



Holiday Season Planning Guide



The holiday season can bring about significant changes in schedules and operational tempos for businesses of all sizes. For HR teams, business owners, managers and payroll officers, it's crucial to plan ahead and ensure smooth operations while also taking care of your staff's needs during this festive period. In this guide, we will provide you with tips and resources to help you effectively plan and communicate your holiday plans to your staff. We will highlight key [Fair Work](#) resources, and useful features available in foundU - the ultimate workforce management tool to streamline your holiday season planning process.

01. Recruit & Retain Seasonal Staff

Finding and retaining seasonal employees is crucial for businesses during the festive season. We recommend checking out our [blog post](#) on "Tips for Recruiting and Retaining Seasonal Employees during the Festive Season" to get valuable insights and strategies.

Fair Work also provides a vast array of resources to assist you in hiring employees.

Fair Work Resources:

- [Job templates](#)
- [Course](#) on hiring employees
- [Guidelines](#) for hiring employees

02. Get Up to Speed on Employee Rights & Obligations

It is essential to understand employee rights and obligations during the holiday period to ensure compliance and fair treatment. There have been recent updates including a New Shutdown Rules policy.

Fair Work provides many resources and tools to help, especially when it comes to compliance and best practice for leave for staff, and shutdown periods.

Resources:

- [New Shutdown Rules for awards](#)
- [Difference between stand down, unpaid leave and shutdown](#)
- [Direction to take annual leave during a shutdown](#)

03. Prepare Staff for the Holiday Season

To maintain a smooth operation during the holiday season, preparing and communicating early with your staff is key. Here's some tips:

- **Be across Fair Works' New Shutdown Rules:** Familiarise yourself with Fair Work's [New Shutdown Rules for awards](#).
- **Submit leave requests early:** Encourage staff to apply for leave early for easier scheduling.
- **Update to date availability:** Ask casual staff to update their availability over the holiday period for easier scheduling.
- **Communicate with staff in bulk:** Save time sending communications to update staff on what is happening during the holiday season by sending them in bulk through email, SMS or even through your roster. For example, communicate company hours during the holiday period, Christmas party details, and etiquette, and encourage staff to submit leave requests early.

foundU Feature Highlights:

- **Time Off:** Track and manage leave applications in one centralised location.
- **Negative Leave Setting & Cap:** Enable leave to go into negative hours and set a cap for specific employees in their profile.
- **Availability & Set Block Out Days:** Casual staff can update their availability in the foundU Employee App. Managers can mark specific days as blocked out in the Availability settings. This prevents casual staff from submitting time-off requests during peak periods.
- **Bulk SMS & Email:** Easily send instant emails or SMS to employees in one click via the foundU platform.
- **Roster & Shift Comments:** Add notes to rosters and shifts that will be seen by employees when published.

04. Plan Ahead for Public Holidays

During the holiday season there are plenty of public holidays ready to cause chaos, but this doesn't need to be the case! Plan and prepare early with these tips:

- **Know your public holidays:** [Check public holidays](#) for your state/regions. Check how public holidays are managed in your payroll software.
- **Revise payroll and entitlements:** Review and understand the legal requirements surrounding public holidays, including entitlements and pay rates. Ensure your payroll system is set up to accurately calculate holiday pay.
- **Roster staff correctly for public holidays so they are paid correctly:** This will help you [accurately roster permanent staff](#) with the appropriate pay settings for public holidays.
- **Early Pay Generation:** Depending on when your pay day falls. Consider giving your staff a holiday treat and pay them early rather than making them wait until after public holidays.

Fair Work Resources:

- [Public Holidays](#)
- [Pay and Conditions Tool](#)

foundU Feature Highlights:

- **Built-in Public Holidays:** foundU builds in all national public holidays in the platform to automatically calculate holiday pay.
- **Early Pay Generation:**
 - Salaried staff: Early draft payslip generation [request here](#).
 - Non-salaried staff: Roster as per usual, and [pre-approve shifts](#).
- **Wageflo (Earned Wage Access add on):** Turn on [Wageflo](#) to empower staff to pay themselves as soon as they've earned it!

05. Share Holiday Calendar with Team

Give your managers and/or staff visibility of when everyone is on leave during the holiday period.

- **Leave calendar:** Create a shared calendar for your team to track everyone's leave during the holiday period. This provides visibility for managers and staff, making it easier to plan and ensure proper coverage.
- **Availability list:** Compile a list of your casual staff's availability and share it with all managers. This allows for quick and efficient filling of last-minute absences, minimising disruptions.

foundU Feature Highlights:

- [External Leave Calendar](#): Export leave from foundU into your work calendars in Apple Mail, Gmail or Outlook.
- [Availability Export](#): Easily export all employee availability into a handy list.

06. Retaining Staff in the New Year

Retaining your staff in the new year is essential for maintaining operational stability. It is a time where employees consider job changes. It's important to think about what strategies you have in place to prevent job hopping and how to retain top talent.

Using Employee Engagement tools can really help in gaining employee feedback and insights, tracking areas for improvement, and putting measures in place to help retain staff.

Resources:

- [Thrive, Don't Just Survive: A Guide to Employee Retention in the New Year](#)

foundU Feature Highlights:

- foundU is integrated with [Prosper EX](#) – an employee engagement tool.

Once the holiday season is over, don't forget to review the effectiveness of your planning and identify areas for improvement for future optimisation.

We hope this Holiday Season Planning Guide has provided you with valuable insights and resources to effectively plan and communicate during the festive season. If you have any further questions or need assistance, feel free to reach out to our [support](#) team. Wishing you a successful and enjoyable holiday season with foundU!