



Australian Government

Department of Defence

Defence People Group

Defence Community Organisation

PARTNER EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (PEAP) GUIDELINES

These Guidelines will aid you in preparing your application. You should read them in full, and ensure that you meet the eligibility requirements for the Program.

Purpose The PEAP Guidelines provide information for applicants wishing to apply for any of the following initiatives:

Professional Employment Services
Professional Re-registration Payable on Relocation

Assessment of Applications All applications submitted to the Defence Community Organisation (DCO) will be assessed to confirm eligibility.

Outcome of Applications DCO will email applicants with advice of the outcome of their applications. Applicants should anticipate that it will take a minimum of 28 days from receipt of a complete application (inclusive of completed application form and any required attachments) to be advised of an outcome.

Your Responsibility Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understand these Guidelines, that their application meets the eligibility criteria and that the information provided in their application is true and correct. Approved applicants must advise DCO (defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au) of any subsequent change in circumstances relating to:

- a. change in relationship status; and
- b. change to your residential location.

Applicants must also sign and date the application form with an understanding that the Program is Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) reportable.

Application Assistance If you require assistance in completing the PEAP application process contact the Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608 or defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au.

For more Information Go to the DCO website www.defence.gov.au/dco or call the Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

Please keep these Guidelines for your information

Preface

These guidelines set out the intent of the program along with the eligibility criteria that applications will be assessed against.

Applicants should be aware that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth). Where false or misleading information is provided, or relevant information withheld, criminal or disciplinary action under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, Public Service Act 1999, or the Criminal Code Act 1995 may be taken depending on the circumstances. If the applicant is a member of the ADF, or employed under the Public Service Act, administrative action may also be taken by Defence and sanctions imposed. Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'P' followed by a long horizontal line that ends in a small loop.

Paul Way
Director General
Defence Community Organisation

29 March 2019

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Part 1 – Introduction

1.1 Defence recognises the challenges that may be presented when navigating military life, in particular the requirement for families to relocate due to posting and the unfortunate instances of ADF members transitioning on medical grounds.

Intent of the Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP)

1.2 PEAP provides funding towards initiatives aimed to assist with the employability of partners in the circumstances of relocation due to posting or the medical transition of a member.

General

1.3 These guidelines apply to a spouse or a recognised interdependent partner (as defined in PACMAN Chapter 1, Part 3, Division 2) of an ADF member or former ADF member at the time of transition. For the purposes of these guidelines the term 'partner' will be used to mean spouse or interdependent partner.

1.4 PEAP is not a statutory benefit and is available to Defence recognised partners strictly in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy document (subject to the availability of sufficient funding).

PEAP Initiatives

1.5 Applicants can apply to access funding for the following initiatives:

- a. professional employment services, such as career advice and job search skills; and
- b. professional re-registration fees under legislative requirements payable on relocation.

1.6 Partners relocating or already overseas with the ADF member must use an Australian service provider for professional employment services.

PEAP Funding

1.7 Funding for PEAP initiatives is a contribution towards a partner's employability; it will not be Defence's responsibility to fund the full cost where the cost exceeds the PEAP funding cap for a posting location.

1.8 Any contract entered into between the approved PEAP applicant and a professional employment service provider is a private matter. In engaging a provider, the approved applicant must ensure that representations should not be made to the provider that suggests Defence is a party to that contract. Furthermore, Defence does not have a role in the case of dispute management.

1.9 The maximum amount of funding that may be used for approved PEAP initiatives in any posting location is \$1,500 AUD. Eligibility will be reassessed for each application for PEAP funding.

1.10 Expenditure over the maximum of \$1,500, available for approved PEAP initiatives in a single posting location, must be self funded.

1.11 PEAP funding is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of sufficient funding in the relevant financial year.

Part 2a – Eligibility (partners relocating due to posting)

2.1 PEAP eligibility is based on the following criteria:

- a. Applicants must be recognised on Personnel Management Key Solution (PMKeyS) as a spouse or a recognised interdependent partner of a member in Service Category (SERCAT) 6 or 7 or Service Option (SERVOP) C.
- b. Members must have received their first posting notification following completion of their initial training continuum before partners may apply for PEAP. This also applies to members who re-enlist and are required to undertake their recruit and initial employment training.
- c. Partners relocating with the member, at the time of posting, can submit applications following the receipt of a posting order and must be lodged no later than two years following the member's effective date of posting, as recorded in PMKeyS.
- d. Partners joining the member in the posting location, from the category of Member With Dependents Unaccompanied, or on marriage or recognition of an interdependent

relationship, can submit applications following the amendment of the member's marital status (e.g. married separated service requirement to married/common law) in PMKeyS and must be lodged no later than two years following the date of the amended marital status, as recorded in PMKeyS.

- e. PEAP is available to partners of members who are transitioning from the ADF on medical grounds (refer to Part 2b below).
- f. PEAP is not available to partners of members who are transitioning, aside from members transitioning on medical grounds. Once an intention to separate is recorded on PMKeyS, eligibility to PEAP funding ceases.
- g. Current serving members are not eligible for assistance under PEAP.
- h. Partners who are also ADF reservists will be considered and assessed against all other eligibility requirements. Partners who are undertaking Continuous Full Time Service are not eligible for PEAP funding.
- i. Should the member die during Service, a partner may access PEAP funds for up to two years after the member's death.

Part 2b – Eligibility (partners of ADF members transitioning medically)

2.2 PEAP eligibility is based on the following criteria:

- a. Applicants must be recognised on Personnel Management Key Solution (PMKeyS) as a spouse or a recognised interdependent partner of a member in SERCAT 6 or 7 or SERVOP C prior to the date of the PEAP application. In the circumstances of applying after the member has transitioned, the above details must align with the member's date of transition.
- b. Members must be identified as:
 - (i) Medical employment classification J51 or J52; or
 - (ii) Goal 3 through an ADF Rehabilitation Assessment and Plan
- c. Applications must be lodged no later than twelve months following the member's transition date.

Part 3 – Initiatives available

Professional Employment Services

3.1 Funding assistance is available for services such as:

- a. development of a personalised resume / curriculum vitae and/or resume / curriculum vitae coaching

A resume / curriculum vitae, is a personal advertising tool to assist with gaining an interview for employment

- b. identification of transferable skills

Identify individual skills and experience to assess the gaps in sectors of employment to move to (this does not include recognition of prior learning)

- c. employment options and job placement advice

Tailored services related to employment and job placement

- d. job search techniques and strategies

Build techniques and strategies related to particular job search approaches, such as networking, recruitment firms, responding to advertisements, social media, cold calling and professional associations

- e. development of online employment profile (e.g. LinkedIn) Note: Funding for memberships with online profile providers will not be considered under PEAP.

Like a resume, an online employment profile assists with communicating skills and experience, along with expediting connections

- f. application and selection criteria preparation coaching

Coaching for writing and tailoring job applications (including addressing selection criteria)

- g. preparation and presentation for interview

Develop skills in preparing (for example, researching the role/company) and undertaking an interview (for example, dress to company/industry standards, body language)

3.2 Applications must be accompanied by a formal quote (in the partner's name) from the partners chosen employment services provider.

3.3 To comply with Commonwealth Procurement Rules, DCO is unable to recommend individual services providers to partners.

Professional re-registration fees

3.4 Partners who relocate to a new location on posting and are required to re-register due to legislative requirements, in order to seek employment in their new location, can apply for payment of such re-registration fees. Partners must demonstrate they held registration, required under legislation, in the losing posting location as part of their PEAP application. Note: Funding will not be considered for annual registration fees or initial registration. In exception to clause 6.1 of these Guidelines, consideration will be given to retrospective requests for re-registration costs on relocation. For retrospective requests to be considered, applicants are required to provide an invoice and receipt with their application.

3.5 Partners relocating to a post transition location, upon a member's medical transition, who are required to re-register due to legislative requirements, in order to seek employment in their post transition location, can apply for payment of such re-registration fees. Partners must demonstrate they held registration, required under legislation, in the transition location as part of their PEAP application. Note: Funding will not be considered for annual registration fees or initial registration. In exception to clause 6.1 of these Guidelines, consideration will be given to retrospective requests for re-registration costs on relocation. For retrospective requests to be considered, applicants are required to provide an invoice and receipt with their application.

Part 4 – How to apply

4.1 Applications can be lodged at any time. This is subject to the overall program having sufficient funding.

4.2 Interested partners need to read and understand the eligibility criteria and then complete the PEAP application form. The form must be signed and dated by both the member and the applicant, and submitted to defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au. The PEAP application form is a .pdf file that can be populated electronically and the member and partner can sign electronically if preferred. If the member is absent due to deployment, training or exercise, please state this in his/her signature field on the application form.

4.3 Applications must be approved prior to commencing a PEAP initiative. There is no discretion to approve and fund applications for assistance retrospectively. In exception to clause 6.1 of these guidelines, consideration will be given to requests for Re-registration costs.

4.4 DCO staff will assess applications in the order in which they are received. Applicants should anticipate that it will take a minimum of 28 days from receipt of a complete and correct application (and any necessary evidence as attachments to the application form) for an assessment to be made. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

Part 5 – Approved PEAP applicants

5.1 Partners who are approved for assistance under PEAP, must access funding within 6 months of approval or they will be required to re-apply and will be assessed against the extant criteria. An application must include the proposed PEAP initiative.

5.2 If circumstances change and a partner is not able to undertake or complete an approved PEAP initiative, it is the partner's responsibility to advise DCO in writing and arrange reimbursement to Defence, prior to consideration of any further PEAP applications. Please refer to clause 6.4 of these guidelines for the process for reimbursing Defence.

5.3 Partners who have previously been approved for PEAP funding and want to apply for further funding for additional initiatives, must complete a new PEAP application. This application will be assessed for eligibility against the current guidelines.

Part 6 – Payment

Payment

6.1 Applications must be approved prior to commencing a PEAP initiative. There is no discretion to approve and fund applications for assistance retrospectively.

6.2 Upon receipt of a correctly rendered invoice, DCO will pay the approved service provider on a partner's behalf. DCO will not pay a provider if the invoice is made out to the Department of Defence. Invoices must be in the approved applicant's name. Alternatively, after approval has been granted by DCO, the partner may pay the provider and then seek reimbursement from DCO.

6.3 The only exception to clause 6.1 is for payments under the Re-registration PEAP initiative. The partner may pay the provider and seek approval and reimbursement from DCO. The applicant must provide a copy of the original invoice and a receipt as evidence that payment has occurred. The expense will be reimbursed into the ADF member's or approved applicant's ROMAN nominated bank account. Funding can only be paid in Australian currency.

6.4 Partners seeking to repay PEAP funds to Defence should send a written request to the Defence Family Helpline. DCO will seek written confirmation of the debt from the member and forward to Defence Accounts Receivable. Defence Accounts Receivable will then issue an invoice to the member detailing the available payment options.

Fringe Benefits Tax

6.5 Payment of this benefit may result in a Reportable Fringe Benefit Tax Amount (RFBA) being recorded against the ADF member. An RFBA will result when a member has received fringe benefits to the total of \$2000 in a FBT year (1 April to 31 March). An RFBA does not have any income tax implications, but will have financial impacts if you are in receipt of any Government means tested benefits. Therefore it is recommended that applicants seek independent tax advice prior to lodging an application.

For further information regarding the impacts of a RFBA, refer to the Australian Taxation Office website or contact the Defence Tax Hotline on 1800 806 053.

Part 7 –Administration

Disclaimer

7.1 The Australian Government will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by an applicant to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy or error contained in an application.

False or Misleading Information

7.2 Applicants should be aware that giving false or misleading information to the Commonwealth is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth). Where false or misleading information is provided, or relevant information withheld, criminal or disciplinary action under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013, Defence Force Discipline Act 1982, Public Service Act 1999, or the Criminal Code Act 1995 may be taken depending on the circumstances. If the applicant is a member of the ADF, or

employed under the Public Service Act, administrative action may also be taken by Defence and sanctions imposed. Applications may be disregarded if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

Our Service Commitment

7.3 PEAP aims to provide a valuable service to its clients. As part of managing the program, the following processes and procedures are applied, ensuring that the needs of partners are met in an efficient and effective manner:

- a. Telephone queries are answered within 48 hours; and
- b. Applications will take a minimum of 28 days to assess, from receipt of a completed application.

Approving Authority

7.4 The Director General DCO is the approving authority for PEAP. However, the day to day approval of applications is delegated to DCO staff who assess applications and provide a response to each application.

Discretionary Provisions

7.5 If a partner is not eligible for assistance, they may apply in writing to the delegate requesting discretionary approval for special/exceptional circumstances. This must be sent to the Defence Family Helpline (defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au) and be accompanied by a completed application form and a detailed explanation of the circumstances. When forming their view, the delegate will consider the following factors:

- a. that the application aligns with the intent of PEAP (refer to Part 1 clause 1.2); and
- b. any other factors relevant to the application.

Review of decision process

7.6 In cases where an applicant is dissatisfied with a decision concerning PEAP, there is an internal review process.

7.7 Requests for review of a decision are to be forwarded in writing to the Defence Family Helpline (defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au) clearly identifying the reason/s for the request. Applicants should anticipate that it will take a minimum of 28 days to review and applicants will be notified of the outcome, in writing.

7.8 A request for review of a decision will be considered by the Deputy Director, National Operations, DCO.

7.9 Additionally, ADF members have access to the redress of grievance process.

Evaluation

7.10 DCO will conduct assessments of PEAP to assess that the aims of PEAP are being met and where necessary, adjust the initiatives to improve the assistance to ensure that the intent of the program is met. On the completion of your approved initiative, DCO may contact you seeking feedback on the contribution from PEAP funding towards employability.

Privacy

Why we collect information

7.11 DCO collects personal information in order to provide quality services, on behalf of Command, to members and their families. This includes assessing and evaluating issues that might impinge on the wellbeing of a family and/or harm their relationship with Defence.

How we collect information

7.12 DCO, in collecting personal information of current members and/or their family's circumstances, is required to comply with the Privacy Act 1988 which regulates the manner in which the organisation collects, handles, stores, secures, maintains, provides access to, uses and discloses personal information.

Who uses the information, and how

7.13 Who has access to the information, and under what circumstances, depends on the situation, and the nature of the request for DCO services. Information may be used by:

- a. Command;
- b. member's Commanding Officer; and/or

- c. other military agencies such as service career managers including to support individual preparedness for operations.

7.14 In general, DCO will use the information directly for the purpose it is collected. If required, for a use other than for that related to the primary purpose of collection, express consent will be sought from the client concerned.

7.15 This information may be recorded as a social work report, DCO report, case notes, DCO case plan, or a transition support separation plan, and filed in a DCO client file. DCO collects uses and/or discloses ONLY that information which is related to a function of the organisation.

Disclosure of your information

7.16 DCO may sometimes need to disclose personal information about you and/or your families' circumstances to other domestic or international agencies or organisations. These organisations may include those operating in such sectors as:

- a. health;
- b. community;
- c. medical;
- d. educational; and/or
- e. legal.

7.17 When a disclosure of personal information is made to an international authority, Defence will take reasonable steps to ensure that your information is only handled by those organisations that can practically provide an assurance/expectation of limited exposure.

More information can be found on the Defence website at <http://www.defence.gov.au/Privacy.asp>

Part 8 –Administration - Definitions

Member	ADF employee in SERCAT 6 or 7 or SERVOP C as defined in MILPERSMAN Part 2, Chapter 5
SERCAT 6	Members of the Permanent Forces rendering a pattern of service other than full-time, who are subject to the same service obligations as SERCAT 7.
SERCAT 7	Members of the Permanent Forces rendering full-time service.
SERVOP C	Members of the Reserve Forces rendering Continuous Full-Time Service (CFTS).
Partner	A partner is a person who is the spouse or interdependent partner of an ADF member as defined in PACMAN Chapter 1, Part 3, Division 2.