

Reduce Your Exposures During Work Events

While these events are fun, team-building opportunities, they can create a number of risks for the hosting company.

Even though most commercial insurance policies do not contain a Liquor Liability exclusion, a liquor-related claim can have a significant impact on a company's insurance costs for a 5 year period. As such, we recommend that our clients consider transferring the risk associated with these events by purchasing a tailored "event" policy. These policies are relatively inexpensive (starting at \$150 depending on number of people/activities) and provide primary coverage for claims associated with the event.

ALCOHOL

Anytime you provide alcohol to individuals in a non-commercial manner, you are considered a social host. This is important to note, as a social host may be responsible for the acts of their guests should their conduct create harm.

While the best way to reduce alcohol liability risks is to avoid serving it altogether, this isn't always feasible. To promote the safety of your employees and guests at company-sponsored events, consider the following:

- Hold the event off-site at a restaurant or hotel.
- Provide plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages throughout the night.
- Serve drinks to guests rather than offering a self-serve bar. Limit the amount of alcohol you will serve. Require servers to measure spirits and avoid serving "Shooters".
- Set up bar stations instead of having servers circulate the room. Place table tents at each bar that remind employees and guests to drink responsibly.
- Don't price alcohol too low, as it encourages overconsumption. Offer a range of low-alcohol and alcohol-free drinks at no charge.
- Close the bar an hour before the scheduled end of the party. Do not offer a "last call," as this promotes rapid consumption.
- Entice guests to take advantage of safe transportation options by subsidizing taxis or promoting a designated driver program.

MARIJUANA CONSUMPTION

Similar to alcohol use, marijuana and other drug consumption can directly affect the safety of your party guests. In fact, according to the most recent data from the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, approximately 34 per cent of vehicle crash deaths can be linked to drug-impaired driving, which is nearly as many as those related to alcohol.

Marijuana contains hundreds of chemicals, many of which act directly on the body and brain. Individual sensitivity to marijuana can vary, but the general effects include the following:

- Dizziness, drowsiness, light-headedness, fatigue and headaches
- Impaired memory, concentration and ability to make decisions
- Disorientation and confusion
- Suspiciousness, nervousness, anxiety, paranoia and hallucinations
- Impaired motor skills and perception
- Dry mouth, throat irritation and coughing
- Increased heartbeat

These health effects can last long after an employee smoked, increasing the potential for accidents or major health concerns. In addition, federal, provincial and local laws may prohibit marijuana use in certain areas, making it all the more important to educate employees on behaviour expectations.

To keep your party guests safe and avoid any liability concerns, consider making clear rules for marijuana use at your party. Remind employees that even though they are at a social event, they are still attending a work function and workplace policies on the use of marijuana still apply.

Even if you take all the right precautions, incidents can still occur.
Contact Lloyd Sadd today to learn about your coverage options when it comes to hosting a party.

LET US HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR
EVENT RISKS

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