

The "Springbok" public holiday - win-win for weekend workers

By [Talita Laubscher](#) and [Sian Gaffney](#)

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This year, 16 December 2023 falls on a Saturday, which is unfortunate for employees who work the traditional Monday to Friday work week, as they 'lose out' on the public holiday. Fortunately, all workers now get Friday, 15 December 2023 as a public holiday due to the Springbok's World Cup victory.



Image: [SANews.gov.za on Facebook](#)

What do these holidays mean for weekend workers who ordinarily work on Saturdays, such as retail staff or shift workers?

Despite being a Saturday, 16 December 2023 remains an official public holiday in South Africa. This means that 'weekend workers' (those who ordinarily work Saturdays and Sundays) are still by law entitled to the public holiday on 16 December 2023. If they do not work on this day, they are entitled to their normal pay. If they do work on this day, they are entitled to double pay, or they can exchange this day for another day which would then be treated as a public holiday. This applies regardless of whether these employees earn above the earnings threshold (currently about R20,100 per month).



What are your employee rights to religious holidays?

16 Mar 2018



As regards Friday, 15 December 2023, if a Friday is a weekend-worker employee's 'work day' in a seven-day week, then that employee will be entitled to both 15 and 16 December as public holidays this year. However, if weekend-workers would ordinarily have been off on this Friday, they will 'lose out' on the public holiday declared on this day.

Which employees benefit from a public holiday is ultimately determined by the day on which the public holiday falls within a calendar year. If it falls on a day they would ordinarily work, they get the day off at full pay. If they work on that day, they get double pay or can exchange the day for another day. If the public holiday falls on a day that they would not ordinarily work – too bad, unless they work on this day (and earn below the threshold) in which event they get paid a premium.

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