

Public Service Christmas Closedown

The Government has announced the Christmas Closedown period for the 2019-20 Christmas and New Year period.

The dates for this closedown are Monday 23 December 2019 until Friday 3 January 2020 inclusive.

You can read the Government announcement [HERE](#).

The PSA encourages members to regularly take recreation leave for their own health and welfare. Christmas and the New Year are a great time to do so.

Can I work during the closedown period?

While the NSW Government encourages all non 'frontline' areas to shut down over the Christmas and 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.

Staff who intend to work should contact their relevant manager with their proposed dates.

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

Unless you can be directed to take leave (see below), it's your choice 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 defined by clause 77.2 of the *Crown Employees (Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009*.

This is usually defined as more than six weeks' accumulated leave, in which case you can be directed to reduce your balance over a period of three months by mutual agreement;

or more than eight weeks' leave, in which case you can be directed to take leave.

Can I be directed to take extended (long service) leave or leave without pay?

You cannot be directed to take extended leave, long service leave or leave without pay under any circumstances.

Christmas Concessional leave

If you work on the morning of Christmas Eve (Tuesday 24 December), you are entitled to concessional leave for the afternoon after you have worked a standard half day.

If you are required to work the afternoon as well, you can take your concessional leave on the afternoon of New Year's Eve (Tuesday 31 December).

Public holidays for Christmas and New Year

The following dates are public holidays in the 2019 Christmas closedown period:

- 2019 – Wednesday 25 December, Thursday 26 December
- 2020 – Wednesday 1 January

Many agencies also have a Public Service Holiday around this time, usually on the day following Boxing Day, being Friday 27 December. Please check with your manager for the local arrangement.

Should you have any questions about the Christmas closedown period please contact the PSA's Member Support Centre on 1300 772 679.

