A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

TRUSTED HR SOLUTIONS

◆ CHRISTMAS PARTY COMPLIANCE

Your Christmas party compliance checklist

Your work Christmas party is an extension of the workplace, so the same obligations apply. Use this practical checklist to keep this year's celebration safe, respectful and compliant at every stage: before, during and after the event.

01 BEFORE THE EVENT

- [ ] Complete a simple risk assessment covering the venue, alcohol, activities, transport and any known workplace tensions.
- [ ] Review your code of conduct, harassment, bullying, and alcohol and drug policies, and confirm they apply to work functions.
- [ ] Send a friendly reminder to all staff a week or two before the event outlining expected behaviour, consequences of misconduct and how to raise concerns.
- [ ] Brief managers and supervisors on their role on the night, including watching for warning signs and stepping in early.
- [ ] Set a clear start and finish time in the invitation, and state that any after-parties are not organised or endorsed by the business.
- [ ] Choose a venue with responsible service of alcohol (RSA) trained staff, and check accessibility, lighting and safe exits.
- [ ] Plan inclusive timing, food and activities, considering dietary, cultural, religious and family needs. Make attendance and drinking optional.
- [ ] Arrange safe transport options, such as taxi vouchers, rideshare credits or a shuttle bus.

02 ON THE NIGHT

- [ ] Limit alcohol through a set bar tab, drink cards or a time limit rather than an open, unlimited bar.
- [ ] Provide plenty of substantial food and non-alcoholic drinks.
- [ ] Nominate one or two senior people to stay sober, supervise, and act as contact points for any issues.
- [ ] Step in early if behaviour becomes inappropriate and remove anyone who is unsafe or breaching policy.
- [ ] Avoid games, themes, costumes or Secret Santa gifts that could be sexualised, demeaning or exclusionary.
- [ ] Close the function at the advertised time and help people get home safely.

03 AFTER THE EVENT

- [ ] Remind staff about social media expectations, particularly around posting photos of colleagues without consent.
- [ ] Follow up promptly on any incidents, injuries or concerns raised.
- [ ] Note what worked and what didn't, so next year's risk assessment is better.

If something goes wrong

Even with good planning, incidents can still happen. How you respond is just as important as what you did to prevent them.

01 **Take every complaint seriously**, even if it comes weeks later, involves a senior person or seems minor.

02 **Act promptly and confidentially.** Ensure the person raising the concern is supported and protected from victimisation.

03 **Manage immediate risks**, such as changing rosters or reporting lines while the matter is looked into.

04 **Follow a fair process.** Put allegations to the respondent, give them a genuine opportunity to respond, and make findings based on the evidence.

05 **Be consistent.** Outcomes should be proportionate and in line with how similar conduct has been treated in the past.

06 **Report notifiable incidents** to your WHS regulator where required and notify your workers' compensation insurer of any injuries.

07 **Get advice early** if the matter is serious or complex. An independent workplace investigation can protect both the people involved and the business.

Celebrate well, and celebrate safely.

At Trusted HR Solutions, we help business owners get this right. We can review your policies and code of conduct, prepare pre-event staff communication, brief your managers, and support you with complaints or workplace investigations if issues arise.

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This checklist provides general information only and does not constitute legal advice. Please seek advice specific to your circumstances.