



The Five: Tips on Managing Office March Madness Pools

News

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J. David Giddens was quoted on *The Dallas Morning News* on March 20, 2015. In the article “The Five: Tips on Managing Office March Madness Pools” David offered five guidelines for employers on evaluating office pools.

1. Tossing more than a coin

Over the years, employee participation in office pools has swelled, with an estimated \$3 billion wagered in office pools in 2013, according to Pregame.com. Significant losses can easily ignite tension between employees, which can defeat the intent to boost morale.

2. Avoid penalties

If office pools are not properly handled, they risk being deemed illegal under Texas law. To avoid these risks, employers should remind employees that all pools must be structured with equal odds for everyone, all money must be paid out and supervisors should be discouraged from participating in pools involving direct reports and should be prohibited from coordinating them.

3. Fouls on social media

Almost 250,000 people follow the official March Madness Twitter feed. Spikes in social media activity can increase the risk of employees publicly making inappropriate remarks tied to their workplace or badmouthing their bosses. Such social media conversations could lead to risks as the National Labor Relations Board is expanding its oversight in this area and siding with employees.

4. Benched on the sideline

Some employees can feel left out of their office pools if they are unable to participate or they aren't invited. Maybe they can't afford the entry fee or the organizer decides to exclude an employee based on culture or gender. At best, employees have hurt feelings. At worse, they accuse their employer of discrimination.

5. Stay in bounds

Permitting employees to sign up other employees for gambling pools counts as solicitation and can pose risks to union-free workplaces. Solicitation policies must be enforced uniformly, according to rules set forth by the National Labor Relations Board. Therefore, if you let employees solicit for brackets in the workplace, you may have to also let them solicit for a union.

To read the full article, please visit [*The Dallas Morning News*](#).

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