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Working on public holidays

Find out how you'll be paid if you do or do not work on a public holiday and what your employment rights are as an employee.

Public holidays in New Zealand

Employment New Zealand sets out which public holidays you can be paid for, depending on your work situation. Anniversary dates are also public holidays.

[Public holidays — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#)^[Link: 1]

Working or not on a public holiday

How you're paid for a public holiday depends on whether you normally work the day that the public holiday falls on. Employment New Zealand lists:

- [public holidays and anniversary dates \(external link\)](#)^[Link: 2]
- [how to work out public holiday entitlements \(external link\)](#)^[Link: 3]

When it's not clear if you would normally work the day that a public holiday falls on

Talk to your employer and agree if the public holiday is on a day that you usually work — this is called an 'otherwise working day'. Employment New Zealand has information to help you find this out.

[Otherwise working day — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#)^[Link: 4]

Having to work on a public holiday

Employment New Zealand sets out the situations when you can be made to work a public holiday. In all other situations, you only work a public holiday when you agree to.

[Public holidays — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#)^[Link: 5]

If you are a contractor or working for yourself

You will not get paid days off or time and a half for public holidays.

[Employee or contractor? — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#)^[Link: 6]

If you work shifts or you are on call

There are different employment situations that might affect how you are paid or not paid for public holidays.

[Shift work on a public holiday — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 7]

If you are on leave or your employer closes during the holidays

Employment New Zealand explains what happens when a public holiday falls on days you are taking leave, such as:

- annual, sick, bereavement or parental leave
- your employer closes for a period of time during holidays.

[Public holidays when you're on leave — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 8]

Some days that can be confusing

There are some days that seem like public holidays, but they are treated differently:

- [Working over Easter](#)
- [Restricted shop trading days — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 9]

Transferring a public holiday — anniversary dates

You or your employer may request to transfer the day of a public holiday. This can come up, for example, with anniversary dates if you are temporarily based in another location for work. Ask if this is an option in your workplace.

[Transferring a public holiday — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 10]

Questions or problems with your holiday pay

You can contact your union representative or Employment New Zealand if you're having trouble understanding your employment rights. Employment New Zealand has a process called Early Resolution — you can use it to quickly sort out workplace issues before they become more serious.

- [Employee rights and responsibilities — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 11]
- [Your options when you have a problem at work](#)
- [Early Resolution — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 12]
- [Contact us — Employment New Zealand \(external link\)](#) ^[Link: 13]

Who to contact for more help

If you need more help or have questions about the information or services on this page, contact the following agency.

- Employment New Zealand

[Contact and agency details](#)

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