

Is Your Alabama Business Having a Holiday Party?

By: Rutledge & Yaghmai

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Despite the struggling economy, many [Alabama businesses](#) will still hold annual holiday celebrations, according to a new survey from Challenger Gray & Christmas Inc. In fact, nearly 70 percent of companies across the country still plan to hold holiday parties in the coming weeks, the survey found.

That's about the same as last year, but still considerably down from 2007, when approximately 90 percent of companies planned holiday parties.

"The economy is not improving as fast as many had hoped. While some companies are seeing improvements, most are still stuck in first gear and continue to hold off on hiring, equipment upgrades and other big expenditures. Yet, despite the less-than-celebratory business conditions, the majority of companies refuse to abandon the year-end holiday party," said John A. Challenger, chief executive officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas.

Here are a few other interesting points from the survey:

- Only about 30 percent of companies plan to hold their parties on company grounds, which is down from 53 percent a year ago.
- 60 percent of companies are limiting attendance to employees only.
- 55 percent are holding the party during the workday or near the end of the day.
- About half of the respondents said they would serve alcohol at their parties.

While we encourage Alabama businesses to celebrate the season, there are some liability risks that should be addressed, particularly if you plan to serve alcohol.

Below are a few considerations:

- **Check the laws in your jurisdiction:** Check local laws to see under which conditions a business could be held liable, and what liabilities may apply.
- **Look into obtaining insurance coverage:** Research the availability of dram shop insurance or liquor law liability insurance to cover the event.
- **Check the insurance coverage of anyone hired for the party:** If you hire caterers, servers, bartenders or anyone else to provide and serve drinks, make sure they carry liability insurance that would cover any potential liability exposure for your business from the event.
- **Hold the party in a licensed establishment:** Have the celebration at a restaurant, bar, or other establishment whose liquor law liability insurance would cover the event.
- **Check with an attorney:** Check with an Alabama business attorney regarding any other liability risks.

Rutledge & Yaghamai is a full service litigation firm that offers more than fifty-seven years of diverse legal experience. The attorneys of Rutledge & Yaghamai leverage that experience to assist large and small businesses throughout Alabama in achieving their business goals while minimizing their risks.

In addition to offering transactional business services such as Alabama business formation and planning, Rutledge & Yaghamai prides itself on the diversity of Alabama business litigation cases it has handled successfully.

To learn more about the wide range of transactional and business litigation services we offer Alabama businesses, please [contact](#) the attorneys of Rutledge & Yaghamai today.

About Rutledge & Yaghamai

<http://rylaw.net/>

Rutledge & Yaghamai (R & Y) is a full service litigation firm that offers more than fiftyseven

years of diverse legal experience. Formed in 2006, Rutledge & Yaghamai concentrates on giving each case individual attention as opposed to carrying a mass a number of cases. That way they are able to develop a lifelong relationship with clients.

William Rutledge

William Eugene Rutledge graduated from the University of Alabama in 1960. He graduated from the University of Alabama Law School 1966. Mr. Rutledge served as a Captain in the Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Army and as Chief of Military Justice at Fort Bliss, Texas. He was trial counsel for the United States where he prosecuted several nationally publicized court marshalls. He was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal for his trial work in the Army.

He began the practice of law in Birmingham, AL on August 1, 1966. His early trial practice was a mixture of business litigation and railroad related litigation. He has a strong appellate practice in which he has excelled since the early 1970s and continues that practice till the present time. He has handled over 100 cases in the state appellate system and 80 cases in the federal appellate system.

He specialized through the years of his practice in business formations. He has assisted new entrepreneurs in the formation and strategy of their businesses. Also, he represents companies in business litigation. Cases have ranged from business disputes among members to representing smaller companies against the "larger corporations." Practice memberships include the Bar of the Alabama Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the Northern, Middle and Southern Districts, the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, and the Supreme Court of the United States. He is married to Sherry Crittenden Rutledge and has four children and six grandchildren.

Greg Yaghmai

Greg graduated with honors from The Citadel where he received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration. In 1997, he received his law degree from Cumberland School of Law.

For the first four and half of years of his legal career, Greg served as a Deputy District Attorney for the Jefferson County, Alabama District Attorney's Office. By age 26 he tried his first death penalty case. He went on to try either solo or as lead counsel seven capital murder and six murder cases. He also had the benefit of being the first lawyer in Alabama to be certified by the Alabama State Troopers as a Traffic Homicide investigator. He obtained this after attending a two-week seminar, which required him to live in a closed military base with forty other police officers. He also had the unique experience of being provided alcohol in a controlled setting so he could be utilized by the Jefferson County Sheriff's training academy in officers learning how to administer field sobriety tests. He is a member of the National College for DUI Defense (NCDD) which is a prestigious organization defending those charged with DUI.

He subsequently left the DA's office to become a partner in a forty lawyer civil litigation firm. This firm concentrated mostly on civil defense work, but Greg continued to expand his plaintiff and criminal defense practice.

In 2006, he co-founded Rutledge & Yaghmai. One of Greg's goals was to reduce the number of cases handled to allow for more individual attention to each case. Rutledge & Yaghmai maintains a general litigation practice. Greg focuses on personal injury, business litigation, and criminal defense cases.

Greg has truly handled cases from all sides: criminal prosecution/defense and civil plaintiff/defense. Overall, Greg has tried more than seventy-five jury trials to conclusion. He has significant experience in using visual presentations and present day media applications in presenting cases to jury. His ultimate jury consultant is his wife, Brandi, who he met when she served on the jury of a rape/kidnapping case he tried.

He has recently been asked to teach Trial Techniques for the International Web based site Solo Practice University. There he will share his expertise in trying jury cases.

Greg is licensed in all state and federal courts in Alabama and the 11th Circuit