

EMPLOYMENT ALERT

14 January 2013

PLANNING FOR PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND EXTRA PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN 2013

Employers are urged to consider the impact of public holidays on their staffing requirements. During 2013 the only public holiday that falls on a Sunday is Youth Day, 16 June. Monday, 17 June 2013 becomes an additional public holiday in terms of the Public Holidays Act. Employees working on both days (Sunday, 16 June 2013 and Monday, 17 June 2013) are entitled to double payment for both the days worked.

The two consecutive public holiday days impacts on working arrangements and shifts. Employers are cautioned to consider this in advance and make appropriate arrangements. Care should be taken to ensure that consent is obtained from those employees expected to work on public holidays. This consent may be obtained on a case-by-case basis and need not be in writing. However, best practice is to secure consent in advance in an employment contract or collective agreement.

Employers should expect employee requests for additional days off on Friday, 22 March; Monday, 23 September and Friday, 27 December. These days are between a public holiday and weekend resulting in sought-after long weekends for employees. While employees have a statutory entitlement to annual leave, employers may decide when to allow employees to take their annual leave. Sound employee relations practices would see employers allocating requests for leave days to be taken during these prime slots on a fair and equitable basis. Employers should consider inviting requests for annual leave at this early stage of the year already to avoid disruption to work over the long weekends ahead.

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The public holidays for 2013 are:

Human Rights Day

Thursday, 21 March

Good Friday

Friday, 29 March

Family Day

Monday, 1 April

Freedom Day

Saturday, 27 April

Workers' Day

Wednesday, 1 May

Youth Day

Sunday, 16 June

National Women's Day

Friday, 9 August

Heritage Day

Tuesday, 24 September

Day of Reconciliation

Monday, 16 December

Christmas Day

Wednesday, 25 December

Day of Goodwill

Thursday, 26 December

New Year's Day

Wednesday, 1 January 2014

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