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Client Led Professional Advisory

HIRING CHRISTMAS STAFF?

The HR Checks Employers Should Make Before The Seasonal Rush

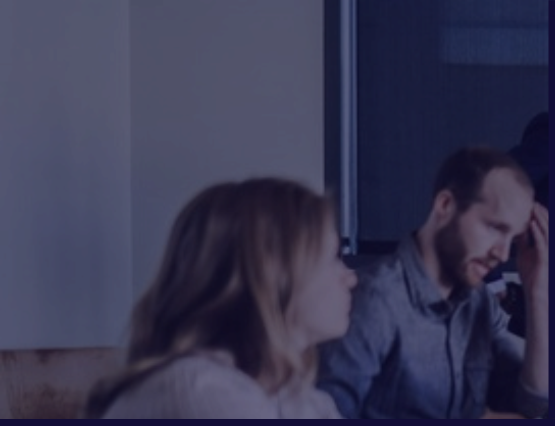
Christmas is one of the busiest recruitment periods of the year. If you're bringing additional employees into your business for the festive season, use this checklist to make sure the HR essentials are covered before they start.



9 PRACTICAL HR CHECKS COVERING:

Contracts · Pay · Rosters · Holidays · Younger Workers · Right to Work · Safety · Driving · Onboarding

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Are you ready?

Use this checklist to assess your current position:

1. Contract & Employment Terms

□ Have we decided whether the employee will be employed on a temporary or fixed-term basis?
□ Is the expected duration/end date of the employment clear?
□ Have we issued the required written terms of employment?
□ Are the role, place of work, working hours and pay arrangements clearly documented?
□ If a probationary period applies, is it appropriate to the nature and duration of the contract?

2. Pay & Payroll

□ Does the employee's rate of pay meet the applicable National Minimum Wage or any relevant sectoral minimum rate?
□ If the employment continues beyond 31 December 2026, have we accounted for the **National Minimum Wage increasing to €14.94 per hour for employees aged 20+ from 1 January 2027?**
□ If employing someone under 20, have we checked the applicable age-related minimum wage?
□ Is the employee correctly set up through payroll before payment falls due?
□ Have we considered whether the employee falls within the eligibility criteria for MyFutureFund auto-enrolment and ensured the appropriate payroll arrangements are in place?
□ If Sunday working will be required, have we checked whether appropriate Sunday compensation is already incorporated into pay or otherwise needs to be provided?





3. Working Hours & Rosters

□ Have we clearly defined the hours the employee is expected to work?
□ Are working-day breaks built into the roster where required?
□ Does the roster allow for the required daily rest period?
□ Does it allow for the required weekly rest period?
□ Are we monitoring overall working time to ensure applicable maximum working-time requirements are observed?
□ If we're using a particularly flexible or "call-in" arrangement, have we checked whether zero-hours/minimum-payment rules could apply?

4. Annual Leave & Public Holidays

□ Are we recording annual leave as it accrues during the seasonal employment?
□ Have we considered how any outstanding statutory annual leave will be dealt with when the employment ends?
□ Have we checked whether the employee qualifies for a public holiday benefit for Christmas Day and St Stephen's Day?
□ For part-time employees, have we checked whether they have worked the necessary hours to qualify?
□ Do payroll/management understand how the public holiday benefit will be provided?





5. Hiring Younger Workers

□ Is the employee under 18?
If yes:
□ Have we verified their age?
□ Have we checked the specific rules applying to their maximum daily and weekly hours?
□ Have we checked the additional break and rest requirements?
□ Have we checked the restrictions on early morning and late-night working before finalising the roster?
□ Where required, has parental/guardian permission been obtained?
□ Are the appropriate records being maintained?

6. Right To Work

□ Have we confirmed that the individual is legally entitled to work in Ireland?
□ Where the individual's right to work is time-limited, have we confirmed that it covers the proposed period of employment?

7. Induction & Health and Safety

□ Has the seasonal employee received an appropriate induction?
□ Have relevant workplace risks and safety procedures been explained?
□ Has any role-specific training been completed before the employee begins carrying out the work?
□ Where relevant, have we addressed matters such as manual handling, equipment use, stock handling or other role-specific risks?
□ Does the employee know who to speak to if they have a workplace or safety concern?





8. Driving For Work

If the employee will drive as part of their role:

□ Have we considered the specific health and safety risks associated with driving for work?

□ Have any applicable vehicle/licence/insurance requirements been checked?

□ Have we considered whether additional drivers' hours, working-time or tachograph requirements apply to the particular work?

9. Before They Start: One Final Check

□ Contract/terms issued

□ Pay confirmed

□ Payroll set up

□ Working hours and roster confirmed

□ Public holiday arrangements considered

□ Annual leave arrangements understood

□ Right to work confirmed

□ Age-related requirements checked where relevant

□ Induction completed

□ Necessary training provided

All boxes ticked? You're ready for your Christmas starter.

Need a little help?
Seasonal doesn't mean informal when it comes to employment obligations.

If you're taking on Christmas staff and would like support with contracts, employment terms, working-time arrangements, employee entitlements or your wider HR processes, Orbitus HR can help.

Get in touch with the Orbitus HR team to make sure you're ready for the Christmas rush.

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Client Led Professional Advisory

Orbitus HR supports employers with:

- Policy and contract reviews
- Template documentation
- Manager training
- Case-specific advice

Contact us today to review your approach to recruitment.



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