

UMHS Diversity

Guidelines for Holiday Decorations

Purpose: To provide guiding principles to departments in planning and displaying holiday decorations to ensure inclusiveness and respect for a wide range of cultural and religious customs.

Background:

The UMHS Diversity Internal Representatives, in conjunction with the Diversity Advisory Team, offer the following recommendations to guide departments as they plan for the use of holiday decorations in their units. We understand that having a festive environment, especially during the December/January holidays is important to many staff, patients and families. We also believe this can and should be accomplished in ways that are inclusive and respectful of a broad range of cultural and religious beliefs and traditions. The following recommendations are guidelines that reflect the interests identified by these representative groups. These guidelines are not meant as rules, but as a starting point and guide for planning within your department. **Holiday decorations must conform to all fire and safety regulations.** (S.P.G. Celebration & Holiday Decoration Policy #05-03-010; and Dress & Appearance policy 04-06-008 section IV.C. regarding the use of fragrances.)

Guiding Principles/interests :

1. Assure a process for staff input into department decorating plans
2. Invite all staff to participate and provide information and items that reflect personal traditions and beliefs they wish to share.
3. An individual's decision not to participate is to be respected.
4. Plans include a means to share and learn about different cultural and religious celebrations and holy days.
5. Decorations are respectful and sensitive toward the diversity of our patients and families.
6. Planning groups strive for consensus, and seek decisions that everyone can live with.
7. Efforts will:
 - enhance work life and relationships
 - heighten diversity awareness
 - support fun at work

Inclusive Strategies

- Identify a period of time before and after holidays for decorations to be put up and taken down
- Invite people to share and include decorations related to their traditions and holidays.
- Explain holidays & symbols so others learn what the holiday means.
- Designate a common area to share various holidays/cultures.
- Provide appropriate size bulletin boards or other display areas
- Allow for individual displays in personal work space where appropriate.
- Use multicultural calendar to assist in planning
- Identify appropriate holiday salutations that can be used when speaking to our customers.

Alternative Neutral Theme—your department may choose to focus celebrations on neutral, seasonal themes such as winter, fall, spring, etc. For example, “Winter Around the World” theme.

