

Bulletin to members: Christmas closedown

The Christmas closedown and you

The NSW Government has announced its planned Christmas closedown arrangements:

- 2016: Monday, 26 December 2016-
Friday 6 January 2017

You can read the announcement [HERE](http://arp.nsw.gov.au/m2016-01-premiers-memorandum-christmas-closedown-2016-2018).
(<http://arp.nsw.gov.au/m2016-01-premiers-memorandum-christmas-closedown-2016-2018>)

Can I work during the closedown period?

While the NSW Government encourages all non-‘frontline’ areas to shut down over the Christmas-New Year period, you are not required to put up a justification or a ‘business case’ to explain why you do not want to take leave.

Some agencies will be required to maintain full or reduced services. This means at least some staff will have to work through this period.

Unless you can be directed to take leave (see below), it’s your choice of whether

you work or not. If your office is going to be shut, a reasonable alternative work arrangement must be made available for you. If practicable, this could include working from home for some or all of that time. You may have to work at a different location, but you cannot be expected to travel unreasonable distances and you may be entitled to be reimbursed for the additional cost of your travel.

Can I be directed to take recreation leave due to the closedown?

You can be told to take recreation leave only if you have an ‘excess’ balance as follows:

- if you have ‘accrued eight weeks’ (or 40 days’) recreation leave, you can be told to take two weeks’ leave sometime within the following six weeks. When you take this leave is up to you, but subject to the convenience of your agency.

- If you have accrued 6-8 weeks' (30-40 days') recreation leave, you can be told to take two weeks' leave sometime within the following three months. When you take this leave is up to you, but subject to the convenience of your agency.

Other than in these scenarios, you cannot be directed to take recreation leave. The PSA encourages members to regularly take recreation leave for their own health and welfare.

Can I be directed to take extended (long service) leave?

No, you cannot be directed to take extended leave (or long service leave) under any circumstances.

Concessional leave

If you are working on the morning of Christmas Eve (Saturday 24 December), you are entitled to concessional leave for the afternoon after you have worked a standard half day. If you have to work the afternoon as well, you can take your concessional leave on the afternoon of New Year's Eve (Saturday 31 December).

The PSA has written to the Government to ask that concessional leave is also available to staff working on Friday 23 December. You can read our letter [HERE](#).

[\(http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/161006-Ltr-to-NSWIR-Arrangements-for-Christmas-Closedown-2016.pdf\)](http://psa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/161006-Ltr-to-NSWIR-Arrangements-for-Christmas-Closedown-2016.pdf)

2016 Public Holidays for Christmas and New Year

The following dates are public holidays in the 2016 Christmas closedown period:

- 2016 - Sunday 25 December, Monday 26 December, Tuesday 27 December
- 2017 - Sunday 1 January, Monday 2 January

Many agencies also have a public service holiday around this time, usually 28 December.

Need help?

If you're a member and have any questions or need the support of your union, please speak to your local PSA delegate or contact the PSA's Member Support Centre on 1300 772 679.

