

The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) is a promise by the nation, ensuring that those who serve, or have served, and their families, are treated fairly. Its key principles are that the Armed Forces community (Veterans, Service Leavers, Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and military spouses/families) should be treated fairly in the provision of public and commercial services; and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

AFC Template – use this to draft your pledges. Section 2 is yours to adapt as you wish, to support your business model.

AFC pledge examples – expands on the suggested pledges found in the template itself. It is your decision as to what pledges feature in Section 2 of the AFC template, I am happy to advise further as necessary. Edit section 2 of the template document to outline your own commitments to the Armed Forces community. In the pledge document, we are asking businesses to explain how they intend to fulfil the commitments which they are making. For example, under ‘Veterans’, you may wish to state: ‘by advertising vacancies through the Career Transitions Partnership and the Recovery Career Service’. Or under ‘Promoting the Armed Forces’ you could include ‘by publicising our Covenant on our website and displaying the Covenant logo’. You can find other suggestions in the Guidance Notes. It is worth stating that one of Defence’s big priorities is Reserves; you are therefore strongly encouraged to include the “support the employment of Reservists” commitment, ideally backed up with an additional 2 weeks leave for annual training commitments. There is also more emphasis being placed upon supporting the Cadet Organisations.

The key point here is to try and avoid repeating word for word suggested pledges, but nuance and alter them to reflect how your organisation might support. Please do not hesitate to give me a call or email if you would like to discuss this further, or wish to discuss any ideas you may have about what your company can commit to.

Once you have signed the AFC, you will also be eligible to register with Forces Families Jobs, which concentrates on employment and training support for military spouses and partners of serving members of the Armed forces, regular and reserve.

The Forces Employment Charity is also another potential recruitment platform, which tend to look after veterans and reservists, and has a link to CTP.

The Office for Veteran Affairs have recently published 'An Employers' Guide to Hiring Veterans' which seeks to showcase best practice developed in the UK to support our veterans and Armed Forces community into employment, providing employers, large and small across the UK, with the tools, information and guidance they need to make the most of what our veterans have to offer.

Benefits to signing the Armed Forces Covenant:

- The Armed Forces Covenant allows your business to focus their support for the Armed Forces community in a single document, forming the foundation for a partnership with Defence.
- Signing the covenant means that you are supporting your employees who choose to serve the nation as Reservists (Reservists represent 18.5% of the operational capability of the UK Armed Forces).
- Signing the Covenant will allow you to demonstrate you are Forces Friendly, thereby attracting military personnel to your business.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - Defence sits at the heart of communities. Becoming Armed Forces friendly allows you to align some of your CSR and ESG objectives in support of Defence

- This is a great opportunity to employers at our many local
- Closer working links with opportunities to work together for staff training, free recruitment opportunities for staff through the
- Signing the Armed Forces Defence Relationship Management reward your existing and future community.



network with other Forces Friendly engagement events every year.

Defence could allow more mutually beneficial objectives i.e. support and adult volunteering Cadet Forces.

Covenant will allow the Regional team at the MoD to recognise and support for the Armed Forces

Sean McCarthy

Sport, Physical Activity, and Environment Co-Ordinator

Armed Forces Covenant Lead

Place Directorate

Tel: 01743 255933

Declaration template

Company Name

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

ADD

Signed on behalf of:

Ministry of Defence

Name:

Position:

Date:

Name:

Position:

Date:



Ministry
of Defence

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom

His 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 **Company Name** 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

The following are suggested draft pledges covering the range of Defence personnel for whom support may be given. Delete, add or change any of the pledges to show how you can pledge support for Defence personnel in ways best suited to you. Pledges may be changed at any time in the future to reflect your changing circumstances.

2.1 We recognise the value that serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, to our staff, customers, suppliers, contractors and wider public.
- **Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to support the employment of Service leavers;
- **Service Spouses & Partners:** supporting the employment of Service spouses and partners; partnering with the Forces Families Jobs Forum (<https://www.forcesfamiliesjobs.co.uk/>); and providing flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment.
- **Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment; actively encouraging members of staff to become Reservists;
- **Cadet Organisations:** supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisations, granting additional leave to attend annual training camps and courses; actively encouraging members of staff to become volunteer leaders in cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the benefits of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce.
- **National Events:** supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day and Remembrance activities;
- **Armed Forces Charities:** supporting Armed Forces charities with fundraising and supporting staff who volunteer to assist;
- **Commercial Support:** offering a discount to members of the Armed Forces community;
- *any additional commitments the company wishes to make.*

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature, on staff notices, and on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community, our staff and our customers on how we are doing. *(Amend as appropriate)*