

Cancelling annual leave

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Employers or employees might want to cancel approved annual leave as a result of the impacts of coronavirus. For example, an employee's planned holiday could be cancelled because of travel restrictions.

For employers, their business may be busier than ever and they might want to cancel employees' approved annual leave to make sure they have enough staff available.

An employer or an employee can cancel approved annual leave if the cancellation isn't unreasonable.

Awards (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/awards>), enterprise agreements (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/agreements>), employment contracts (<https://www.fairwork.gov.au/awards-and-agreements/employment-contracts>) and workplace policies may have extra rules about cancelling approved annual leave, so make sure you check what applies to you.

Employees cancelling annual leave

If an employee asks to cancel their approved annual leave, an employer shouldn't unreasonably refuse the request.

Example: Cancelling an annual leave request

Caitlin is a full-time administrative assistant at a small accounting firm. In late 2019, Caitlin's employer approved her request to take 4 weeks of annual leave in July 2020 to travel to Europe.

Because of the impacts of coronavirus, Caitlin can't travel overseas and her trip has been cancelled. In early May 2020, Caitlin asks her employer if she can cancel her annual leave approved for July. The employer considers Caitlin's request and approves it because it's a reasonable request. Caitlin has given plenty of notice and has plans to use her accumulated annual leave to go to Europe later.

Caitlin's employer emails her to confirm the cancellation of leave.

Employers cancelling annual leave

When deciding to cancel an employee's approved annual leave because of the impacts of coronavirus, employers should also consider:

- whether any costs have been incurred (for example, if the employee has paid a deposit for activities during their leave)
- how much notice of the cancellation is given.

Related information

- [Annual leave \(www.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/pay-and-leave-during-coronavirus/annual-leave\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/pay-and-leave-during-coronavirus/annual-leave)
- [Directions to take annual leave \(www.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/pay-and-leave-during-coronavirus/annual-leave/directions-to-take-annual-leave\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/pay-and-leave-during-coronavirus/annual-leave/directions-to-take-annual-leave)
- [Leave and the JobKeeper scheme \(www.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/pay-and-leave-during-coronavirus/jobkeeper-wage-subsidy-scheme/leave-the-jobkeeper-scheme/default\)](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/coronavirus-and-australian-workplace-laws/pay-and-leave-during-coronavirus/jobkeeper-wage-subsidy-scheme/leave-the-jobkeeper-scheme/default)

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