

June 2021

PSNC Briefing 018/21: Pharmacy opening hours in the remainder of 2021 and in 2022

In this briefing, we explain the pharmacy opening hour requirements in the pharmacy terms of service for the remainder of 2021 and in 2022.

PSNC's Regulations and Support Team are frequently asked questions about the requirements in the pharmacy terms of service relating to opening hours. We have therefore produced this quick reference guide to help contractors.

Name of holiday	Date in 2021	Day of the week	Covered by the Regulations?	Can the pharmacy close without giving notice?
Summer Bank Holiday*	30 th August	Monday	✓	✓
Christmas Day	25 th December	Saturday	✓	✓
Christmas Day (substitute day)*	27 th December	Monday	✓	✓
Boxing Day (substitute day)*	28 th December	Tuesday	✓	✓
Name of holiday	Date in 2022	Day of the week	Covered by the Regulations?	Can the pharmacy close without giving notice?
New Year's Day (substitute day) *	3 rd January	Monday	✓	✓
Good Friday	15 th April	Friday	✓	✓
Easter Sunday	17 th April	Sunday	✓	✓
Easter Monday*	18 th April	Monday	✓	✓
Early May Bank Holiday*	2 nd May	Monday	✓	✓
Spring Bank Holiday*	2 nd June	Thursday	✓	✓
Platinum Jubilee bank holiday*	3 rd June	Friday	✓	✓
Summer Bank Holiday*	29 th August	Monday	✓	✓
Christmas Day	25 th December	Sunday	✓	✓
Boxing Day	26 th December	Monday	✓	✓

Christmas Day (substitute day)*	27 th December	Tuesday	✓	✓
--	---------------------------	---------	---	---

*These are not specifically mentioned by name but because they are official 'bank holidays' they are covered by the Regulations.

Please note that this Boxing Day on Sunday 26th December 2021 and New Year's Day 1st January 2022 are normal working days for community pharmacy opening hours.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I close my pharmacy on these days?

Yes. Community pharmacy contractors can close their pharmacies on days which are specifically mentioned in the Regulations (namely Christmas Day, Good Friday and Easter Sunday) or a day which has been designated as a '[bank holiday](#)', unless directed to open by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE&I).

Contractors must always ensure that their respective entries in the NHS Directory of Services (DoS) and NHS website are up to date and are encouraged to do this as early as possible for any holiday period.

2. What about my core contractual hours?

A pharmacy will be treated as having been open for its usual hours on that day for the purpose of counting the core contractual hours that week. Therefore, the pharmacy can be closed on the days indicated without giving notice or applying to change the core hours.

Contractors must always ensure that their respective entries in the NHS DoS and NHS website are up to date and are encouraged to do this as early as possible for any holiday period.

3. Are there any circumstances when I must open on these days?

Yes, if a contractor has been directed to open their pharmacy by NHSE&I.

4. Can I close my pharmacy early any other time?

If the hours that the contractor wishes to close early are supplementary hours, then notice of that intention should be given at least three months in advance. If they are core hours, then an application is needed, and the contractor would have to satisfy NHSE&I that there have been changes to the needs of people in the area, otherwise the application is likely to be refused.

Unless you have notified NHSE&I of changes to your supplementary hours at least three months before the date, or applied successfully for amendment of core hours, the contractor will not be able to close early.

5. Do I need to notify NHSE&I of opening intentions on bank holidays / public holidays?

Contractors are encouraged to inform NHSE&I whether their premises will be open on bank holidays. This information is of critical importance to NHSE&I to plan pharmacy provision during holiday periods.

If NHSE&I is not able to determine the opening hours of pharmacies with a high degree of certainty, its only option may be to issue directions to one or more pharmacies requiring them to open.

This clearly is not in the best interests of pharmacies if there are others that would have been open anyway; so PSNC recommends that all pharmacies notify their intentions and then open as they have notified.

NHSE&I has published template forms to provide notification: www.england.nhs.uk/publication/pharmacy-manual-chapter-36-annexes

Contractors must always ensure that their respective entries in the NHS DoS and NHS website are up to date and are encouraged to do this as early as possible for any holiday period.

Q. What if Boxing Day or New Year's Day is on a Saturday or Sunday?

Contractors are reminded that if Boxing Day or New Year's Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday it will be classed as a normal working day for the purposes of community pharmacy opening hours. Therefore, pharmacies must open on these days for any core and supplementary hours. The substitute bank holiday for Boxing Day or New Year's Day is when contractors do not have to open.

Contractors do not have to open on days which are specifically mentioned in the relevant NHS Regulations (namely Christmas Day, Good Friday and Easter Sunday) or a day which has been specifically designated as a 'bank holiday', unless directed to open by NHSE&I.

If contractors want to reduce any supplementary hours, for example, to close early, they must give notice to NHSE&I at least 3 months in advance, unless NHSE&I agrees otherwise. Therefore, the last day to give notice for 26th December, for any guaranteed reduction in supplementary hours, is on 26th September, and NHSE&I must receive the notification, for example, by email, on or before that date.

Contractors must always ensure that their respective entries in the NHS DoS and NHS website are up to date and are encouraged to do this as early as possible for any holiday period.

Q. What are the Terms of Service requirements for NHS Directory of Services and NHS website profiles?

Pharmacy contractors must ensure that there is a comprehensive and accurate profile for their pharmacy NHS website profile and their Directory of Services (DoS) profile. Contractors must also ensure they verify and, where necessary, update the information contained in the profile at least once each quarter of the financial year. Contractors must ensure they update their DoS profile where the pharmacy's opening hours change, either temporarily or permanently. Contractors must also ensure they include their opening hours on Bank Holidays, Christmas Day, Good Friday and Easter Sunday within their DoS profiles.

Further information

NB: Please note that changes have been made to opening hours regulations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and these remain in place until further notice.

For more information, including a comprehensive list of FAQs, please visit: psnc.org.uk/hours

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or require more information, please contact [Layla Rahman, Regulations Officer](#) or call 0203 1220 814.