

# INCLUSIVE WINTER HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

## Tips and Inclusive Strategies

### 1

#### EDUCATE, THEN CELEBRATE

AN INCLUSIVE HOLIDAY SEASON SHOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO DECORATIVE FLAGS AND POTLUCK DISHES FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS.

##### CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- ▷ Host an educative panel discussion
- ▷ Poster board presentations
- ▷ Shared slide show that allows employees to learn about underrepresented faith-based systems or religions.
- ▷ Also, consider that some of your employees may be non-religious, and provide opportunities to celebrate days that focus on advocating for all human rights.

GIVEN THE WIDE RANGE OF WAYS PEOPLE CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAY SEASON, IT IS IMPORTANT TO AVOID GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT ONE OR SOME HOLIDAYS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER OTHERS.

### 2

#### KNOW YOUR OFFICE

- ▷ Engage in data collection (survey, email, direct communication) where employees can share the faith-based or religious holidays they celebrate.
- ▷ Be sure to communicate to employees that sharing information about their faith or winter holidays is voluntary.
- ▷ Ask participants to share the dates and methods of celebration of those holidays; the goal of collecting this information is to spread cultural awareness and foster inclusion during the Winter holiday season.

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Tips and Inclusive Strategies *(continued)*

## 3 PERSONAL HOLIDAYS

- ▷ Regular full-time employees in Workgroups A and F (Faculty) receive nine designated holidays and three personal holidays in 2022.
- ▷ UAB will be closed on December 23rd and December 26th.
- ▷ Personal Holidays or Vacation time may be used for faith-based holidays and cultural celebrations that take place on days when the University is open.

AS A REMINDER, ALL LEAVE REQUESTS ARE APPROVED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR.

## 4 NOT A ZERO-SUM SCENARIO

- ▷ Remember that being inclusive of underrepresented Winter holidays does not mean that you cannot celebrate Christmas.
- ▷ Inclusive excellence calls for collaboration and cohesion.
- ▷ Expanding the winter holiday celebrations that your office celebrates asks participants to be mindful and compassionate towards all faith-based holidays.

## 5 IGNORING FAITH & RELIGION CAN BE HARMFUL

- ▷ Some might think that completely ignoring all religious and faith-based holidays is the best way to be inclusive. Faith and religion are important components of many employees' lives and an important facet of diversity. It can impact how they approach their role, how they interact with their colleagues and students, and may underpin many other aspects of their identity.

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Tips and Inclusive Strategies *(continued)*

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## HOST A TWO-PART EVENT

IF YOU DECIDE TO HOST A HOLIDAY GATHERING FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES, CONSIDER HOSTING A TWO-PART EVENT.

- ▷ **The first phase of the celebration should be free of alcohol consumption and feature secular music.** *This could benefit employees from different religious groups, people who have experienced substance abuse disorders, or people who prefer to abstain from alcohol consumption.*
- ▷ **The event could feature words of appreciation, positive remarks, and moments of reflection.**
- ▷ **Always respect an employee's decision not to participate in a holiday event or other celebration.**

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## INCLUSIVE FOOD

- ▷ **Be sure to provide food that is inclusive of the cultures and faiths that are represented in your department.**
- ▷ **Provide options that meet the dietary needs of your employees, including meals that are kosher, halal, vegan, or gluten free.**
- ▷ **Additionally, be mindful of the placement of food dishes. For example, you would not want to place shrimp or pork near vegan dishes.**

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## INTERFAITH CALENDAR

- ▷ **Locate and distribute an interfaith calendar to promote awareness and intentional inclusion of underrepresented winter holidays.**
- ▷ **Be sure not to schedule any celebrations on any of the holidays.**

### EXAMPLES & RELATED RESOURCES:

<https://ifcmw.org/2021-2022-interfaith-calendar-descriptions/#gallery>

<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/1118/pages/how-to-make-holiday-celebrations-more-inclusive.aspx>