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WORLD CUP 2026

Your Employer Game Plan

Stay compliant, avoid disruption
and keep your team match-fit

Includes a FREE sickness absence policy

DON'T GET CAUGHT OFFSIDE

The World Cup isn't just a big event, it's a potential HR minefield if you're not prepared. Without a plan, you could face:

- A sudden spike in absence and lateness
- Multiple employees requesting the same time off
- Noticeable drops in productivity
- Situations that could quickly escalate into disciplinary or legal issues

The good news? With the right approach, you can stay in control, and even boost team morale.



ABSENCE - PLAY IT BY THE BOOK AND AVOID A VAR REVIEW

What to expect:

- “Sick days” conveniently after late kick-offs
- Last-minute absences or late arrivals

Your winning move:

- Stick to your existing procedures - no exceptions
- Hold return-to-work meetings every time
- Track patterns, but don't jump to conclusions

A consistent approach now can save you from time-consuming disputes later.



Download your FREE
Sickness Absence Policy





ANNUAL LEAVE - AVOID A FIXTURE CLASH

When everyone wants the same day off, things can get tricky fast.

Remember:

- You can refuse leave based on business needs
- Fairness is critical - use a clear system

Best practice:

- Encourage early bookings
- Be transparent with decisions

**Clear rules now prevent a last-minute penalty
shootout with your team.**

FLEXIBILITY - SMART SUBSTITUTIONS WINS MATCHES

A little flexibility can go a long way.

Options to consider:

- Shift swaps
- Adjusted hours
- Later starts after evening games

Why it works:

- Reduces unauthorised absence
- Keeps employees engaged and motivated

Flexible employers are far less likely to face unexpected no-shows.

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WATCHING MATCHES - KEEP IT CONTROLLED

Letting employees watch matches can boost morale, but it needs boundaries.

If you allow it:

- Keep it to breaks or quieter periods
- Ensure performance isn't affected

Managed properly, this can be a team-building win, not a productivity loss.



PRODUCTIVITY - KEEP YOUR TEAM MATCH FIT

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During tournaments, even your best players can lose focus.

Common signs:

- Constant score checking
- Tiredness after late matches
- Reduced output

Your approach:

- Address issues early and informally
- Reinforce expectations clearly

Small dips in performance can quickly turn into bigger problems if ignored.



CONDUCT & BEHAVIOUR - AVOID A RED CARD

Emotions run high during tournaments, and that can spill into work.

Key risks:

- Alcohol misuse
- “Banter” going too far
- Offensive or discriminatory comments

What to do:

- Set expectations clearly
- Act quickly when issues arise

Important: What seems harmless can lead to serious complaints, or even tribunal risk.





SOCIAL MEDIA - THINK BEFORE THEY POST

One post can damage your reputation.

Employees should:

- Avoid posting content that reflects badly on the business
- Keep interactions respectful

A quick reminder now can prevent costly reputational issues later.

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Not every employee is a football fan, and that matters.

Be mindful of:

- Excluding team members
- Cultural or national sensitivities

INCLUSION - KEEP EVERYONE IN THE GAME

**A truly inclusive approach
avoids unintentional complaints
or disengagement.**



COMMUNICATION - SET YOUR GAME PLAN EARLY

The most successful employers don't react, they prepare.

Before kick-off, clearly communicate:

- Attendance expectations
- Leave request handling
- Any flexibility available

Clear communication now prevents confusion, frustration, and disputes later.

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QUICK DO'S & DON'TS

DO

- Plan ahead like a winning manager
- Apply rules consistently
- Offer flexibility where possible
- Encourage respect across your team

DON'T

- Make assumptions about absence
- Treat employees differently
- Ignore poor behaviour
- Leave anyone feeling sidelined

EMPLOYER CHECKLIST

Use this quick checklist to make sure your business is prepared.

PREPARATION

- ☐ Key match dates identified
- ☐ Expectations communication to employees
- ☐ Managers briefed and aligned

FLEXIBILITY

- ☐ Temporary flexible options considered
- ☐ Clear boundaries set to protect operations

INCLUSION

- ☐ Activities are optional
- ☐ No employee feels excluded or pressured

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Clear reporting procedures in place
- ☐ Return-to-work meetings planned
- ☐ Approach to managing suspicious absence agreed

CONDUCT & BEHAVIOUR

- ☐ Behaviour expectations communicated
- ☐ Zero tolerance for discrimination reinforced

ANNUAL LEAVE

- ☐ Process for handling multiple requests agreed
- ☐ Fair system in place (first come, first served)
- ☐ Employees encouraged to book early

SOCIAL MEDIA

- ☐ Employees reminded of social media guidelines
- ☐ Approach to inappropriate posts clarified

FINAL WHISTLE WIN WITHOUT THE HEADACHES

The World Cup can either:

- ✗ Disrupt your business
- ✓ Or bring your team together

With the right game plan, you can avoid risk, stay compliant, and boost morale, all at the same time.

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Claim Your FREE
Consultation Here



Tired of HR headaches draining your time and resources? Whether you're a seasoned HR professional seeking robust compliance or an employer needing help with all things people management, our comprehensive HR compliance packages are designed to simplify your obligations and free up your valuable time and resources to focus on running your business.

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