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Checklist to Assist a Lodging Property in Achieving Reasonable Care Part 2

The following list is a compilation of suggestions based on the evolution of litigation that will assist innkeepers in overcoming these challenges focusing on labor and transactions:

1. Maintain current employee certifications for alcoholic beverages and food safety.
2. Have protective lenses, gloves and masks available for all housekeepers.
3. Train housekeepers to work in teams.
4. At a minimum, perform comprehensive background checks on any employee with access to master keys or rooms.
5. Develop a detailed key control protocol with strict restricted access and accountability.
6. Utilize a CCTV system for visual, not audio, property and grounds coverage as a deterrent, and display appropriate signage - "Video Recording in Progress".
7. Train all personnel in emergency response procedures and track the training process.
8. Become fire/vapor free: no tobacco products, e-cigarettes, candles, incense, etc.
9. Promote strict adherence to sanitation best practices for pools, hot tubs, work out areas, and food and beverage processes.
10. Develop protocols for cleaning spills and warning guests of wet or other slippery surfaces or areas.
11. Be sure your warning and other signage around the property (including the pool area) is accurate, relevant, conspicuous and in the predominant languages of your guests.
12. Clearly disclose in promotions and at time of reservation any additional charges including internet, parking, resort/activity fees, pet deposits, etc.
13. Clearly disclose your cancellation policy.
14. Do not post false reviews of your property online or any other place.
15. Avoid misrepresentations in your advertising and promotions: "smoke free", "disabled friendly", "green", etc. all have very specific meanings which guests use to develop expectations.
16. Allow front desk associates to sit during portions of their shifts.
17. Do not misclassify workers to avoid overtime.
18. Strictly comply with tip credit and tip sharing laws.
19. Treat employees and request employees to treat each other with dignity and respect and add this to the employee handbook.
20. Add the expectation of safe and secure execution of job performance to employee handbooks.
21. Create a brief open handbook test over the handbook contents and a required 100 percent passing rate before beginning work.

22. Have all employees sign a continuous drug testing consent form. In addition to performing random drug tests, administer drug tests whenever a workplace accident occurs.
23. Do not eavesdrop on employees (refer to suggestion 39).
24. Limit housekeepers to 15 rooms per day. According to research by PETRA, a hospitality insurance brokerage firm, injuries to housekeepers rise dramatically when they clean more than 15 rooms a day, and the highest rate of injuries occurs in first years on the job. Hire efficiently and train extensively.
25. Use a mutual (aka win-win) meeting contract template (see the Convention Industry Council Accepted Practices Exchange aka APEX for guidance).

It would be helpful to review this list and create a GAP analysis (what are you currently doing, what do you feel you should be doing) then create a plan to fill the gap. Remember we are not the insurers of guest safety; our obligation is to operate hotels with reasonable care. These suggestions will help you achieve that threshold.

Happy Innkeeping!

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