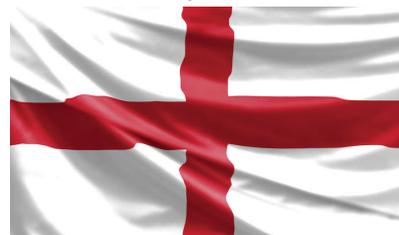


World Cup - Brazil 2014

Whenever there is a major sporting event which captures the interest of the nation, then invariably there is the potential for problems at work.

As most of you will be aware, the World Cup in Brazil will take place between Thursday 12 June 2014 and Sunday 13 July 2014.

The kick off times for the England games are scheduled between 5pm and 11pm (UK time). England is the only UK country to qualify, but other games may be of more interest to others.



The main employment related issues which will affect both Employee and Employers will be:

-  Requests for annual leave
-  Sickness absence
-  Use of the website during working hours

Annual leave

An Employer's annual leave policy should set out how staff can book time off. Employers may wish to look at being more flexible when allowing employees leave during this period, with the understanding that this will only be a temporary arrangement. Employees should be reminded that such special arrangements may not always be possible.

Employers should consider all Employee's leave requests fairly and consistently, and consistent with other major sporting events in granting leave, as not everyone likes football!

Sickness absence

An Employer's sickness absence policy will still apply during this time and this policy should be operated fairly and consistently for all staff. Levels of attendance should be monitored during this period in accordance with the company's attendance policy.

Staff should be reminded that any unauthorised absence or patterns of absence could result in formal disciplinary action being taken. This could include the monitoring of high levels of sickness or late attendance due to post match hangovers.



Flexibility

Employers have the options of having more flexible working days, when employees may come in a little later or finish sooner, and then agree when this time can be made up at a later time.

Employers may allow staff to swap shifts with their line Manager's permission or allow staff to take a break during match times.

Allowing staff to listen to the radio or watch the TV may be another possible option. If an Employer allows additional benefits during the World Cup, for example, any change in hours or flexibility in working hours, this should be approved before the event.

Use of social networking sites and websites

There may be an increase in the use of social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, or websites covering the World Cup.



Employers should have a clear workplace policy on the use of the internet during working hours and all employees should be made aware of the policy. If employers choose to monitor internet usage, then the data protection regulations require Employers to make it clear to staff in advance that it is happening to all employees. A web use policy should make clear what is and what is not acceptable usage.

Drinking or being under the influence at work



Some people may participate in drinking while watching the football or even may go to the pub to watch a match live.

It is important to remember and Employers should remind staff that anyone caught drinking at work or found to be under the influence of alcohol in the workplace could be subject to disciplinary procedures. There may be a clear no alcohol policy at work and Employees will need to be reminded of this.

Work together

Being flexible on both sides throughout the World Cup period is the best for Employers and Employees and is the key to a productive business and engaged workforce.

Employers should try to adopt a flexible approach and try to agree in advance with staff the arrangements in place for issues such as time off, sickness absence or even watching TV during the World Cup.

