



An
Bord
Pleanála

Time limits, decision time periods and our services over Christmas 2021 and New Year 2022

November 2021


**Plain
English**
Approved by NALA



About this guide

This guide provides information about:

- the 2021 Christmas and New Year holiday period in An Bord Pleanála,
- how the nine days of Christmas and New Year holidays (from 24 December to 1 January inclusive) can affect you making appeals, applications, observations, requests, submissions with us and the Board's time period to make decisions,
- two important rules on time limits and time periods over Christmas and New Year and examples of how these rules work and how they affect cases,
- our opening hours over the period and when you can view decided case files.

On pages 17 to 19 of this guide, there are handy tables to help you work out the last day to make an appeal on a planning decision over the Christmas and New Year period. We have also included examples that will help you figure out relevant dates for you about cases.

This guide is published to provide general information, assistance and guidance only. It is not a legal interpretation of the legislation. Readers must follow the relevant statutory provision for their own particular circumstances and, in doing so, should obtain their own expert advice if necessary.

Data Protection

An Bord Pleanála uses your personal data only to provide our services and to fulfil our legal duties. The personal data you supply will be circulated to other relevant parties and made available in the public domain about any matter before An Bord Pleanála.

To view our full policy statements on Data Protection, please go to

<https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/privacy>

Our opening hours over Christmas 2021 and New Year 2022

Monday	20 December	9.15am - 5.30pm
Tuesday	21 December	9.15am - 5.30pm
Wednesday	22 December	9.15am - 5.30pm
Thursday	23 December	9.15am - 5.30pm
Friday	24 December	9.15am - 5.30pm

Monday	27 December	Closed 🌲
Tuesday	28 December	Closed 🌲
Wednesday	29 December	Closed 🌲
Thursday	30 December	9.15am - 5.30pm
Friday	31 December	9.15am - 5.30pm

Monday	3 January	Closed 🌲
Tuesday	4 January	9.15am - 5.30pm



COVID-19

You can find out the latest information about COVID-19 and An Bord Pleanála on our website at <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/covid-19/covid-19-general-information>

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) has awarded this guide its Plain English Mark



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Terms

Some terms we use in this guide are listed below. We recommend that you refer to these as you read the guide:

Appeal	A review of the original decision on a planning application made by a planning authority.
Appellant	An individual or organisation who makes an appeal.
Applicant	An individual or organisation who makes a planning application to a planning authority.
Appropriate Assessment	An examination of a plan or project to evaluate how it might negatively affect a site which is protected under the EU Habitats Directive. (This is a directive about wildlife and nature conservation.)
Board	The Board of An Bord Pleanála.
Building control authority	The local authority – county council, city council or city and county council – responsible for building control in its area.
Invalid	Does not meet all of the statutory requirements needed by law and regulations to be considered a case.
Local authority project	Applications made by a local authority directly to An Bord Pleanála for planning approval for developments proposed to be carried out by or on behalf of the local authority. Examples include: flood works, large road projects and housing. Local authority projects also include compulsory land acquisition, for example: compulsory purchase orders.
Lodged, to lodge	To give or submit something to An Bord Pleanála.

Observation	A document submitted by an Observer (see also Submission).
Observer (Appeals)	Any person, other than the applicant, planning authority or an appellant, who comments on an appeal (see also Observation).
Observer (Applications)	Any person, other than the applicant, who comments on the application (see also Observation).
Oral hearing	An oral hearing is a meeting to allow relevant issues in a case to be discussed and examined.
Planning authority	The local authority – county council, city council, or county and city council – responsible for planning in its area.
Point of detail referral	In certain situations, a point of detail referral can ask the Board to make a decision in a case where the participants involved cannot agree (see also Referral (section 5) .)
Referral (section 5)	A case where the Board decides whether a proposal requires planning permission or not (see also Point of detail referral).
Statutory	Something that is decided, set up or controlled by statute law. Statute law is a law passed by parliament.

Statutory notice	<p>Information required by law that we must send you or make available to the public. A statutory notice may tell you something about a case. It may also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer you the opportunity to comment, or • ask or require you to do something. <p>For example, it may offer you the opportunity to comment on information we have received.</p>
Statutory objective period (SOP)	<p>The time period to make a decision on a case. The time period is a target given to the Board by law depending on the type of case. For example, in planning appeals, the statutory objective period is 18-weeks. In some types of cases, no time period is set by law.</p>
Statutory requirements	<p>Requirements needed by law for a case to be valid.</p>
Strategic housing development (SHD)	<p>Applications for planning permission directly to An Bord Pleanála for certain housing developments.</p>
Strategic infrastructure development (SID)	<p>Applications for planning permission directly to An Bord Pleanála for major infrastructure developments by local authorities and others.</p>
Submission	<p>A document on appeals or applications which may include supporting materials such as photographs, plans, drawings and technical guidance. (The document can be typed or handwritten.)</p>

Substitute Consent	<p>An application for permission made directly to An Bord Pleanála about development already carried out and which should – but did not – have had some or all of the following assessments carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Impact Assessment, • Environmental Impact Assessment Determination, • Appropriate Assessment.
Valid	<p>Meets all statutory requirements needed by law and regulations to be considered as a case.</p>
We, our, us	<p>An Bord Pleanála.</p>
You	<p>You as a person, company, group, organisation or State authority.</p>

Introduction

Over Christmas 2021 and the New Year 2022 period, An Bord Pleanála will be **closed** on four days. These days are:

- **Monday 27 December 2021** 🌲
- **Tuesday 28 December 2021** 🌲
- **Wednesday 29 December 2021** 🌲
- **Monday 3 January 2022** 🌲

On the days we are open, you can still make appeals, applications, referrals and observations, submissions and request oral hearings. You can also view decided case files in our office, and our staff are available to answer any questions you may have.

The holiday period between 24 December and 1 January affects:

- the time limits when you can send or deliver documents to us,
- the time period the Board has to make a decision on your case, and
- the time limits in statutory notice letters we may have sent to you.

Before we explain what happens between 24 December and 1 January inclusive (nine days), we need to explain **two important rules** which affect time limits and time periods. These are:

1. the **holiday period rule**, and
2. the **weekend rule**.

These rules are explained on pages 10 to 12.

1. Holiday period rule

Under the Planning and Development Acts, the holiday period is the following nine days (shaded in the calendar below):

- 24 December
- 25 December
- 26 December
- 27 December
- 28 December
- 29 December
- 30 December
- 31 December
- 1 January

December 2021 – January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

During the holiday period, we are **open** on three days:

- **24 December**
- **30 December**
- **31 December**

Note: Even though we are open on these days, the holiday period rule below **still** applies.

How the holiday period rule affects time limits for the public.

If you are due to make or want to make:

- an appeal,
- an application,
- an observation,
- a request,
- a submission, or
- anything else

to An Bord Pleanála on any of these nine days, the holiday period rule gives you an **extra nine days after the due date** to send or deliver your item.

Example: If the planning authority makes its decision on a case on Wednesday 1 December, the last date for an appeal would be Tuesday 28 December. However, that is one of the days in the holiday period, so nine days are added after the due date of 28 December leaving the revised date of **Thursday 6 January**.

December 2021 – January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15

How the holiday period rules affect time limits for An Bord Pleanála.

The Board has a target to make decisions within 18-weeks of a case being received. This timeframe is known as the ‘[statutory objective period](#)’.

The holiday period rule affects this statutory objective period from the Board’s perspective, as it has extra time to make a decision in addition to the normal 18-weeks. Depending on what day in the holiday period the Board was due to make a decision, **between one and nine extra days** will be added to the time period it has to make a decision.

Example: If a decision was due on 29 December, six extra days will be added to the holiday period as 29 December is one of the holiday period days. The decision is now due on **Friday 7 January**.

If the Board is due to make a decision after the Christmas and New Year period on a case, but the 18-week statutory objective period includes the holiday period, nine extra days will be added to the time period the Board has to make a decision. (See time period for deciding cases example 1 on page 21 and example 2 on page 22.)

2. Weekend rule

If the last date for us to receive documents is on a Saturday, Sunday, public holiday or other day when our office is closed, we can receive it by 5.30pm on the **next** working day that our office is open.

Example: If you are due to send or deliver something on Saturday 8 January, the next working day you can send or deliver your item will be **Monday 10 January**.

Do both these rules apply to all cases handled by An Bord Pleanála?

When calculating time limits over Christmas 2021 and New Year 2022, the rules that apply depend on the relevant Act as you see in table below.

Under the:	The rules that apply to these cases are ...
Planning and Development Acts the holiday period rule and the weekend rule apply – in that order. (See timeframe example 2 on page 16.)
Building Control Acts and Water Pollution Acts only the weekend rule applies.

The following pages describe how the holiday period rule and weekend rule apply first to Planning and Development Acts cases (see pages 13 to 19 inclusive). They include a very useful calendar on pages 17 to 19. After this we describe, how only the weekend rule applies to the Building Control Acts and Water Pollution Acts (see page 20).

Planning and Development Acts cases

What do the holiday period rule and weekend rule apply to?

Both these rules apply if you want to make:

- a [planning appeal](#),
- a [referral](#),
- an [observation](#) on a current appeal or observation on a current application,
- a [submission on documents](#) we have sent you,
- an [oral hearing](#) request,
- a pre-consultation request or application for:
 - [Strategic Infrastructure Development](#)
 - [Strategic Housing Development](#)
 - [Local Authority Project](#)
- an application, appeal or request on any other function under the Planning and Development Acts, for example:
 - [Substitute Consents](#)
 - [Appropriate Assessments](#)

What happens between 24 December and 1 January?

From 24 December to 1 January, the holiday period rule will apply to time limits and time periods. The weekend rule will **also** apply if the revised last day is a Saturday or Sunday.

Can I still send or deliver items to An Bord Pleanála during Christmas and New Year?

Yes, you can still send or deliver your items to us during Christmas and New Year on the days we are open – Friday 24 December, Thursday 30 December and Friday 31 December. You **do not** have to wait until after the holiday period to send or deliver your item if you wish. You **must** follow all the statutory requirements to make a valid appeal, application, observation, request or submission. This means you need to please check the [relevant guide](#) carefully.



Important note 1

Do not place your appeal, application, or request in the letterbox of our office and do not email it to us as your appeal, application, or request will be invalid.

We recommend members of the public do not place their observation in the letterbox of our office or send it to us by email.

For submissions on appeal documents you have received from us, please follow the advice in the letter you have received from us or contact us for further help.

My appeal is due to be received by Friday 31 December 2021 which is one of the days you are open over the holidays. Does this mean I have to submit by that date?

No. Even though we are working on 24, 30 and 31 December, anyone with an appeal (or other items in the list on page 13) which is due to be received by these dates benefits from the extra time allowed under the holiday rule. These three days are treated as holidays when the rule is being applied. Therefore, if your appeal is due by Friday 31 December 2021, your revised date after the rule is applied is **Monday 10 January 2022.**



Important note 2

This is the only time in the year when an appeal or other item normally due on a working day we are open is allowed to have the deadline extended. This is only allowed because of the holiday period rule.

Examples

Two timeframe examples for planning appeal cases

Example 1

I want to make an observation on a planning appeal. An Bord Pleanála received the last appeal on Tuesday 7 December 2021.

The time limit to make your observation is **Wednesday 12 January 2022**.

Why?

1. If the last planning appeal is received on Tuesday 7 December 2021 and you want to make an observation, the last day of the four-week period would be Monday 3 January 2022 (see **red X** in calendar).
2. This four-week period includes all nine days of the holiday period.
3. We add nine extra days to the last day for making an observation to An Bord Pleanála.
4. The last day to receive this observation is **Wednesday 12 January 2022** (see **green circle** in calendar).

December 2021 – January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15

Example 2

An Bord Pleanála has sent me a copy of an appeal on Friday 17 December 2021 and I want to make a submission on it.

The time limit for you to make a submission on the appeal is **Monday 24 January 2022**.

Why?

1. If we write to you with a copy of an appeal on Friday 17 December 2021 and you want to make a submission, the last day of the four-week period would be Thursday 13 January 2022 (see **red X** in calendar).
2. This four-week period includes all nine days of the holiday period.
3. The last day to make a submission is nine extra days after Thursday 13 January 2022. This is Saturday 22 January when we are closed.
4. The weekend rule applies and the last day to make your submission is the next working day our office is open which is **Monday 24 January 2022** (see **green circle** in calendar).

December 2021 – January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

In this example, both the holiday period rule and weekend rule are used. First, the holiday period rule is applied, then the weekend rule.

Handy calendar of last dates to make a planning appeal (November 2021 to January 2022)

The handy tables below can help you work out the last day to make an appeal when the planning authority has made a decision **on and between** Monday 22 November 2021 and Friday 7 January 2022 (but it does not cover weekends). This table applies the holiday period rule and weekend rule when they are needed.

To find out the last date to make an appeal on a planning authority decision:

1. Find the date that the planning authority made its decision on the planning application in the left-hand column of the relevant table.
2. Then go across to the right to see the last date you can make an appeal to us.
Remember we are open from 9.15am to 5.30pm on the day shown.

Example: The first table below shows that when a planning authority makes its decision on Monday 22 November, then your last date to make an appeal is Monday 20 December 2021.

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Monday 22 November 2021	Monday 20 December 2021
Tuesday 23 November 2021	Monday 20 December 2021
Wednesday 24 November 2021	Tuesday 21 December 2021
Thursday 25 November 2021	Wednesday 22 December 2021
Friday 26 November 2021	Thursday 23 December 2021

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Monday 29 November 2021	Tuesday 4 January 2022
Tuesday 30 November 2021	Wednesday 5 January 2022
Wednesday 1 December 2021	Thursday 6 January 2022
Thursday 2 December 2021	Friday 7 January 2022
Friday 3 December 2021	Monday 10 January 2022

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Monday 6 December 2021	Tuesday 11 January 2022
Tuesday 7 December 2021	Wednesday 12 January 2022
Wednesday 8 December 2021	Thursday 13 January 2022
Thursday 9 December 2021	Friday 14 January 2022
Friday 10 December 2021	Monday 17 January 2022

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Monday 13 December 2021	Tuesday 18 January 2022
Tuesday 14 December 2021	Wednesday 19 January 2022
Wednesday 15 December 2021	Thursday 20 January 2022
Thursday 16 December 2021	Friday 21 January 2022
Friday 17 December 2021	Monday 24 January 2022

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Monday 20 December 2021	Tuesday 25 January 2022
Tuesday 21 December 2021	Wednesday 26 January 2022
Wednesday 22 December 2021	Thursday 27 January 2022
Thursday 23 December 2021	Friday 28 January 2022
Friday 24 December 2021	Monday 31 January 2022

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Monday 27 December 2021	Monday 31 January 2022
Tuesday 28 December 2021	
Wednesday 29 December 2021	
Thursday 30 December 2021	
Friday 31 December 2021	

Planning authority makes a decision on planning application	Last date to make an appeal to An Bord Pleanála
Tuesday 4 January 2022	Monday 31 January 2022
Wednesday 5 January 2022	Tuesday 1 February 2022
Thursday 6 January 2022	Wednesday 2 February 2022
Friday 7 January 2022	Thursday 3 February 2022

Building Control Acts and Water Pollution Acts cases

The Christmas and New Year holidays also affect appeals under the Building Control Acts and Water Pollution Acts.

There is an important difference to time limits on these cases compared to planning appeals and applications. **Only** the weekend rule applies to time limits on these cases.

The holiday period rule does not apply on a case **under the Building Control Acts or the Water Pollution Acts**.

Example:

I want to make an appeal on a fire safety certificate decision. The building control authority made the decision on the application on Friday 26 November 2021.

The time limit for you to make your appeal is **Thursday 30 December 2021**.

Why?

1. For a decision made on Friday 26 November 2021, the last day of the one-month period would be Saturday 25 December 2021 (see **red X** in calendar).
2. We are closed on Saturday 25 December 2021. The weekend rule is used and the last day to make an appeal is the next working day our office is open.
3. Therefore, the last day to receive this appeal is Thursday 30 December 2021 (see **green circle** in calendar).

November, December 2021 – January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Time period for deciding cases

This section outlines the time period for deciding each of the following:

1. Planning and Development Acts cases, and
2. Building Control Acts cases and Water Pollution cases (page 23).

1. Planning and Development Acts cases

For Planning and Development Acts cases, the amount of time (statutory objective period) the Board has to make a decision on the case will be increased by up to nine days if it is with An Bord Pleanála during the holiday period.

Three examples of planning cases

Example 1

My appeal was made on Tuesday 24 August 2021. The statutory objective period (18 weeks) target date should be Monday 27 December 2021.

The decide-by date for your appeal is **Wednesday 5 January 2022**.

Why?

- Without the holiday period, your case would be due to be decided by the Board by Monday 27 December 2021. However, the 18-week statutory objective period to decide this case includes four days of the holiday period.
- These five additional days start after the end of the holiday period, so the decide-by date for this appeal is Wednesday 5 January 2022.

Example 2

The appeal was made on Wednesday 27 October 2021. The statutory objective period target date should be Tuesday 1 March 2022.

The decide-by date for the appeal is **Thursday 10 March 2022**.

Why?

- Without the holiday period, the case would be due to be decided by the Board by Tuesday 1 March 2022. However, the 18-week statutory objective period to decide this case includes all nine days of the holiday period.
- These nine additional days are included in the time period for this case, so the decide-by date for this appeal is Thursday 10 March 2022.

Example 3

The strategic housing application was made on Friday 15 October 2021 and the 16-week statutory objective period decide-by date should be Thursday 3 February 2022.

The decide-by date for the application is **Monday 14 February 2022**.

Why?

- Without the holiday period, the case would be due to be decided by the Board by Thursday 3 February 2022. However, the 16-week statutory objective period to decide this strategic housing case includes all nine days of the holiday period.
- These nine additional days are included in the time period for this case, so the decide-by date for this application is Monday 14 February 2022. (Nine days after 3 February is 12 February which is a Saturday, so the weekend rule applies.)

2. Building Control Acts cases and Water Pollution Acts cases

If the case is under the Building Control Acts or the Water Pollution Acts, there is no holiday period rule. Therefore, Christmas and New Year will not affect the statutory objective period, the normal period of four months will continue to apply.

Viewing decided case files: Public access

You can [view decided case files](#) through our public access service over the Christmas and New Year period on days that we are open. This service is free.

If you want to view a decided case file, please contact us at publicaccess@pleanala.ie to arrange a time to view the file or files. This will also allow our staff to have the file or box available in the office when you arrive to view them.

Due to social distancing requirements, we may need to limit the number of people using the public access reading facilities in our office.

Further information about your case

To get further information about how your case is affected by the Christmas and New Year period, please [contact us](#). Our contact information is on page 25.

Legislation

The laws and regulations referred to in this document are:

- [Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended](#)
- [Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended](#)
- [Planning and Development \(Housing\) and Residential Tenancies Act 2016](#)
- [Building Control Acts 1990 to 2014](#)
- [Local Government \(Water Pollution\) Act 1977](#)
- [Water Services Act 2007](#)

Contact us

If you want a copy of this document in a different format or if you need more information, please contact An Bord Pleanála.

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