Holiday Party Self- Assessment

A practical checklist for employers planning company holiday celebrations.

Use this checklist to spot and close common gaps before, during, and after your company's holiday celebration.

Before the Party

Have the important decisions been made?

- ☐ **Attendance expectations:** Is attendance genuinely optional, or are managers creating an expectation that employees must attend?
- ☐ **Pay considerations:** Has the company considered which employees may need to be compensated for attending or working at the event?
- ☐ **Conduct expectations:** Have employees and managers been reminded that workplace conduct and harassment policies may apply to company celebrations?
- ☐ **Alcohol and transportation:** Is there a plan for alcohol service, transportation options, and addressing concerns during the event?
- ☐ **Venue and guests:** Has someone reviewed venue arrangements, insurance considerations, and expectations for employees, clients, and other guests?
- ☐ **Reporting concerns:** Do employees know whom to contact if something happens, including when the concern involves their own manager?

During the Party

Who is responsible when something goes wrong?

- ☐ **Event oversight:** Is there a designated, sober decision maker with authority to address concerns, coordinate with the venue, and respond when assistance is needed?
- ☐ **Behavior:** Does everyone understand that their conduct and interactions with others can raise workplace concerns, even outside ordinary working hours?
- ☐ **Alcohol service:** Are the arrangements for serving alcohol, handling visibly impaired guests, and coordinating transportation clear?
- ☐ **Unofficial gatherings:** Have managers considered how invitations to afterparties or gatherings involving their employees could affect workplace relationships?

After the Party

What happens when an employee raises a concern?

- ☐ **Receiving complaints:** Do managers know how to respond when an employee reports inappropriate behavior, even if the employee asks to keep it informal?
- ☐ **Confidentiality:** Is there a process for handling sensitive information without promising absolute confidentiality?
- ☐ **Investigations:** Is there a process for determining who should review a complaint, particularly when it involves an owner or senior manager?
- ☐ **Evidence:** Does the company know how to identify and appropriately preserve relevant messages, photos, videos, and other information when necessary?
- ☐ **Employee protections:** Have HR and leadership considered appropriate interim measures, confidentiality, and protection against retaliation?
- ☐ **Follow through:** Is there a process for documenting findings, evaluating an appropriate response, and communicating necessary next steps?
- ☐ **Disabilities:** Do individuals handling concerns realize how to deal with addiction issues as a disability?

This resource is for general legal education, not legal advice. It does not create an attorney-client relationship.