

## FIVE TOP TIPS ON

## MANAGING VALENTINE'S DAY

## IN THE WORKPLACE

Valentine's Day. It's the only holiday based solely on emotion, and—as you can imagine—that can lead to some serious workplace tension. It doesn't matter if you love love, are lovesick, or sick of love - it's here to stay.

Employers are less than smitten with the holiday—for good reason. But it doesn't have to be all bad news. If managed properly, Valentine's Day can be a day like any other, if not a better one. Here are some key areas you should be thinking about:



### 1 Watch out for harassment

Workplace sexual harassment remains a key issue and Valentine's Day shouldn't be used as an excuse for this behaviour.

Remember; giving someone a bunch of flowers might seem harmless... but it could also be used as a way to harass someone.

### 2 Don't tolerate bullying

Make sure that staff aren't using the day as an excuse to bully colleagues with offensive presents or cards.

Staff should be reminded what amounts to acceptable forms of conduct. Discipline anyone who breaches this in accordance with your anti-harassment and bullying policy.



### 3 Process holiday requests fairly

With Valentine's Day falling on a Friday, staff may want to take a long weekend off work for a romantic break.

Holiday requests should be processed fairly; it's advisable to maintain a first come, first served system.

### 4 Watch out for bribery

Receiving chocolates or flowers from certain clients could, potentially, be classed as bribery.

As a precaution, employers should ask staff to report any gifts they receive.



### 5 Make it fun

Valentine's Day can be a good excuse to organise activities between staff that can help improve working relationships and morale.

You could encourage staff to distribute 'shout out' notes to colleagues. These are little cards that thank individuals for their help with certain work or projects.



**Office romance? Harassment claims? Too many cards and chocolates? We can help with the first two, and any other HR issue you might face.**

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