



It's That Time of Year Again - Holiday Parties

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'Tis the season for planning holiday parties. And again, employers are asking themselves (and us) about the wisdom of holding dealership parties. There is always a risk involved in holding any dealership sponsored function. According to one study, 36% of employers reported behavioral problems at their most recent employer-sponsored party. Misconduct may include excessive drinking, vulgar or offensive language, fist-fights or inappropriate sexual advances. Employers may be civilly liable for harassment or discrimination claims, as well as negligent or intentional acts occurring within the scope of employment.

At the Holiday Party, we recommend you:

- Remind employees that, while you encourage everyone to have a good time, your dealership's normal workplace standards of conduct will be in force and misconduct at or after the party can result in disciplinary action.
- Do not serve alcohol. This is much easier if you simply have a lunch.
- If you do serve alcohol, do not have an open bar. Instead, use a cash bar or a ticket system to limit the number of drinks.
- Limit the bar to beer and wine. Do not serve liquor. And always have plenty of non-alcoholic beverages available.
- Let your managers know that they will be considered "on-duty" at the party. They should be instructed to keep an eye on their subordinates.
- Invite spouses and significant others. Employees seem to behave more appropriately when in the presence of their family.
- Arrange a no-cost taxi service for any employee who that he or she should not drive home.
- At management discretion, be prepared to provide hotel rooms for intoxicated employees.
- And, lastly...never, never, never hang mistletoe!

This article originally appeared in the November 2013 issue of the *Ohio Automobile Dealers Association Newsletter*. Click the link to the right to read the entire article.

Attachments

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Melanie L. Webber

Partner

440.838.8800

Email