

TROJANTODAY

The Newsletter for Today's Dental World

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STAINLESS STEEL POST**



Trojan's Dentifi has been named by DentalClaimsSupport.com as one of the four best insurance verification systems, noting this automation makes verification much easier and doing verification in-house saves money.

Tis the Season: Unwrapping HR During the Holidays

by Bebecca Boartfield

The holidays are right around the corner, and businesses are gearing up for parties and events—which always bring plenty of questions and concerns. We're here to help!

Below are some of the most common questions and compliance concerns that come up this time of year—along with a few tips to help you stay merry and maintain peace of mind.

Holiday Party/Events Attendance: Paid or Unpaid Time

Perhaps you're celebrating the holidays to be social (and jolly), but compensation may need to be provided in some cases.

Exempt employees will get their usual salary, so compensation happens automatically for them.

For non-exempt employees, here are four questions to ask yourself:

1. Are they helping organize or manage the party/event?
2. Does the event occur during any portion of normal work hours?
3. Is attendance required, or would an employee be judged negatively for non-attendance?
4. Will work concerns be part of the party? For example, presenting end-of-year summaries or forecasting next year, employee recognition presentations, or other matters of concern to the business.

If the answer to any of those is “yes,” then any non-exempt employees attending the event may need to be paid for their attendance.

Determining compensation for these events is really fact-specific. Each employer has a unique scenario, and one small adjustment to a planned party/event can mean the difference between being paid or unpaid, so seeking guidance on this in advance can make all the difference and prevent problems.

When in doubt, document your decision-making process and the reasoning behind it—especially if you decide the event time will be unpaid.



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QUOTE-WORTHY

“ If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader. ”

-John Quincy Adams

Company-Sponsored Event Liability

Even if your holiday party is held after hours or off-site, it's still considered a company-sponsored event. That means the employer could, in some cases, be held responsible for employee conduct, accidents, or other issues that arise. It's smart to double-check that your liability insurance and workers' compensation coverage extend to company events, and to remind employees that professional expectations still apply.

Remember that serving alcohol at a company event can also raise your risk exposure—both from a safety and liability standpoint—which is why coverage verification is so important before the party.

Holiday Parties: Alcohol Concerns

Any time alcohol is available, the potential for negative employee issues increases. Obviously, not serving alcohol at the party would likely solve that problem, but many employers still opt for cocktails. So, if you plan to serve alcohol at this year's party, consider limiting the risks by utilizing the following tactics:

- Require employees to pay for drinks, or consider utilizing a drink-ticket system in which each employee is entitled to two drinks on the house and no more.
- Choose when to have alcohol available, either pre-dinner or during dinner only. Close the bar at least one hour before the party ends.
- Limit alcohol to beer and wine rather than hard liquor, due to reduced ABV.
- Invite families and/or clients and vendors. The presence of employees' family members or other work-related colleagues can encourage employees to be on their best behavior.
- Designate a person(s) to monitor employees' behavior. Items to look for include: how much employees drink and whether they have a safe ride home; employee interactions, especially those who become "too friendly" with each other or if tempers rise; any other employee activities that may be dangerous to themselves and others.
- Cover all transportation bases by arranging for a taxi or car service for employees to get to and from the event;
- Prepare for the possibility of pre-partying. Impose a rule that employees who arrive buzzed or drunk will not be admitted to the party, and a pre-designated driver (e.g., an employee or a taxi) will take the intoxicated employee home.

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Ask the Consultant

Answer by Kathleen Johnson



Q: What is the proper code to use for a Stainless Steel Post?

A: This is the code that best matches your need.

D2954 - PREFABRICATED POST AND CORE IN ADDITION TO CROWN THE POST MIGHT BE COMPOSED OF VARIOUS METALS (SUCH AS STAINLESS STEEL OR TITANIUM)

From the May 1990 Dental Business Today, Charlie Kidd, Trojan's founder, shares how Trojan ends up with a fantastic group of employees that put customer service at the top of the priorities list.

The Higher Purpose:

One of the reasons our staff is so dedicated to doing a good job is that we all answer to a higher purpose. I am not talking about religion here. Rather, I am talking about you - our clients. All of us at Trojan understand the power of service to our clients. All of us at Trojan understand the power of serving our clients. We take great care to instill this dedication to client service in all new staff.

For us, what serves the client best is the answer to every question. I happen to believe that this is the key to any problem.

[READ IT](#)

Trojan Today provides a forum for industry professionals to offer diverse information and provide ideas and suggestions in dental practice management. These articles are meant to be information and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Trojan Professional Services, Inc.

Remind employees about your office alcohol and substance abuse policy and the rules of behavior, public intoxication, fighting, harassment, etc., that will be enforced at the party. These reminders can be done via emails or memos a few days before the party.

Holiday Parties: Marijuana Concerns

Many states have legalized recreational marijuana. If you're in one of those states, you may think it could be okay to bring some fun holiday edibles to the party. Like alcohol, this could backfire and is not recommended.

The first consideration is that bringing marijuana to a party may conflict with your drug & alcohol policy. If you might test employees for being under the influence of drugs and potentially discipline or fire them for testing positive for marijuana, what kind of message does that send if you're the supplier of those substances at a party?

The second consideration is that dosing with marijuana is tricky—particularly with edibles. One holiday cookie could affect one person very differently than another. Because the effects can take time to appear, some people may eat too much too soon, causing a much stronger reaction than intended. Not everyone responds to marijuana the same. Do you want to be responsible for causing some kind of major issue?



Like alcohol, people leaving the party under the influence are dangerous and could cause accidents to themselves or others. If this were to happen after their employer supplied the edibles, it could lead to serious liability.

Of course, substance use isn't the only challenge employers face during holiday gatherings—maintaining appropriate conduct and professionalism is equally important.

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Respectful Conduct Reminder

Holiday gatherings can blur the lines between personal and professional behavior, especially when alcohol is involved. It's a good idea to remind everyone that all company policies—especially your harassment and conduct rules—still apply at work-related events, whether held on or off-site. Supervisors and managers should model appropriate behavior and watch for situations that could cross professional boundaries. Reinforcing respectful conduct ahead of time can help ensure your event stays both enjoyable and problem-free.

Religious Accommodations

As you plan holiday gatherings, remember that not everyone celebrates the same holidays—or any holidays at all. To make everyone feel welcome, consider hosting a “year-end celebration” rather than a specific “Christmas party,” and keep decorations and themes general and inclusive. Celebrating your team's accomplishments in a way that respects all backgrounds fosters a stronger sense of belonging and inclusion.

While Christmas Day and New Year's Day are the big-ticket holidays this time of year, remember that not everyone celebrates them. For religious reasons, some people may not want to celebrate holidays at all, or have different holidays they prefer. An employer generally has to reasonably accommodate employees with different religious beliefs unless doing so would cause an undue hardship, which is difficult to establish and prove. Not doing so can create liability for the employer. Here are some potential accommodations:

- Allowing observance of a different holiday. for example, taking a day off for Hanukkah.

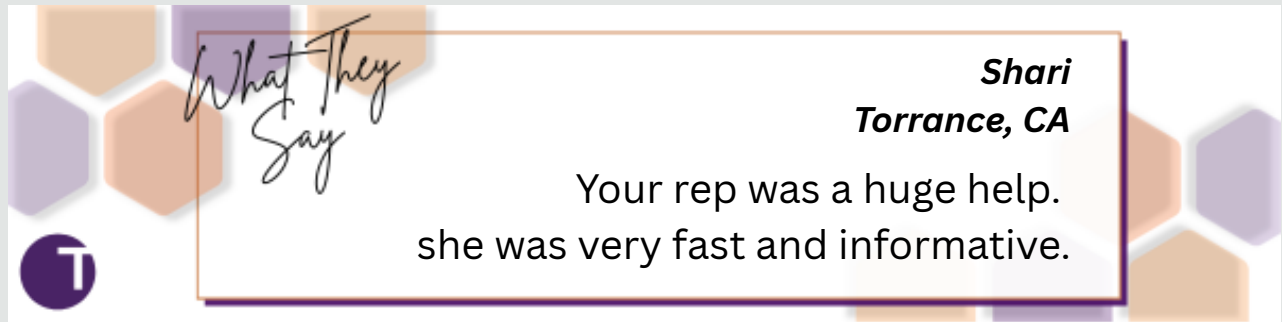
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Read more from Rebecca Boartfield

[Trojan Today | The Value of Job Descriptions | Rebecca Boartfield](#)

[Trojan Today | The End of the Dreaded Yearly Performance Review](#)

[Trojan Today | The Challenge of a Multi-Generational Workforce](#)



Conclusion

The holidays should be a time to celebrate your team's hard work—not to navigate unexpected HR headaches. With a little advance planning, clear communication, and thoughtful attention to inclusivity and compliance, you can make sure your holiday season stays festive, fair, and fun.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rebecca Boartfield is a Human Resources and Employment Compliance Consultant with Bent Ericksen & Associates, a national human resources and employment compliance consulting firm.

*FMI: rebecca@bentericksen.com
or www.bentericksen.com*



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