

Contract Factsheet: Pharmacy opening hours in 2019

Are you aware of the pharmacy opening hour requirements in the terms of service? Here we explain all you need to know for the public holidays in 2019.

PSNC's Regulations and Support Team are often asked questions about the requirements in the terms of service relating to opening hours. We have therefore produced this quick reference guide for 2019.

Name of holiday	Date in 2019	Day of the week	Covered by the Regulations?	Can the pharmacy close without giving notice?
New Years' Day*	1st January	Tuesday	✓	✓
Good Friday	19th April	Friday	✓	✓
Easter Sunday	21st April	Sunday	✓	✓
Easter Monday*	22nd April	Monday	✓	✓
Early May Bank Holiday*	6th May	Monday	✓	✓
Spring Bank Holiday*	27th May	Monday	✓	✓
Summer Bank Holiday*	26th August	Monday	✓	✓
Christmas Day*	25th December	Wednesday	✓	✓
Boxing Day*	26th December	Thursday	✓	✓

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

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.

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 contractor can close their pharmacy on the days indicated without giving notice or making an application to change their core hours.

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

Yes, if a contractor has been directed to open their pharmacy by NHS England.

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

Sometimes contractors may wish to close an hour or so earlier than usual on a particular day for any reason. 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 the hours are core hours, then an application is needed, and the contractor would have to be able to satisfy NHS England that there have been changes to the needs of people in the area, otherwise the application would likely to be refused.

Unless you have notified NHS England 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 NHS England of opening intentions on bank holidays / public holidays?

Contractors are encouraged to inform NHS England whether their premises will be open on bank holidays. This information is of critical importance to NHS England in order that it is able to plan pharmacy provision during holiday periods.

If NHS England is not able to determine the opening hours of pharmacies with a high degree of certainty after consulting the LPC, 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 other suitable pharmacies that would have been open; so PSNC recommends that all pharmacies notify their intentions and then open as they have notified.

NHS England has published template forms which can be used to provide notification of a pharmacy's opening intentions. These forms are available to download from: tinyurl.com/yctuel26 (see Chapter 18)

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