

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FINANCIAL SERVICES
Bureau of Human Resources
November 8, 2017

HUMAN RESOURCES MEMORANDUM 8-17

TO: All Agency Heads, Agency Human Resource/EEO Representatives

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Holiday Decorations and Celebrations

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Throughout the year, but particularly during the fall and winter months, a number of cultural and religious days of significance are observed. While it is a time for celebration, it is also a time to be mindful and respectful of the rich and diverse cultures that are very present in our workplaces and the communities we serve.

Holiday Decorations

Display of holiday décor is dependent upon whether the space is public or whether it is a shared or private work space.

Public Work Space: Any space to which the public has physical or visual access that is not private work space. Examples include (but are not limited to) lobbies, reception areas, front counters, publicly accessible conference rooms, community centers, hallways, or exteriors of buildings.

In a public work space, only secular holiday decorations may be displayed. Secular holiday decorations include things like trees, tinsel, garland, snowmen, candy canes, reindeer, etc. Religious symbols or holiday decorations with religious content may not be displayed in public work spaces. Examples include nativity scenes and menorahs.

Private Work Space: A work space that is assigned exclusively to one employee, such as a cubicle, desk, or office that may be seen occasionally by coworkers but not ordinarily by clients, customers, or the general public. In a private work space, an employee may display holiday decorations with religious content and/or secular decorations.

Shared Work Space: A work space that is shared by more than one employee, such as a large cubicle or office, that may be seen occasionally by coworkers but not ordinarily by clients, customers, or the general public. In a shared work space, employees sharing the work space may display holiday decorations with religious content and/or secular decorations only if mutually agreed to by each of the

employees sharing the work space. Employees' decisions should be respected and they should not feel obligated to agree to the display of holiday decorations in a shared work space.

Holiday Celebrations or Activities

Holiday activities, such as luncheons, potlucks, or gift exchanges should be voluntary. Employees may not feel comfortable participating in the activities, or their religious beliefs may prevent their participation. An employee's decision not to participate should be respected.

s/ Joyce A. Oreskovich

Joyce A. Oreskovich, Director
Bureau of Human Resources