



Office Pools for March Madness Can Be Murky

News

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In the article, "Office Pools for March Madness Can Be Murky," featured in *HRE Daily*, Attorney Corey Goerdts discussed potential risks one should consider before starting or joining a NCAA tournament bracket at work.

Employers have to be careful, too, said Corey.

"Many employers either allow or encourage some type of office pools around big sporting events and have little or no trouble," Corey told 11Alive's Jennifer Leslie. "However, employers should be aware of the risks, even if they are not particularly likely to impact most workplaces."

"Gambling is illegal, and many employers have explicit policies banning gambling," he added. "As long as the stakes are not too high, law enforcement is unlikely to target companies with office pools. But employers with anti-gambling policies need to be aware that looking the other way or actively encouraging office pools could make it much more difficult to successfully discipline employees for gambling in other circumstances."

In some cases, he warned that office pools even lead to claims of discrimination.

"Hurt feelings over being left out of an office pool or teasing about performance in the pool could end up being evidence of discrimination," he explained. "If an employer is encouraging participation in a pool, they should make sure to be inclusive."

Corey said there could be a significant upside to office pools.

"Pools can promote teamwork and interaction among employees who otherwise might not have that opportunity," he said.

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