

HR CLINIC
January 2020

Last Minute Tips: Get Your Company Ready for Super Bowl

Even if you're not a regular football fan, your workplace is likely to see a significant impact from the forthcoming Super Bowl. In fact, it probably already has.

Are Gambling/Betting Pools Okay?

Gambling pools, with very little exception (if there is money involved) are not legal in many states. In others, there are restrictions on amounts, etc. Of course, no matter what state you operate in, gambling pools of the "buy-a-square" variety are not likely going to inspire a police raid. However, an organization should be aware that such a thing could lead to other secondary issues.

For example, what might happen if there is some extra cash floating around for the office pool, and that goes missing? It is easy to imagine the resultant finger pointing and accusations. Such situations can escalate quickly, so what can you do to prepare?

Some companies opt to institute a gambling-in-the-workplace policy and then enforce it consistently, while others prohibit such activity altogether. Some organizations will even implement parameters to keep certain behaviors under control.

We have recently seen some clients host their own company pools with no entry-fee, awarding winners with company swag/resources. In this scenario, the winners win and so does the organization.

Game Week Productivity

People are into the Super-Bowl. Kansas City hasn't played in the game for fifty years, so, it is to be expected that if you have a few diehard KC fans, they might be a little distracted. Fans of participating teams and sports fans, in general, tend to spend more time reading up on the teams, storylines, etc. during the days immediately preceding (and directly after, if their team wins) the big game. It is not uncommon to experience a bit of a letdown in productivity.

Consider hosting a Jersey Day/Week.

Dress Code Concerns

Many companies wave their dress code policies, at least in part, to allow their employees to show support for their favorite team or player. It is important to clearly communicate these expectations in advance.

Post-Game Considerations

Monday absences? Is your office located in the Super Bowl Champion's hometown? (Note: if so, a parade is coming.)

To be sure, this is the time for a spike in absences, no-call/no-shows and late arrivals. Statistics show that last year's game was "unofficially" connected to nearly 14 million sick/unrequested PTO days. And it is no secret that unplanned absences are measurably costlier to employers.

For those who are absent, the absences should be treated as they would any other business day. If you require evidence of medical treatment for sick days, this day should be no different with standard policies enforced as always.

With a little pre-planning, the Super-Bowl can be used to unite your workforce. The **HRWS Advisory Team** is available for last minute consultation or the sharing of best practices regarding Super Bowl Workplace policies.

As a reminder, NCAA basketball's "March Madness" is right around the corner, so keep these tips handy.

The information contained in this article is intended for educational purposes and to provide a general understanding of regulatory events, legislative changes and the law – not to provide specific legal advice.