



HR POLICIES & PROCEDURES (HR)

RESERVISTS POLICY

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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust ('The Trust') is committed to support staff who are in the Reserve Forces (Maritime Reserve, Army Reserve and RAF Reserve) and who may be called up for mobilisation to areas of conflict.
- 1.2 These staff require regular time off for training to maintain their skills and readiness for deployment. The training undertaken by reservists enables them to develop skills and abilities that can be of benefit to them as employees, and to the employer in terms of service delivery
- 1.3 The [Mandate from the Government to Health Education England: April 2014 to March 2015](#) states that there are clear advantages to the NHS, its staff and the Armed Forces of healthcare professionals and other staff contributing to the armed services as reservists. There are benefits which accrue to the NHS, its staff and the hosts and recipients of volunteering at home and overseas.
- 1.4 The average Reservist receives approximately £8000 of training per annum in skills such as communications, IT and LGV licences (Gov.uk). Therefore the more Reservists the Trust employs, the more we can benefit from these transferrable qualities. Exposure to Reserve Forces also develops core values including teamwork, leadership and the ability to improvise in unfamiliar or difficult circumstances.
- 1.5 The Trust values of Teamwork, Caring, Professional and Innovation underpin everything we do to support our vision of saving lives and enabling patients to get the care they need. SCAS aims to nurture a healthy culture, based on all staff demonstrating their role-relevant values-based behaviours within their working lives. All staff are expected to model their behaviours to support SCAS with its strategic aims to become an Employer, Partner and Provider of Choice.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Trust has pledged its support for members of staff who are currently in or wishing to join the Reserve Forces and acknowledges the training undertaken by Reservists that enables them to develop skills and abilities that are of benefit to both the individual and their employer.
- 2.2 This policy intends to define The Trust's obligations towards all employees who are members of the Reserve Forces.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 The policy applies equally to all employees working on any of The Trust's sites.
- 3.2 The Trust will not disadvantage those Reservists who notify The Trust of their Reserve status or those Reservists who are made known to The Trust directly by the Armed Forces.
- 3.3 Reservists are required to inform their employer that they are a member of the Reserve Forces and the specific Force that they belong to (*A Declaration of Military Service form can be found in Appendix 2*). This is so that The Trust can provide the appropriate level of support to the Reservist. It also assists with resource planning during periods of leave e.g. training and/or mobilisation.

Reservist employees are also required to grant permission for their Unit Commanding Officer to write directly to their employer subject to any security considerations. This is known as 'Employer Notification' and ensures The Trust is made aware that the employee is a Reservist and the benefits, rights and obligations and annual training commitments that apply.

The MoD will issue written confirmation to the employer informing them the employee is a Member of the Reserve Forces. The letter will provide detail of mobilisation obligations and rights as an employee; rights as an employer; and details of the financial assistance available if an employee is mobilised. Where possible, the MOD will routinely inform employers three months before the start of the training year of the annual training commitments that their employee is expected to attend. It will also provide reasonable notice of any changes. The MoD will also send a follow-up letter each year to confirm that the information held is still accurate.

It is the responsibility of the Reservist to ensure their personal details are kept up to date e.g. if they change employer or leave their respective Reserve Force.

In any circumstance, the Reservist will not be disadvantaged as a result of notifying The Trust of their Reserve status.

- 3.4 This policy does not apply to anything other than Military Employment. In the case of other roles, such as Special Constable, please refer to the Additional Leave Policy and other leave policies including the Paid and Unpaid leave policy.

4. EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Trust is committed to promoting positive measures that eliminate all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, marriage and civil partnership, disability, race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity or any other basis not justified by law or relevant to the requirements of the post. The Trust will therefore take every possible step to ensure that this procedure is applied fairly to all employees regardless of the aforementioned protected characteristics, whether full or part-time or employed under a permanent or a fixed-term contract or any other irrelevant factor.

- 4.1 By committing to a policy encouraging equality of opportunity and diversity, The Trust values differences between members of the community and within its existing workforce, and actively seeks to benefit from their differing skills, knowledge, and experiences in order to provide an exemplary healthcare service. The Trust is committed to promoting equality and diversity best practice both within the workforce and in any other area where it has influence.
- 4.2 Where there are barriers to understanding; for example, an employee has difficulty in reading or writing, or where English is not their first language, additional support will be put in place wherever necessary to ensure that the process to be followed is understood and that the employee is not disadvantaged at any stage in the procedure. Further information on the support available can be sought from the HR Department.
- 4.3 Employees exercising their rights and entitlements under these regulations will suffer no detriment as a result.

5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 There are two main pieces of legislation relating to employers and the Volunteer Reserve Forces.

- [The Reserve Forces Act 1996](#) (RFA 96) which provides the powers under which reservists can be mobilised for full-time service.
- [The Reserve Forces \(Safeguard of Employment\) Act 1985](#) (SOE 85) which provides protection of employment for those liable to be mobilised and reinstatement for those returning from mobilised service.

6. THE TRUSTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 To provide reasonable leave to support training. Up to **2 weeks paid leave** (pro rata - per annual leave year) will be made available to reservists to attend annual camp or equivalent continuous training. Additional annual leave from the employees normal annual allocation may be granted for short periods of training, provided adequate notice is given (at least 35 working days) and where such training cannot be undertaken in off-duty time. Attendance at weekend camps, which cannot be undertaken during off-duty, will be subject to the same arrangements.

6.1.1 Reservists need to apply for this leave by submitting a claim in writing. Note that this is an application for leave and not a right, and managers may not grant this leave under exceptional circumstances e.g. operational pressure.

7. MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Reservists are responsible to inform their managers of the training they are committed to do (this ranges from 24-40 days depending on which service they belong to and any specialist skills they have)

7.1.1 Line managers will as far as possible facilitate work rosters to allow attendance for annual camp and other training commitments, e.g. weekly or weekend training sessions.

7.1.2 Reservist employees are required to give as much notice as possible to allow appropriate planning for absences. This should include detail of all planned military training that will require absence from the workplace at the beginning of each year. Permission will be granted where possible in line with service needs. Once given, permission will not be rescinded except in exceptional circumstances e.g. operational pressure.

8. MOBILISATION

8.1 Mobilisation is the process of calling reservists into full-time service. This can be with the Regular Forces on the military operations or to fulfil their part of the UK's defence strategy. The Reserve Forces Act 1996 provides the legal basis for mobilisation. In the past this has usually been done on a voluntary basis with the prior agreement of employers but can involve compulsory mobilisation of selected personnel. Subject to the severity of the crisis there would normally be a minimum of 28 days' notice. Mobilisation will normally be for between 3 and 12 months. For operational reasons the Ministry of Defence (MoD) is unable to give the employer a precise return date.

8.2 An employee who wishes to volunteer for mobilisation must seek prior agreement of their employer via the designated contact and line manager. Any such request

should be submitted in writing and will be considered within 10 working days. Any decisions made will be confirmed in writing.

- 8.3 Where there is compulsory mobilisation of any employee, The Trust is entitled to apply for deferral, revocation or exemption from the call out. Suitable and timely evidence will need to be provided to support an application to defer, revoke or seek exemption from the call out.
- 8.4 *Pre-mobilisation:* Meetings with the Reservist must take place to ensure all mobilisation paperwork completed (including pay, benefits & pension arrangements) and to discuss any handover of work and agreements for keeping in touch.
- 8.5 *During mobilisation:* The Employee must keep in touch with The Trust as agreed and is obliged to inform The Trust should their circumstances change i.e. length of mobilisation or any health concerns.
- 8.6 *Post-mobilisation:* The Trust and the Employee must ensure to fulfil their return to work obligations, any necessary after care and support requirements to be discussed with the Employee.
- 8.6.1 When an employer is advised by a reservist that they want to return to work, the employer is obliged reengage them as per their contract of employment as stated in The Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985. Where this is not possible, they must be offered an equivalent position with the same terms and conditions of service. The right to return to work lasts for six months after demobilisation.
- 8.6.2 To enable SCAS to plan for the staff members return to work after their military service has ended, reservists must advise their line manager (or designated contact) in writing, the date they will be available to start work. This communication should be made no later than 5 weeks after the completion of military service. The employer must be advised as soon as possible, if, due to illness or some other reasonable cause, the employee is unable to start work on the agreed date.

9. NHS PENSION WHILST ON ACTIVE SERVICE

- 9.1 A reservist who is called-up is entitled to remain a member of the NHS Pension Scheme. The MoD will pay the employer's pension contributions whilst the individual is mobilised provided they continue to pay their individual contributions. Where mobilisation occurs, the employee will be given special unpaid leave of absence. The employee's pension contributions would be calculated and held over until the employee returns. These would then be recovered monthly from salary and over the same period as the employee was absent. The employer will continue, on request of the employee, to pay employer's contributions to the NHS Pension Scheme for the period of mobilisation and invoice the MoD to recover this amount. Further information regarding pensions refer to NHS Pensions Agency: <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Pensions/4189.aspx>

10. ANNUAL LEAVE WHILST MOBILISED

- 10.1 Reservists have no entitlement to accrue annual leave whilst mobilised and on unpaid leave

- 10.2 Reservists will have a period of 'post tour' leave which they accrue at the rate of 2.5 days per month of service from the MoD. This leave will be taken before the individual is demobilised.

Any annual leave untaken in line with the *Annual Leave Policy* up to the date of mobilisation may be carried over into the following leave year. The maximum of 37.5 hours rule associated with untaken annual leave being carried forward is waived in the case of a reservist if they are unable to take leave due to being on duty.

11. EXEMPTION AND DEFERRAL FROM MOBILISATION

- 11.1 The employer has the right to ask for exemption from, or deferral of, mobilisation if it is considered that the organisation will suffer serious harm because of their absence. Serious harm can be defined as demonstrable harm to the provision of services or any financial harm.
- 11.2 To be considered for exemption or deferral, the Reservist, or the employer, must make an application, within seven days of the Reservist being served with a mobilisation notice, to the Service Adjudication Officer (SAO) for the Service in which the Reservist will serve. Late applications can only be made with the permission of the SAO appointed by the MoD.

12. MONITORING & REVIEW

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed as indicated on the front sheet – or sooner subject to legislative change.

13. RELATED POLICIES

- 13.1 Please read this policy in conjunction with the following:
- Additional Employment Policy
 - Annual Leave Policy
 - Capability Policy
 - Discipline and Conduct Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Grievance Policy
 - Paid and Unpaid Leave Policy
 - Sickness Management Policy

USEFUL CONTACTS & FURTHER INFORMATION**Name** Laura Farrow – Recruitment Advisor

Tel: 07795 347789

Email: laura.farrow@scas.nhs.uk**Name** SaBREWebsite: <http://www.sabre.mod.uk/Employers/Supportive-Employers/Industry-Bodies-working-with-SaBRE/NHS-Employers.aspx>**Unison**Website: www.unison.org.uk

Tel: 0870 770 1112

Email: unison-southern@unison.co.uk**Unite the Union**Website: www.unitetheunion.org

Tel: 01753 313820/0800 709 007

Email: Membership.southeast@unitetheunion.org**GMB**Website: <https://www.gmb-southern.org.uk>

Tel: 0208 397 8881 (Regional Office)

Email: info@gmb.org.uk**Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)**Website: www.acas.org.uk/**Department for Business, Innovation & Skills**Website: www.bis.gov.uk

Armed Forces Reservist Declaration

Existing employment with South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Surname:..... Forename(s)

Post held:

Location:..... ESR No:

Line Manager.....

Current weekly working hours:.....

Name of employer and Unit.....

Address of employer:.....

.....Postcode:

Contact name at Unit:.....

Please describe the main activities of this role:

Enclose a job description & person specification where available

Equality Impact Assessment Form Section One – Screening

Name of Function, Policy or Strategy: **Reservist Policy**

Officer completing assessment: **Laura Farrow**

Telephone Number: **07795 347 789**

1.	What is the main purpose of the strategy, function or policy?
	To set out guidelines for all staff who serve with the Reserve Forces. To provide information regarding time off for training and mobilisation procedures.
2.	List the main activities of the function or policy? (for strategies list the main policy areas)
	Reservists are entitled to 2 weeks paid leave if they give their managers sufficient notice, and where their absence is not seem to be detrimental to patient care.
3.	Who will be the main beneficiaries of the strategy/function/policy?
	All staff of SCAS whom serve with the Reserve Forces and, indirectly, everyone they work with beyond SCAS.
Use the table overleaf to indicate the following:-	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Where do you think that the strategy/function/policy could have an adverse impact on any equality group, i.e. it could disadvantage them? b. Where do you think that there could be a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relations within equality target groups? 	

		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Reasons
GENDER	Women	Yes	N/A	Work-life balance – especially with reference to the care of children and elderly relatives.
	Men	N/A	N/A	
RACE	Asian or Asian British People	N/A	Yes	Possible difficulties in understanding the policy if English not first language
	Black or Black British People	N/A	Yes	
	Chinese people and other people	N/A	Yes	
	People of Mixed Race	N/A	Yes	
	White (inc Irish) people	N/A	N/A	
	Disabled People	N/A	Yes	Excluded by Reserve Forces' Policies
	Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	N/A	N/A	
	Transgender	N/A	N/A	
AGE	Older People (60+)	N/A	N/A	
	Younger People (17 to 25) and children	N/A	N/A	
	Faith Groups	N/A	N/A	
	Equal Opportunities and/or improved relations	N/A	N/A	Yes – ensuring that a fair and consistent process is followed for all Trust staff.

Notes:

Faith groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Sikhs and Hindus. Consider faith categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts. The categories used in the race section refer to those used in the 2001 Census. Consideration should be given to the specific communities within the broad categories such as Bangladeshi people and to the needs of other communities that do not appear as separate categories in the Census, for example, Polish.

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

Unit 7 & 8, Talisman Business Centre, Talisman Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 6HR

Reservists Policy – Version 4 – May 2017EIA – II

5. If you have indicated that there is a negative impact, is that impact:		
	Yes	No
Legal (it is not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory law)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Intended	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Level of Impact	High	Low
If the negative impact is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact, please complete a thorough assessment after completing this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6(a). Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance? Explain how below:		
Clear, simple language used. Line managers support and guide their staff to understand what has been written in the policy and the impact/effect it would have on them.		
6(b). Could you improve the strategy, function or policy positive impact? Explain how below:		
By using clear and simple language.		
7. If there is no evidence that the strategy, function or policy promotes equality, equal opportunities or improves relations – could it be adopted so it does? How?		
N/A		

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one copy to the Trust's Equality Lead.	
Signed: Laura Farrow
Name: Laura Farrow
Date: 18/05/2017

Equality Impact Assessment Form Section Two – Full Assessment

Name of Function, Policy or Strategy: **Reservists Policy**

Officer completing assessment: **Laura Farrow**

Telephone: **07795 347 789**

Part A

1. Looking back at section one of the EqlA, in what areas are there concerns that the strategy, policy or project could have a negative impact?

Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sexuality/Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faith	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Summarise the likely negative impacts:-

..... Difficulties with understanding the policy relating to language problems and/or learning
 disabilities. No perceived issues relating to other groups; actively addresses some

3. Using the table below, give a summary of what previous or planned consultation on this topic, policy, function or strategy has or will take place with groups or individuals from the equality target groups and what has this consultation noted about the likely negative impact?

Equality Target Groups	Summary of consultation planned or taken place
Gender	
Race	Standard 21 days' consultation across the Trust.
Disability	Standard 21 days' consultation across the Trust.

Equality Target Groups	Summary of consultation planned or taken place
Sexuality/Transsexuality	
Older People	
Younger People	
Faith	

4. What consultation has taken place or is planned with Trust staff including staff that have or will have direct experience of implementing the strategy, policy or function?

..... As previous table.

.....

.....

5. Check that any research, reports, studies concerning the equality target groups and the likely impact have been used to plan the project and guide or indicate what research you intend to carry out:-

Equality Target Groups	Title/type of/details of research/report
Gender	
Race	
Disability	
Sexuality/Transsexuality	
Older People	
Younger People	
Faith	

6. If there are gaps in your previous or planned consultation and research, are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to get further views or evidence on the issues?

Yes (Please list them and explain how you will obtain their views)

.....
.....
.....

No

Part B

Complete this section when consultation and research has been carried out

- 7a. As a result of this assessment and available evidence collected, including consultation, state whether there will be a need to be any changes made/planned to the policy, strategy or function.
- 7b. As a result of this assessment and available evidence, is it important that the Trust commissions specific research on this issue or carries out monitoring/data collection?

(You may want to add this information directly on to the action plan at the end of this assessment form)

.....
.....
.....

8. Will the changes planned ensure that negative impact is:

Legal?
(not discriminatory, under anti-discriminatory legislation)

Intended?

Low impact?

9a. Have you set up a monitoring/evaluation/review process to check the successful implementation of the strategy, function or policy?

Yes No

9b. How will this monitoring/evaluation further assess the impact on the equality target groups/ensure that the strategy/policy/function is non-discriminatory?

Details:

.....

.....

.....

Please complete the action plan overleaf, sign the EQIA, retain a copy and send a copy of the full EQIA and Action Plan to the Trust's Equality Lead.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

EQIA ACTION PLAN

Issue	Action Required	Lead Officer	Timescale	Resource Implications	Comments
Difficulties of understanding	Plain English, simple language		During drafting	Built into process	
Difficulties of understanding	Managers to support staff to understand		In use, ongoing	Shouldn't be any.	

Please continue on another sheet if you need to.