

Carrying over holiday

In some circumstances, workers can carry over their holiday entitlement. How much they can carry over depends on the circumstances.

If there's a relevant agreement

Workers can carry over some of their statutory 5.6 weeks' holiday entitlement if there's a relevant agreement that allows it.

A relevant agreement can be one of the following:

- a workforce agreement, which is made between an employer and worker representatives
- a collective agreement, which is made between a recognised trade union and an employer
- an agreement that can be legally enforced between a worker and an employer, for example an employment contract

If there's no relevant agreement, workers must take the 5.6 weeks' holiday entitlement during the leave year. This is unless there's a good reason why they cannot use their holiday. For example, this could be if they're on long-term sick leave.

Carrying over enhanced holiday

Some workers get more than the legal minimum 5.6 weeks. This can be called 'enhanced' or 'contractual' holiday.

Their contract should say if they can carry over any of this holiday and how much.

Long-term sick leave

If a worker is on long-term sick leave, they can carry over a maximum of 4 weeks' holiday entitlement. They must use it within 18 months starting from the end of the leave year in which they accrued it.

[Find out more about sick pay and holiday pay](#)

If someone cannot use holiday because of statutory leave

Someone might not be able to use their holiday entitlement because they're on statutory leave. For example, they're on maternity leave.

In this situation, they must be allowed to carry the holiday over to the next leave year. They should arrange this with their employer as early as possible.

If an employer does not let someone take all their holiday

Employers have a legal responsibility to make sure workers can take the holiday they're entitled to.

By law, a worker can carry over holiday if their employer:

- does not let them take all their holiday or does not encourage them to take it all
- does not inform a worker that they will lose any holiday they do not take

In these circumstances, they can carry over a maximum of 4 weeks' holiday entitlement.

Encouraging workers to take holiday

Making sure workers take holiday can:

- improve productivity
- reduce unplanned sickness absence
- improve staff retention
- improve working relationships

To encourage workers to take holiday, employers could:

- have a policy that sets out clearly that workers will lose holiday they do not take
- cover this in training for managers
- send out email reminders to workers
- remind workers to take holiday in one-to-one and team meetings
- make clear on any forms or systems for booking holiday that workers will lose holiday they do not take

Employers could also consult with workers and any trade unions on the best way to communicate about this.

If a worker cannot take all their holiday for another reason

A worker might not be able to take their full holiday entitlement for another reason and be worried about losing it. They should [talk to their employer](#) and try to reach an agreement.

Irregular hours workers and part-year workers

There are different rules about carrying over holiday for irregular hours workers and part-year workers.

[Find out about carrying over holiday for irregular hours workers and part-year workers](#)

Contact the Acas helpline

If you have any questions about carrying over holiday, you can [contact the Acas helpline](#).