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BrightHR's ultimate guide to staff summer holidays 2022

Make managing annual vacations a breeze.





Are you ready for the summer vacation season?



Summer holidays are fast approaching. But are you ready for the potential last-minute requests? We give you some helpful tips on how to handle them.

Summer holidays are upon us and whilst many employees booked time off months in advance, plenty of staff will be trying to book a last minute vacations. This could be due to a number of factors; just looking to take a break, last minute deals, or even to book time off to spend time with the kids. Whatever the reason, small businesses need to be ready to respond to these requests.

But how do you do it?

Plan ahead

The best way to deal with any problems is to plan ahead and anticipate the issues before they even arise. What happened last year? What's the worst case scenario? What do you do if two people ask for the same time off? By looking at what has happened

previously and anticipating other issues you can start to put plans in place to deal with them before they come up.

Put your policy in place

Having a policy is key. How much notice do employees have to give you when booking time off? What will be the procedure if you need to decide who gets time off? Are there any times of year where holiday approval is limited? Having a policy means everyone is aware of the rules and it can help you be consistent and fair if things do go wrong.

Managing multiple vacation requests

When it comes to managing requests, it's important to set out how these will be approved. For many this is a first come, first served basis. But there are others ways: scheduling systems, team delegation, preference to longest-serving employees. There are plenty of options but whichever one you choose, you need to stick to it.

Be flexible with working arrangements

Childcare can become an issue during the summer holidays and many parents dread this time of year as they have to juggle work commitments with changing childcare arrangements.

Offering a degree of flexibility could be key for your employees, enabling workers to start late or finish early to meet these needs. This degree of flexibility is down to you and the type of business you have. Some businesses may be able to offer full flexibility, allowing workers to work remotely at home, whereas others may be able to offer flexible start and finishing times; others may not be able to offer any degree of flexibility at all. If you can be flexible, it's worthwhile for both your employees and your business.

Refusing holiday requests

If you can, it's always best to approve holiday requests. However, there may come a time when you have to decline one. This may be due to conflicts, the request coming at a busy operational time or because of the length of the request. It's down to what's best for your business and following the correct procedures to reduce any negative outcomes, such as giving as much notice of a rejection as the amount of vacation requested, for example, two weeks' notice if the vacation requested was two weeks.



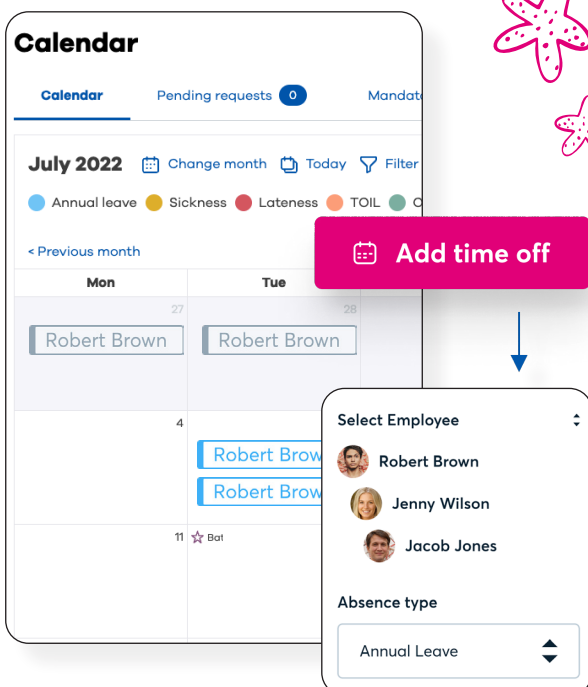
Communicate with staff

Whatever you do it's important you communicate with your staff. This way staff are made fully aware of any existing policies in regards to booking time off, any flexible working arrangements can be clearly outlined and you can outline your position on refusing requests. This way everyone is clear in terms of expectations and there can be no complaints when it comes to potentially refusing requests.

Automate the process

The vacation request process can take up valuable time and effort and can prevent you from getting on with the important task of growing your business. But it doesn't have to be this way. With BrightHR's brilliant people management software this process is automated and can save you valuable time.

With our software employees can book vacations from the mobile app whenever, wherever. Managers can instantly check for any conflicts and approve requests in a matter of seconds. No more time-consuming paper forms or spreadsheets, no more hassle.



The guilt-free way to handle parent holiday requests

Losing sleep over the thought of rejecting a parent's holiday request? Here's how to shake off your guilt.

You think you've got it bad juggling parent vacation requests. But what about your poor staff?

They have six weeks of childcare to cover in the summer. And if both parents work and family members can't help out, it's going to be an expensive one.

That's why you're probably starting to worry about the number of vacation requests coming your way. Here's how to deal with parent holiday requests without feeling too guilty.

Do parents take priority?



Absolutely not.

If you give parents priority when divvying out summer vacations, you could face accusations of unfair treatment from non-parents.

Those without kids could argue you're punishing them.

To avoid such claims, decide on a fair way to assign holidays. You could operate on a first-come, first-served basis, or rotate who gets to request time off first.

Whatever you decide, put the details in your annual leave policy so you can show this to your staff.

So I shouldn't give parents time off?

It goes without saying that if you can give your staff time off, you should.

Your staff have a right to take a certain number of holidays each year. And once they take time off, they'll probably be eager to get back to work—especially if they've had their kids all summer.

Let's face it though, you won't be able to accept all vacation requests. You must have a valid reason to refuse annual leave, for example if too many people are already off or it's a busy time of year.

I've had to decline a parent's time off. What now?

Be sympathetic to your employee and explain what else you can do for them.

You could offer flexible working for the summer. This might mean letting your staff come in later or work



their usual hours in fewer days so they get extra time off.

You could even let your staff work from home if their job allows them to. And then there's parental leave.

Employees who've worked for you for more than 13 weeks can take unpaid leave to look after their child. They are entitled to take up to 61 or 63 weeks of unpaid time off work. This can begin anytime no later than 78 weeks after the date their baby is born or first comes into their care and control.

Employees may decide to take a shorter leave if they wish. However, once an employee has started parental leave, they must take it all at one time. The employee cannot use up part of the leave, return to work for the employer and then go back on parental leave for the unused portion.

I dread this time of year. Is there another way to manage vacations?

You won't have to worry about managing staff vacations with BrightHR.

Your employees can request them on their own and you can sign it off in seconds—even when you're away from your workplace.

Use our free iOS and Android app to approve or decline requests, wherever you are. And get 24/7 access to your holiday calendar so you always know when your staff are off.

BrightHR also flags any vacation clashes with you before they happen—so you won't ever have too many people off at the same time.

And you can log parental leave to help make sure you pay your staff correctly.



Should you rethink your uniform policy in a heatwave?

The hot Canadian summer is well on its way. And no doubt, you've heard grumbles from staff asking you to relax your dress code during the humid weather. But do you have to? Let's find out.

What the law says

During hot weather, you're under no obligation to relax dress codes.

That being said, you may want to allow staff to dress more casually in high temperatures to make the working environment more comfortable.

Don't worry though, this doesn't mean that staff can come to work in beachwear and flip flops. Relaxing your dress code could be as simple as allowing staff to lose their business jacket or be able to wear smart sandals to work.

But whatever you decide, it's important to be clear on how staff should dress during the hot weather and when the relaxed dress code ends.



Save time on organising vacation requests and make holidays a breeze with our smart staff vacation planner.

[Book my FREE demo](#)

Example–Annual vacation policy

A) ANNUAL HOLIDAYS

1. It is our policy to encourage you to use all of your vacation in the current calendar year, and therefore, employees are expected to take vacations in the calendar year in which the vacation time is earned.
2. All vacation requests must be made via BrightHR. You will be given the rights to request time off and view your time off using BrightHR at any time. This is to give you the facility to easily plan your holidays/vacations throughout the year.
3. Once you have requested your time off online, you will receive an e-mail from your manager authorising or declining your request. If you feel that your request has been unreasonably refused for any reason you should refer the matter to your manager. They will endeavour to ensure that you have every opportunity to take your holidays at the time you request them, but they will need to balance your requests with the needs of the department.
4. You should wait to receive authorization from your manager before you make any firm vacation arrangements. Any costs incurred due to cancelling or changing prior arrangements will be your responsibility.
5. You may not normally take more than two working weeks consecutively.
6. You may be required to reserve sufficient days from your annual entitlement to cover the Christmas/New Year shut-down period.
7. In the event that you have not scheduled your entire vacation entitlement before October 1 of each year, you may be directed to use the remainder of your vacation entitlement before December 31 at a time selected by your employer.

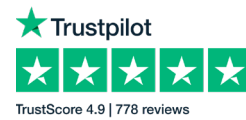
B) PUBLIC/STATURTORY HOLIDAYS

1. We adhere to the statutory holiday provisions of applicable employment standards legislation, as amended from time to time, and will administer this policy in accordance with the requirements of same.
2. We reserve the right to close part of our operations from Christmas Day to New Year's Day. This decision will be assessed annually and will depend on operational requirements.
3. Employees who qualify for statutory holiday pay under the applicable employment standards legislation will receive holiday pay calculated in accordance with same.





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