

## As the Royal Wedding looms What are your rights to time off work?

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**As Royal wedding fever rolls in, we will all be off work to watch Kate and William's big day and celebrating with street parties. Well- not necessarily. There is no automatic right for employees to take the time off work for the additional public holiday on Friday 29th April.**

Many employers will simply close their businesses and give their employees an extra days holiday. But what if they don't?

There is often confusion over rights and entitlements to bank holidays- let alone additional days which are not the norm. The Working Time Regulations state that full time employees are entitled to a minimum of 28 days paid leave each year. That includes the usual 8 permanent bank holidays. Your contract of employment therefore will be the governing factor determining whether you are entitled as of right to paid leave on bank holidays, and how many. Some contracts will state that you will receive 20 days holiday plus all bank holidays, in which case you are entitled to the 29th April as an additional paid days' leave. Other contracts will say you are entitled to 28 days holiday including bank holidays and here, you would have no right to take the additional bank holiday as paid leave.

If your employer is maintaining a business as usual approach on the 29th April and you wish to take the day as part of your holiday entitlement, you can request this but your employer does not have to agree if it is not convenient for the business. This is in line with any request for holiday to be taken at other times during the year.

For those that are working on the royal wedding bank holiday, there is also no statutory entitlement to additional pay. Again, the position will be governed by the provisions in your contract of employment or any separate agreement reached, so this needs to be checked carefully.

With another additional bank holiday on the horizon next year for the Queen's diamond jubilee, it is hoped that employers will not be mean spirited. What they should try and do at the very least is to apply a consistent approach to their employees, especially where the contractual positions regarding holidays may vary between their staff.

It is estimated that the extra bank holiday may cost the British economy £2.9 billion. The cost to the British economy of a disgruntled and resentful workforce would be significantly higher, however, if employers are overly mean spirited on the day.

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