

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- *no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- *in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- *promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation; by displaying the logo along with our own corporate badge, via social media and our own website*
- *seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old and working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP), in order to establish a tailored employment pathway for Service Leavers; hold briefing days specifically for those leaving the Armed Forces, as a way to raise awareness of the opportunities for employment within our Fire and Rescue Service.*
- *striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners; advertise job opportunities through service friendly recruitment agencies and charities.*
- *recognising relevant military qualifications in recruitment/application processes.*
- *endeavouring to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment; consider whether special paid leave is appropriate for employees who are bereaved or whose loved ones are injured.*
- *seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, by accommodating their training and deployment where possible.*

- *offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible, as well as encourage our employees to be cadet helpers or instructors.*
- *aiming to actively promote and when possible participate in Armed Forces Day; follow the Armed Forces Day on social media and post messages of support on social media and links to the Armed Forces website, fly the Armed Forces flag at our Service headquarters.*
- *to register for the 'Defence Employer Recognition Scheme'.*

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from both the Armed Forces and wider community on how we are doing.