



Work related social functions

Effective date	1 July 2005
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Guideline owner	Diocesan Chancellor
Applies to	All lay Diocesan employees and Volunteers
Related guidelines & procedures	Code of conduct
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Introduction

Social functions which originate, or are sponsored by the employer may be sufficiently work related to come within a range of legislation including:

- Work Health & Safety legislation
- A range of anti-discrimination legislation, including provision for dealing with sexual and racial harassment
- Criminal code, including assault either of a physical or verbal nature

If this is the case, then like the normal workplace, the Diocesan Business Office has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure employee safety and health and to provide an environment free from harassment and discrimination.

Managers/ Supervisors

Managers need to be aware that their failure to take reasonable steps to prevent injuries or harassment during these social functions can result in significant liability for the Diocesan Business Office.

To limit these risks, Managers are requested to consider the following information and actions:

- Remind employees that work related social functions are considered an extension of the workplace, so the same rules apply, e.g. Code of Conduct, even when the function is held off site.
- Revisit the Diocesan Business Office guidelines dealing with discrimination and harassment - bring them to the attention of employees.
- Issue a friendly reminder to employees about the dangers of excessive drinking and drink driving.



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- If alcohol is available make sure that there is plenty of food and non-alcoholic drinks.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the supply of alcohol is limited.
- Make sure that the venues and activities are appropriate and do not put people at risk.
- Provide supervision to prevent inappropriate behaviour and excessive drinking. Intoxicated employees should be asked tactfully to stop drinking and if necessary, to leave the function with safe transport arranged to ensure they do not drive.
- Do not supply alcohol to employees or guests who are below the legal drinking age.
- Set definite start and finish times.
- Ensure employees have made arrangements to get home safely. For example public transport, taxis etc.

Employee's Responsibilities

Employees have a responsibility to take reasonable precautions for their own safety and health and that of others. They are also expected to behave in such a way that the workplace is free from harassment and other abusive behaviour. Employees should avoid becoming so intoxicated that their behaviour becomes a hazard to themselves, or others.

Risk Management

Where practical social functions are to be held offsite and on licensed premises if alcohol is being served.

A friendly notice should be issued to all employees advising that normal business has ceased and that employees are officially on their own time.

If access / travel arrangements have not been provided advise employees of their responsibilities and encourage employees to make arrangements in advance, e.g. Taxis, buses etc.

Legislation

[Work Health & Safety 2011\(NSW\)](#)