

# CAN BOSSES BAN SUGAR IN THE WORKPLACE?

SOURCE  
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- adjust *v.* to make suitable for a particular situation
- challenge *n.* an interesting or difficult task or situation
- conclusion *n.* an ending or outcome
- measure *n.* an action planned for a specific purpose
- especially *adv.* more than usually
- hostile *adj.* showing dislike; unfriendly
- negotiate *v.* to try to bring different ideas together
- require *v.* to make necessary

Since 2005, more than 20 different companies have tried to ban foods containing sugar from their workplace. Leaders of these companies say that they want to help their workers be healthier by making them **change** their eating habits. That may be so, say their employees. But they say that is not the real reason the companies want their employees to change. What they really want is to reduce their own healthcare costs.

Workers say that bosses at companies that have rules about what they can eat are **mean** to employees. Instead, said one worker, they should be kind. Another said it is none of a boss's business what an employee eats.

One company, for example, took an extreme **step** with an employee who was eating a donut at her desk. They fired her! The employee was one of the company's top salespeople. But she lost her job over a donut.

However, some businesses, **particularly** fitness centers, work hard to have an image connected to good health. More than other businesses, fitness centers want people in the community to see that their workers have good, healthy habits.

The **problem** businesses need to solve is how to find a way for employees to keep their rights while still meeting the needs of their employers.

A large fitness center was able to **reach an agreement** with its employees. The company offered extra money to employees who had healthy, sugar-free eating habits in the workplace. Almost all of the employees took their company up on the deal! But is this a real answer?

Most people agree with the basic belief that sugar is not good for people. Eating less sugar makes people healthier. Healthy people are happier.

Everyone wants to be healthy and happy. However, most employers accept that



people's basic personal freedoms must be respected, even when they are at work.

Right now there are several legal cases about these rules being reviewed by judges. It is possible that judges will tell employers that they can't **demand** their employees to stay away from sugary foods. They can't just order the people who work for them not to eat sweets!

We don't know yet what the **result** of the court cases will be. Whatever happens in the end, we do know that civil liberties groups -- organizations that protect people's freedom -- strongly oppose rules about what people can eat at work.