

Silly Season Work Event Checklist



IRiQ Law
Guide

Understanding Your Obligations

Work Christmas parties and staff events are an opportunity to celebrate, but they can also present workplace risks, particularly where alcohol, inappropriate behaviour or misconduct is involved.

Employers should take proactive steps to manage these risks, set clear expectations and understand when conduct at or after a work-related event may give rise to employment obligations.

IRiQ Law has developed this practical checklist to help employers plan safer workplace celebrations, minimise legal risks and respond appropriately if an incident occurs.

How to use this checklist

This checklist provides a practical framework for managing key considerations before, during and after workplace Christmas parties and staff events.

- Work through each section to identify relevant risks and preventative measures.
- Establish clear expectations around alcohol consumption, employee behaviour and workplace policies.
- Plan appropriate safety measures, including transport arrangements and event supervision.
- Understand the steps to take if misconduct or a workplace incident occurs.

This checklist is intended as a general compliance guide only and does not replace tailored legal advice.

Looking for more practical HR/IR support?

Get in touch via email at iriqlaw@iriqlaw.com.au
or call 07 3077 6767 to discuss your needs.

www.iriq.com.au



Get in Touch

1. Before the Event

☐	Set clear start and finish times	Include these in invitations and make it clear when the official employer-sponsored event ends.
☐	Nominate responsible event contacts	Have appropriate senior staff or HR representatives remain sober and available to monitor safety, behaviour and any issues that arise.
☐	Provide plenty of food and non-alcoholic drinks	Ensure substantial food is available throughout the event, together with easily accessible non-alcoholic options.
☐	Plan safe transport	Consider taxis or rideshare vouchers, organised transport or easy access to public transport.

2. Alcohol & Venue Management

☐	Use responsible service of alcohol	Alcohol should be served by appropriately trained venue staff. Avoid self-service alcohol or unrestricted access.
☐	Manage alcohol consumption	Consider limiting bar tabs, restricting high-strength drinks and ensuring service stops for anyone showing signs of intoxication.
☐	Plan the close of the event	Consider stopping alcohol service before the official finish time and working with the venue to encourage an orderly departure.

3. Behaviour & Workplace Expectations

☐	Remind employees that workplace standards still apply	Before the event, remind employees that relevant workplace policies continue to apply, including the Code of Conduct, Anti-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy, and WHS and Environment policies.
☐	Set expectations for respectful behaviour	Make it clear that discrimination, harassment, abusive language, aggressive behaviour and violence are not acceptable.
☐	Remind employees there may be consequences	Serious misconduct at a work function may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

4. After the Official Event

☐	Clearly announce when the work event has finished	Make it clear that any further socialising is not organised, sponsored or paid for by the employer.
☐	Avoid managers organising the "after-party"	Managers should avoid purchasing rounds, opening tabs or actively directing employees to another venue.
☐	Remember the workplace connection may continue	Conduct after the official event may still have a connection to employment where it occurs shortly afterwards or involves interactions arising from workplace relationships.

5. If Something Goes Wrong

☐	Deal with immediate safety first	Separate those involved, arrange medical attention if required and assist affected employees to get home safely.
☐	Consider ongoing workplace safety	Where there has been violence or threatening behaviour, assess whether temporary changes to workplace access, locations or other arrangements are required.
☐	Preserve evidence quickly	Contact the venue promptly to request preservation of relevant CCTV, incident reports or other records before they are deleted or lost.
☐	Follow a fair investigation process	Where an investigation is required: • Clearly identify the allegations; • Give the employee a reasonable opportunity to respond; • Allow a support person where appropriate; • Consider whether paid administrative leave is necessary for safety or investigation integrity; • Base findings on reliable evidence; and • Ensure any disciplinary response is proportionate to the conduct.

6. Final Check

☐	Review event readiness	Have we clearly set the boundaries, managed alcohol and transport risks, reminded employees of expected behaviour and planned what we will do if an incident occurs? If the answer is yes, you are well on the way to a safer—and more enjoyable—workplace celebration.
--------------------------	-------------------------------	---

Need assistance managing workplace risks or misconduct? IRIQ can help.

Get in touch via email at iriqlaw@iriqlaw.com.au
or call 07 3077 6767 to discuss your needs.

www.iriq.com.au



Get in Touch