



AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE
RESERVES AND EMPLOYER SUPPORT

We Support ADF Reserves

Supportive Employer Program

Frequently asked Questions

For Employers (and other supportive organisations):

What is the new Supportive Employer Program?

Defence is committed to supporting employers and other organisations that support our Australian Defence Force Reserves. Without the support of employers this vital part of Australia's Defence capability could not be delivered.

The Supportive Employer Program publicly acknowledges and recognises organisations that go above and beyond to support Australian Defence Force reservist employees and choose to enhance their support of Defence service. The program is open to organisations of all shapes and sizes – and there is no requirement to currently employ an ADF reservist.

An employer or other organisation that signs up to the new Supportive Employer Program is publicly acknowledged and recognised as being fully supportive of employees undertaking ADF Reserve service and actively enables this service. An organisation that does not currently employ a ADF reservist commits to support future employees who may wish to render service as a reservist.

There are three tiers of membership: bronze, silver and gold. Each tier of membership acknowledges the level of support an organisation provides their reserve employees and have increasing levels of benefits.

What are the benefits for my organisation in joining the program?

Your organisation will be publicly recognised by Australian Defence Force Reserves and Employer Support (ADFRES) as a Supportive Employer of reservists. Your business will be listed in the Supportive Employer Program directory on the [ADFRES website](#). Reservists who are looking for a new workplace can scroll through the directory of supportive employers to see the organisations that will support their Defence work.

Membership will also enable direct access to the ADFRES team for advice, information and resources on how to best employ and support a reservist in your organisation. All members receive a link to the Supportive Employer Program portal which contains significant resources and tools for employers of reservists, as well as event images and more.

You will receive a merchandise pack, which includes a certificate to display in your workplace as well as a digital copy of the Supportive Employer Program Logo. We encourage you to use the logo on your webpage, email signatures and recruitment portals to convey your support.

Silver members will also have other benefits, such as virtual event invitations and the opportunity to hear from senior ADF officers.

Gold members will be exclusively invited to in-person networking and media opportunities to receive their gold member certificate, merchandise pack and network with other supportive organisations.

What if I am a large public sector organisation? Can we still apply?

Large public sector organisations will need to apply at the departmental level. Employees are required to gain approval from both their Senior Director and Human Resources team. This is so we can ensure all large organisations meet the requirements of the Program.

What are the requirements of each tier to enter the program and how will I know what category my organisation fits in to?

Employers and other supportive organisations should consider the level of membership they meet, with all applications being assessed by the Australian Defence Force Reserve and Employer Support team.

A breakdown of the requirements for each tier is listed below.

You will be placed into a tier of the *Supportive Employer Program* once your application has been processed. Organisations can move up through the tiers over time through the continued demonstration of active supportive for reservists and through improving their understanding and advocacy of ADF Reserve service.

Bronze (Declare)	Silver (Demonstrate)	Gold (Advocate)
<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer is a signatory to the Supportive Employer Program. The employer must have met their reserve service protection obligations under the Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001 for a period of 12 months prior to applying for the program. Any nominees of Defence's Employer Support Awards will be automatically awarded this tier of membership. Note: You do not need to employ reservists to enter this level of the program. 	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer must have achieved and maintained Bronze membership for at least 6 months and have a current Defence Leave Policy (DLP) that is compliant with the Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001. The employer must have met their reserve service protection obligations for a period of 2 years prior to applying for the program. Any winners of Defence's Employer Support Awards at the state level will be automatically awarded this tier of membership, once their leave policy has been approved. 	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer must have achieved and maintained Silver membership for a minimum of 6 months. The employer must not only demonstrate, but also positively advocate for their Reserve members through a current Defence/ADF leave policy that may include more generous leave provisions (e.g. additional paid leave may be provided). The employer must demonstrate recognition and utilisation of the skills, knowledge and experiences that reservists can bring to their organisation. The employer must proactively advocate and demonstrates that their recruitment and selection process considers reservists and ADF veterans equitably. The employer must actively ensure that their workforce is aware of their positive policies supporting ADF Reserve service. The employer must advertise ADF Reserves and Employer Support or the benefits of employing reservists across social or digital media. The employer must have met their reserve service protection obligations for a period of 2 years prior to applying for the program.

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any winners of Defence's Employer Support Awards at the National level be automatically awarded this tier of membership, once their leave policy has been approved. |
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How long will it take me to sign up and what time commitment does being part of the program entail?

The application should take you no longer than 10 minutes. We encourage you to start by gathering all of your organisational information (including logo) so you can breeze through the application process.

Being part of the Supportive Employer Program does not require a significant time commitment but rather an ongoing attitude to improving the awareness and support of ADF Reserve service within a business or organisation. Members of the program will at times be invited to attend activities or events, however participation is always optional.

I was a previous member of the supportive employer program; can I join the new program? Are previous members automatically placed in the program?

With the release of the new *Supportive Employer Program*, we ask all organisations that were a part of the old program to reapply. This is to ensure all details are up to date and so you will be sent a new merchandise pack and toolkit.

How will Defence promote our organisation?

Defence will include your organisation in our [Supportive Employer Program Directory](#). We direct this list to reservists who are seeking employment opportunities and we encourage you to use the Supportive Employer Program logo on your webpage and recruitment portals to convey your support also.

How do I meet my Reserve Service Protection obligations to be a part of the program? How long prior to applying should these requirements have been met?

We encourage all organisations to apply for the Supportive Employer Program and the ADFRES team can assist you in resolving any possible concerns you may have prior to joining. Meeting your obligations means being proactive in your approach to ADF Reserve service and resolving any issues that may arise. We highly encourage businesses who are seeking support with an issue or who are just making a simple enquiry, to contact our team so we can assist you!

A bronze member will need to meet their obligations under the *Defence Reserve Service Protection Act, 2001* for 12 months and silver / gold members will need meet their obligations under the Act for 2 years prior to applying.

We understand that situations can occur where service timings may need to be negotiated, and it is important as an organisation to identify and communicate any concerns to us so we can assist. Having a clear Defence leave policy is a great way to aid in meeting your Reserve service obligations and supporting your staff. A benefit of the *Supportive Employer Program* is that you will have a direct

link to ADFRES to get advice and support.

Is there a cost to apply?

There is no cost to apply or to be a member. The *Supportive Employer Program* is a free program designed to recognise and reward you (the employer).

For Reservists:

How do I nominate my employer for the program?

With the endorsement and support of your civilian employer you can apply for your civilian employer to be part of the *Supportive Employer Program*. We encourage you to engage and discuss the benefits of the program with your civilian employer to gain their approval to apply.

Can I search for organisations that are members of the program?

Absolutely! If you are a reservist searching for a new employment opportunity and are looking for a supportive employer that will be understanding about your Defence commitments, have a look through the [program directory](#).

I need help explaining the program to my superiors and why they should join. Can you help?

Yes! If your employer has any questions or would like more information, they can contact the ADF Reserves and Employer Support team adfres.npp@defence.gov.au

Need more info?

Contact the ADF Reserves and Employer Support team at adfres.npp@defence.gov.au