weather so, whilst communicating our very best greetings to you, the focus of our factsheet this month is the celebrations!

The Party Pooper....

Without wanting to sound like a party pooper, the Christmas party is a formal work event and therefore businesses must ensure that employees are not subjected to bullying, harassment, abuse or any other detrimental treatment at the party.

This can be simply communicated by circulating a friendly memo saying that you want everyone to enjoy themselves but reminding them that it is a work event and colleagues must be treated with respect.

Combine this with details of all the party arrangements and it won't seem too onerous!

Party Wise at Work

- Select a designated area carefully and ensure any valuable, or potentially dangerous equipment, is locked away and all out of bound areas are secured
- Don't be over-generous when providing alcohol; buy a sensible amount based on the number of people that are attending
- If you are providing food, make sure all the hygiene requirements are observed
- Avoid the inclusion of spirits or the stronger beers and wines in your bar selection
- Have telephone numbers of local taxi firms readily available or consider organising transport home.

Do contact us

HR Insight
20 Eastern Road, Romford, Essex

Offices in Romford, London (City & West End), St Albans, Hayes and Redhill.

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Party Wise at Venues

- Set an agreed limit for the bar and stick to it
- Liaise with the venue's management to understand the standards of behaviour that are expected and advise employees of these (not forgetting the required dress code)
- Consider transport arrangements for getting people home and pre-arrange these if possible
- Consider that not all staff will drink alcohol or eat meat for various reasons (including religious beliefs). Ensure alternatives are provided
- If an incident occurs, send the employees involved home and deal with it when everyone has had a chance to cool down.

Party Pitfalls

The range of problems that we hear about in HR Insight is vast and we hope you will not encounter any of them! Unfortunately however, a minority will act inappropriately and this will require managing. This might include:

- Having to stop an employee who is clearly 'over the drink drive limit' from driving home or warning them not to drive to work the following morning
- Dealing with insubordination; abusive or offensive language; behaviour regarded as harassment by colleagues; improper use of facilities or damage to property
- Dealing with inappropriate or offensive behaviour; reckless, deliberate or dangerous actions; fighting; possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs
- Absence following over-indulgence!

Remember, when employees attend a work-organised social event they are your responsibility. Any misconduct can be treated as a disciplinary matter.

General Enquiries
enquiries@hrinsight.co.uk

Legal Support with HRi Legal
legal@hrinsight.co.uk

Time to Rein Santa in?

Many a conversation has been held by businesses considering whether Santa should be reined in this year because of The Bribery Act.

The Guidance provided on the Act does provide some clarity, with boundaries and parameters. The legislation is not intended to criminalise reasonable bona fide marketing activities although there are questions about what is reasonable and proportionate.

Offering gifts that are perceived to be 'lavish' may trigger the application of the Act if it is intended to induce improper conduct. However, thank you trinkets and presents, branded merchandise and celebration meals intended to form part of your sales, marketing or relationship management strategies are all fine.

But if you still haven't got an Anti-Bribery Policy, it is time to act. Call and we'll treat you to one this Christmas!

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

A THANK YOU TO YOU!

2011 has been another busy year for HR Insight and a challenging one, certainly for many of our clients. We are hopeful that 2012 will bring better fortunes to the economy and see the removal of some red tape and very much look forward to continuing to work with you.

Your continued support of us and our CAN DO attitude is appreciated by the whole team. Thank you!

With our very best wishes to you for the festive season.

Heather Matheson
HMatheson@hrinsight.co.uk

Telephone
01708 758 958