

# Can we prohibit employees from receiving private packages at work?

**Q. Over the holidays, many of our employees received packages at the office. We are worried that this might be a disruption. Should we ban employees from receiving personal packages at work?**

**A.** This problem is increasing and becoming a year-round issue as more people shop over the Internet. California law would not prohibit employers from instituting a complete ban on employees' ability to receive personal packages at their place of employment.

However, most employers feel morale issues dictate against a complete ban—as long as employees generally don't abuse the privilege by having too many packages delivered to work. Employers can simply tell employees that occasional personal packages may be delivered to the office, but as a general rule, the employer's mailroom services are for business purposes.

In fashioning such a policy, some additional issues for employers to consider are:

- Safety and storage of delivered items
- Impact on productivity (people ordering and opening packages during work time)
- Receipt of inappropriate materials in the workplace
- Confusion of business and personal packages
- Privacy (for example, the inadvertent opening of personal items)
- Additional work for the company mailroom
- Postage costs associated with employees sending personal items from the workplace
- Delivery of spoiled food or live animals.