

# Partner Employment Assistance Program Guidelines

## Defence Community Organisation

(Note: on 1 July 2021, DCO will be renamed Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) Branch)



[www.defence.gov.au/dco/family/partners/peap.asp](http://www.defence.gov.au/dco/family/partners/peap.asp)



# Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP) Guidelines

## Produced by Defence Community Organisation

(Note: on 1 July 2021, DCO will be renamed Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) Branch)

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[www.defence.gov.au/dco](http://www.defence.gov.au/dco)

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Follow Defence Community Organisation on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter to receive information about support services, links with community organisations, and the range of DCO events for families.

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/defencecommunityorganisation](https://www.facebook.com/defencecommunityorganisation)

Twitter: @DCO\_AusDefemce

Instagram,: dco\_asudefence

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## Disclaimer

The content in these guidelines are intended to provide information for applicants wishing to apply for the Partner Employment Assistance Program. Defence does not provide advice concerning, recommending or promoting any non-government organisation.

**Cover image:**

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# 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.



**Paul Way**

Director General

Defence Community Organisation

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# Part 1 – Support initiatives and eligibility

## Intent of the Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP)

- 1.1 The Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP) provides funding for initiatives to assist ADF partners with employment when they are relocated on posting, or if their ADF member is medically transitioning.

## PEAP initiatives

- 1.2 Recognised Partners (Partners) of Full-Time ADF Members (Members) can apply to access funding for the following initiatives:
  - a. professional employment services; and
  - b. professional re-registration costs aligned to legislative requirements.

## PEAP funding

- 1.3 Support under the professional employment services initiative will be up to a maximum of \$1,500 per posting. Support for re-registration costs will be provided in addition to the \$1,500.

## Eligibility

- 1.4 To be eligible for PEAP support, partners must:
  - a. be a recognised partner of an ADF member in Service Categories 7, 6, or 5 (SERVOP C); and
  - b. not be a current serving ADF member; and
  - c. be one of the following:
    - i. be undertaking or have undertaken a relocation aligned to the posting of the ADF member; or
    - ii. be a recognised partner of a member (in the above mentioned service categories) whom is transitioning for medical reason (i.e. J51, J52 or J40 Goal 3 Rehabilitation); or
    - iii. be a recognised partner of a member (in the above mentioned service categories) whom has died during Service.
- 1.5 Note: The eligibility criteria for PEAP has been temporarily expanded to support families during COVID-19. Partners of ADF members can access PEAP at any time during the posting cycle and do not need to have recently relocated with the member.
- 1.6 Applications aligned to eligibility criteria c. ii and iii will be accepted up to two years following a member's transition date or death.

## Part 2 – Professional employment services - provider offerings

2.1 Partners can elect to use the Defence provider or a provider of their choice.

### Defence provider

2.2 The following services are offered through the Defence provider:

a) Job Search Preparation Workshop,

Delivered in varying delivery formats. Partners can undertake a Job Search Preparation (JSP) workshop at any time throughout a posting. There is no cost to the partner for this service, and will therefore not impact upon the \$1,500 support cap.

The JSP workshop will help manage your career, sell your skills and experience, build or refine your resume and provide an opportunity to gain further employment assistance through other initiatives such as Job Connections.

The JSP virtual workshop is delivered by webinar over four, two-hour modules which include:

- Module 1: Career insight and planning
  - identification of transferrable skills;
- Module 2: Personal branding (resume development)
  - development of a personalised resume and/or resume coaching;
- Module 3: Networking and job search
  - employment options and job placement advice;
  - job search techniques and strategies;
  - development of an online employment profile;
  - application and selection criteria coaching; and/or
- Module 4: Preparing for interviews
  - preparation and presentation coaching for interviews.

You will also receive lifetime access to an online portal containing thousands of career resources, tools and learning units to support your career planning.

The virtual workshops can be accessed from home or on a portable device through Microsoft Teams.

To become job ready and to gain access to potential employment opportunities faster, consider undertaking a JSP workshop prior to applying for Job Connections through the Defence provider.

b. Job Connections

Job Connections is for partners who have an up to date and contemporary resume and are interview ready. The Defence provider uses their Australia-wide employment network to fast track partners to interview by connecting them to potential employers.

It is recommended that partners undertake the free JSP workshop prior to commencing Job Connections to ensure branding (resume / LinkedIn) and interview skills are market ready.

2.3 Payment for services delivered by the Defence provider will be administered by Defence.

Provider as selected by ADF partner

2.4 Partners can elect to use a provider of their choice for employment services such as:

- a. development of a personalised resume and/or resume coaching;
- b. identification of transferrable skills;
- c. employment options and job placement advice;
- d. job search techniques and strategies;
- e. development of an online employment profile;
- f. application and selection criteria coaching; and/or
- g. preparation and presentation coaching for interviews.

2.5 Partners accessing a provider of their choice must have confirmation, from DCO, that their application for employment services is approved prior to commencing services with the provider. **Retrospective applications will not be supported by Defence.**

2.6 Partners using a provider of their choice must access the services within 6 months of approval, or they will be required to re-apply. In instances where a partner has not commenced services with a provider of their choice and has since relocated under an ADF posting, a new application for the new location will be required.

2.7 Partners must use a service provider with an Australian Business Number.

2.8 Any contract entered into between an approved PEAP applicant and an employment service provider of the partner's choice is a private matter. In engaging a provider:

- a. the approved applicant must ensure that representations made to the provider do not suggest Defence is a party to that contract; and
- b. Defence does not have a role in the case of any dispute between the partner and the provider or in any dispute management resulting from the arrangement.

2.9 Partners using a provider of their choice have two payment options:

- a. DCO can pay the service provider on the partner's behalf. Approved applicants must make arrangements for the Tax Invoice to include the following information:
  - i. addressed to "[Applicant's Name] c/o Department of Defence";
  - ii. name of the service provider;
  - iii. itemised services provided;
  - iv. amount owing;
  - v. date the invoice was issued; and
  - vi. the service provider's preferred payment method.



- b. DCO can reimburse the paid amount into the ADF member's bank account registered on the Defence accounts payable system. Receipt of payment from the service provider must include the:
  - vii. partner's name;
  - viii. itemised services provided;
  - ix. amount paid; and
  - x. date of payment.

## Part 3 – Professional re-registration

- 3.1 Partners can apply for costs of professional re-registration fees, required under legislation to secure employment, in instances when they relocate as a result of their ADF partner's posting or medical transition.
- 3.2 Costs under this initiative will be supported in addition to the \$1,500 maximum limit for professional employment services.
- 3.3 Access to this support initiative requires partners to demonstrate they held registration in the former location.
- 3.4 Annual registration or initial registration costs are not supported under PEAP.
- 3.5 Retrospective applications under this initiative will be considered, upon the submission of an itemised receipt of payment.

### Payment Options

- 3.6 There are two payment options for the re-registration initiative:
  - a. Partners are able to pay the registering body directly and submit receipts to DCO for reimbursement. Expenses will be reimbursed to the ADF member's bank account within 30 days following approval of an application. Receipts need to clearly show: payment from the partner or ADF member, a description of services provided and the associated costs.
  - b. After an application has been approved, payments can also be made by DCO on your behalf. Partners are required to submit a tax invoice addressed to "(Partner's name), c/o Department of Defence." Invoices must be a valid tax invoice that complies with the requirements of taxation law.

## Part 4 - Program Administration

- 4.1 PEAP support is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of sufficient funding in the relevant financial year.
- 4.2 To apply, partners must complete the [online application form](#).
  - 4.2.1 The link to the application form can accessed on 'Partners' page under the Employment Assistance on the DCO website.
- 4.3 Partners unable to apply electronically, should contact the PEAP team ([partner.employment@defence.gov.au](mailto:partner.employment@defence.gov.au)) for an alternative avenue to apply for PEAP support.
- 4.4 All applications will be assessed by DCO to confirm eligibility. Applicants will be notified of an outcome within 5 business days from receipt of a complete and correct application. Notification will be via the email address provided.

- 4.5 Applications will be assessed in the order in which they are received.
- 4.6 Partners who want to change a requested service, or access additional services are required to submit a new online application form.
- 4.7 Once a partner has commenced receiving services from a provider, those services will be treated as committed PEAP funds and subsequent applications aligned to that posting will be assessed as a request for additional services.
- 4.8 PEAP support will not be approved for job-specific courses, training, educational programs, or to assist with the costs of maintaining employment.

### Approving authority

- 4.9 The Director General DCO is the approving authority for PEAP, with the program administration undertaken by DCO staff.

### Discretionary provisions

- 4.10 If a partner is not eligible for assistance, they may apply in writing requesting consideration of special/exceptional circumstances. This should be emailed to DCO ([partner.employment@defence.gov.au](mailto:partner.employment@defence.gov.au)) and be accompanied by a detailed explanation of the circumstances. The PEAP delegate will consider the following factors:
  - a. whether the application aligns with the relevant PEAP initiative; and
  - b. any other factors relevant to the application.

### Review of decision

- 4.11 Partners can appeal a decision concerning PEAP through an internal review process. Requests for review of a decision are to be forwarded in writing to DCO ([partner.employment@defence.gov.au](mailto:partner.employment@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. A request for review of a decision will be considered by the Assistant-Director of Partner Employment, DCO. Additionally, ADF members have access to the redress of grievance process.

### Fringe Benefits Tax

- 4.12 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 \$2,000 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. 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.
- 4.13 By the partner and ADF member agreeing to proceed with the online application process, they are confirming that they understand that payment of this benefit may result in a Reportable Fringe Benefit Tax Amount (RFBA) being recorded against the ADF member.

### Disclaimer

- 4.14 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.

- 4.15 Any contract entered into between an approved PEAP applicant and the partner's chosen provider is a private matter. In engaging a provider, the approved applicant must ensure that representations are not made to suggest Defence is a party to the contract.
- 4.16 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 rejected if, in the belief of the Department, false or misleading information has formed a component of an application.

### Privacy and disclosure of information

- 4.17 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 impact upon the wellbeing of a family and/or harm their relationship with Defence.
- 4.18 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.
- 4.19 In general, DCO will use the information directly for the purpose it is collected. Primary collection purposes are outlined in the participant information and consent section of the application form. 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.
- 4.20 Information may be recorded as a social work report, DCO report, case notes, DCO case 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.
- 4.21 DCO may sometimes need to disclose personal information about you and/or your family's circumstances to other domestic or international agencies or organisations.
- 4.22 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>.

### Program Evaluation

- 4.23 To ensure PEAP is meeting its intent with assisting partners with professional employment services and re-registration initiatives, DCO will collect feedback to understand partner experiences of the program, the Defence provider or the provider or their choice.
- 4.24 Partners accessing PEAP will receive two electronic surveys at 6 months and 12 months post application to collect this feedback.

## Part 5 – Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Recognised Partner</b>	As defined in PACMAN Chapter 1, Part 3, Division 2 and recognised on the Personnel Management Key Solution (PMKeyS) as a spouse or interdependent partner of an ADF member
<b>Full-Time ADF Member</b>	ADF Employee in SERCAT 6, SERCAT 7 or SERVOP C as defined in MILPERSMAN Part 2, Chapter 5
<b>Medical Transition</b>	Members identified as: a. Medical employment classification J51 or J52; or b. J40 Goal 3 through an ADF Rehabilitation Assessment and Plan

*Table 1 - Definitions*