



For Love of Halloween: Costumes & Compliance

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Clarence Belnavis' article "For Love of Halloween: Costumes & Compliance" was featured in the *Vancouver SW Washington Business Journal* on October 23, 2015.

The office holiday party is enough to "scare" any HR department. Many a workplace dispute and even the occasional lawsuit can trace their origins back to such an event. Since not everyone does a good job of being professional at office holiday parties, it is important to set clear guidelines in order to avoid legal horror stories.

Most people overlook Halloween when they consider "holidays" that are routinely celebrated in the workplace. "All Hallows' Eve" is a celebration with some religious connotations as it starts the observance of Allhallowtide – remembering departed saints and believers. The holiday also has Celtic, Welsh and other roots.

In the article, Clarence provides managers and supervisors with some tips on how to properly plan and manage any Halloween celebrations:

- Decide if costumes are appropriate for the workplace.
- Clearly communicate costume guidelines in advance.
- Remind employees they are still at work.
- Don't overreact, but be sensitive to the issues.
- Think about any feedback the company received from employees or customers regarding last year's Halloween party or employee costumes.
- Offer alternative celebrations.
- Be prepared to discipline, if necessary.
- "Trick or treating" is just horseplay and still inappropriate.

To read the full article, please visit [*Vancouver SW Washington Business Journal*](#).

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