



Dear Colleague

NHS SCOTLAND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN 2026-27 AND 2027-28

1. This circular provides additional guidance on the issue of public holiday entitlement for the leave years 2026-27 and 2027-28. As you will be aware, an extra public holiday for NHS Scotland was announced by [PCS\(PH\)2026/1](#) to mark the first game of the men's FIFA World Cup.
2. It is also the case that Good Friday and Easter Monday in 2027 are on 26 and 29 March respectively. In Boards where the Easter holiday forms part of the public holiday allocation awarded within the year, this will mean staff will receive 3 more public holidays than usual in the 2026-27 leave year.
3. With regard to Agenda for Change staff, the approach to be applied where one or both of the Easter public holidays are in March is covered at paragraph 37 of [PCS\(AFC\)2025/06](#).
4. For part time AfC staff, public holiday entitlement is worked out with reference to the standard allocation of 8 public holidays a year. The calculation is - working hours divided by 5 and multiplied by 8, to give a yearly pro-rata value for public holiday in hours. This figure is then rounded up to the nearest half day as per paragraph 13.6 of the [Agenda for Change Handbook](#).
5. Dividing this rounded up figure by 8 then provides a consistent value for a single day for the part-time staff member and, where necessary, allows additional days to be added on to the allocation for one year and subtracted from the next year's allocation (assuming that the staff member's working hours do not change across the two leave periods).

10 June 2026

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives,
Directors of Human Resources
and
Directors of Finance
(NHS Boards and Special Health
Boards)

For information

Members, Scottish Partnership
Forum
Members, Scottish Terms and
Conditions Committee
Members, Scottish Workforce and
Governance Group

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6. The [NHS Scotland Annual Leave Calculator](#) will make these calculations automatically as long as the correct number of public holidays are entered into the "Public holidays (days)" window.
7. For clarity then, the full number of public holidays in the 2026-27 leave year for Agenda for Change staff (where Good Friday and Easter Monday are designated public holidays locally) will be 11. And in that situation the full number of public holidays in the 2027-28 leave year for AfC staff will be 6.
8. The same approach outlined above will apply to Executive and Senior Manager staff, although their allocation will be based on a 37.5 hour full-time working week, rather than the 36 hour week introduced this year for AfC staff.
9. Medical and Dental staff have different public holiday provisions, but the same overarching principles should apply in terms of moving public holiday entitlement between leave years to ensure that all staff receive a fair and consistent allocation of public holiday paid time off work in line with their terms and conditions.

Cabinet Secretary Approval

10. This agreement has been approved by Scottish Ministers under Regulation 2 and 3 of the National Health Service (Remuneration and Conditions of Service) (Scotland) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991 No.537). A copy of the formal approval is attached.
11. This circular can be found online at:
www.publications.scot.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely



TAI MCLENNAN

Deputy Director

Health Workforce: Culture, Pay and Partnership Division

The Scottish Government
Health Workforce
Culture, Pay and Partnership Division



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
APPROVAL OF REMUNERATION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

In accordance with regulations 2 and 3 of the National Health Service (Remuneration and Conditions of Service) (Scotland) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/537) the remuneration and conditions of service set out in the attached Scottish Government Health Workforce Directorate circular of 10 June 2026 – PCS(PHG)2026/1 – in respect public holidays in 2026-27 and 2027-28 are approved for the purposes of the said Regulations.

TAI MCLENNAN
Deputy Director
Health Workforce: Culture, Pay and
Partnership Division
10 June 2026

NHS SCOTLAND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN 2026-27 AND 2027-28 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: What happens if the staff member changes their working hours over this time?

A: Each period within a given leave year should be treated as a separate calculation based on the number of public holidays within the period. The data entry page of the [NHS Scotland Annual Leave Calculator](#) asks for all the required information to make a calculation, including the start and end date of the period covered within the leave year, hours worked (per week) and public holidays (days) within the period being calculated. Staff may need to check which days have been designated as public holidays locally using their Board intranet in order to ensure they are filling the correct number into the public holidays entry box.

Q2: How do we use this for a staff member who starts midway through the year?

A: For public holidays, allocation will depend on the number of days which have been designated as public holidays locally between the staff member's start date and the end of the leave year on 31 March. Staff will wish to check which days have been designated as public holidays locally using their Board intranet.

Q3: What does this mean for staff on maternity leave regarding carry forward of public holidays?

A: For Agenda for Change staff, the provisions at paragraph 15.94 and 15.95 of the [Agenda for Change Handbook](#) apply i.e. staff on paid and unpaid maternity / adoption / shared parental leave retain the right to the public holidays provided for within their terms and conditions. This will include any additional public holiday hours awarded to NHS Scotland staff by Scottish Ministers. Arrangements for carry forward of any untaken public holiday entitlement should be discussed and agreed between the employee and the employer locally.

These same provisions cover Executive and Senior Manager staff.

Medical and Dental staff should refer to their own terms and conditions with regard to this issue.

Q4: What information should we give to staff starting in 2027-28 about their entitlement?

A: Entitlement is based on the number of days which have been designated as public holidays locally within a given period. As per paragraph 7 of this guidance, where 26 and 29 March 2027 have been designated as public holidays locally, the allocation of public holidays for Agenda for Change and Executive and Senior Manager staff in the 2027-28 leave year will be 6. The same overall principle will apply to Medical and Dental staff based on the entitlement to public holidays set out in the relevant set of terms and conditions.