



# **Employment of Armed Forces Personnel and Support for Reservists Policy**



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## 1.0 Introduction

SHEQ Services Ltd supports its reservists in the British Armed Forces and ex-British Armed Forces personnel. The reserve forces include the Army Reserve, Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marine Reserve, and Royal Auxiliary Air Force Reserves.

The company recognizes the vital role of the armed forces, the valuable contributions of reservists to the national interest and the community, and the transferable skills developed by reservists that can benefit the company.

The company will assist reservists to the best of its ability, such as accommodating unusual leave requirements or adjusting working patterns.

## 2.0 Recruitment of Armed Forces Veterans

As part of SHEQ Services' commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, we ensure that ex-armed forces personnel aren't disadvantaged due to their service. Veterans of the armed forces, along with their spouses or civil partners, applying for a job at the company will be guaranteed an interview, provided they meet the following criteria:

1. They or their spouse/civil partner are currently serving in the armed forces and within 12 weeks of their discharge date.
2. They or their spouse/civil partner had long-term employment with the armed forces within the last five years.
3. They meet the essential criteria for the advertised role.
4. They confirm that they wish any application for a post at SHEQ Services to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme.

## 3.0 Informing SHEQ Services that you are a Reservist

To support reservists, the company requests that new starters who are already reservists or existing staff who become reservists inform their line manager as soon as possible that they are, or intend to become, reservists. This request is made solely to enable the company to address the practical implications of this commitment and provide the necessary support. Reservists who comply with this request will not face any disadvantages.

## 4.0 Time Off for Reservist Activities

Employees who are reservists will receive an additional five days of paid discretionary leave.

All other time off requested by reservists will be covered by their annual leave allocation or can be requested as unpaid leave.

Employees should submit their leave requests to their line manager using the standard procedures outlined in the employee handbook. While the company will make every effort to accommodate requests for this additional leave in accordance with operational needs, line managers cannot guarantee approval for all requests. Therefore, to ensure employees can take time off when necessary, they should apply for the additional leave as soon as possible if informed they need to take time off from work, providing a minimum of three months' notice whenever possible.

This arrangement is only available to employees who can provide evidence of their need to take time off for reservist activities, such as a letter from their commanding officer.

This leave cannot be used for days when the employee is not engaged in reservist activities, such as to recover from the physical demands of a weekend away with the reserve forces.

## 5.0 Flexible Working Requests

SHEQ Services offers Flexible Working to all employees who have served for at least 26 weeks. Employees can request a change in their working hours or pattern for a temporary or permanent period, subject to the guidelines.

## 6.0 Mobilisation

Reservists may be called out for military operations, usually with a 28-day notice before mobilization, which can last up to 12 months. Upon being called out, the employee must present their mobilization papers, typically accompanied by a letter from the Ministry of Defence (MoD), to their line manager. This document should specify the mobilization date and potential duration. Occasionally, the MoD may contact the organization independently.

During mobilization, employees will receive special unpaid leave of absence. They will not accrue annual leave during this period.

The company acknowledges that, under the Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985, if it deems the employee's absence for military service probable to cause 'serious harm' to the business, the company may seek an exemption, deferral, or revocation of mobilization. The company recognizes that the criteria for these exemptions, deferrals, or revocations are stringent, and such applications will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

### 6.1 Pay During Mobilisation

There are no requirements for the company to pay the reservist during their absence on military operations. During this period, the reservist will receive service pay from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) commensurate with their military rank, along with a standard award to compensate for any shortfall (up to the statutory limit) between their service pay and their normal average weekly earnings.

The company will also continue to contribute to the employee's occupational pension scheme (provided that the employee agrees to continue making their own contributions to the scheme during the mobilization period).

### 6.2 Demobilisation

Regardless of the duration of military service, the mobilized reservist has the right to be reinstated to their former role within the company within six months of demobilization, subject to favourable terms and conditions.

If reinstatement to the original role is not feasible, the company will re-engage the employee in the most suitable role that is reasonably possible in the current circumstances.

To exercise this right, the reservist must write to SHEQ Services by the third Monday following demobilization, confirming their intention to return to work within the next 13 weeks. This 13-week period can be extended for an additional 13 weeks if unforeseen circumstances such as illness or injury prevent the reservist from returning during the initial period. However, if the reservist fails to comply within 26 weeks of demobilization, they relinquish their right to return to work with SHEQ Services.

The company will make every reasonable effort to support the reservist's re-integration into their position.

## 6.3 Unauthorised Absence

The company will treat any unauthorised leave as a disciplinary matter that could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including procedural dismissal. Employees should be informed that taking an unapproved leave period will result in disciplinary action upon their return to work.

## 6.4 Continuity of Employment

The reservist's employment with SHEQ Services will remain continuous if they are reinstated to their former job within six months of demobilization. However, when calculating an employee's total continuous employment period, the company will exclude the days between the reservist's call-up for military operations and their return to work.

## 7.0 Support for Line Managers of Reservists

Line managers should first contact the Director or Business Coordinator if they have any questions or need additional information regarding this statement.

## 8.0 Further Information

Further information can also be obtained from the following websites:

[ACAS](#)

[UK Government – Rights and Responsibilities for reservists and employers](#)

[UK Government – Defence Relationship Management](#)