

This factsheet will help you to:

- Identify the dates of the 11 public holidays
- Determine an employees' entitlement when Christmas and New Year fall on the weekend
- Understand the legal requirements around transferring public holidays

Public holidays and observance dates

Public holidays are days of national, religious, or cultural significance to New Zealand. There are 11 public holidays per year. Most holidays are observed on the day they fall, however, special rules apply to the Christmas and New Year holidays.

The 11 public holidays

- Waitangi Day (6 February)
- Good Friday (date varies)
- Easter Monday (date varies)
- ANZAC Day (25 April)
- Queen's Birthday (first Monday in June)
- Labour Day (fourth Monday in October)
- Provincial Anniversary date (date varies by province)
- Christmas Day (25 December)
- Boxing Day (26 December)
- New Year's Day (1 January)
- New Year's Holiday (2 January)

For a list of public holiday dates, please visit [Department of labour - public holidays](#)

Christmas and new year holidays:

Historically the Holidays Act was influenced by employees who worked Monday to Friday and this lingers in the Christmas and New Year holiday provisions.

If Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day or 2 January fall on a Saturday or Sunday, and the employee doesn't normally work these days, the holiday is transferred to the following Monday or Tuesday respectively.

If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, and the employee normally works these days, the holiday is observed on the day it falls.

An employee cannot receive more than four public holidays over the Christmas and New Year period, regardless of their work pattern.

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Transferring public holidays:

As of 1 April 2011, employers and employees can agree to transfer the observance of public holidays to another working day. This agreement should be recorded in writing.

Both the employee or employer can request that the public holiday be transferred; the other party is required to consider this request in good faith. The purpose of the transfer cannot be to avoid paying the employee time and a half for working on a public holiday or providing them with an alternative holiday (although this may be the end result).

The 'transferred public holiday' should also be an otherwise working day for the employee. An employee is entitled to a paid day off on this day (payment is their relevant daily pay). If the employee ends up working on the transferred public holiday, they should receive time and a half for the hours worked plus an alternative holiday to be taken at a later date.