



AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE
RESERVES AND EMPLOYER SUPPORT
We Support ADF Reserves

Supportive Employer Program

Frequently asked Questions

For Employers:

What is the new *Supportive Employer Program*?

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

The new Supportive Employer Program publicly acknowledges and recognises those businesses and employers who go above and beyond to support their Australian Defence Force reservist employees and those businesses that wish to enhance their support of Reserve service. The program is open to organisations of all shapes and sizes and you do not have to currently employ ADF reservists to be a part of the program.

An employer or business who signs up to the new Supportive Employer Program is publicly acknowledged and recognised as being fully supportive of their employees undertaking ADF Reserve service and actively enables this service. A business may not currently employ any ADF reservists, however they do support future employees who may wish to render ADF Reserve service.

There are three tiers of membership; bronze, silver and gold. Each tier of membership acknowledges the level of support businesses provide their reserve employees and have increasing levels of benefits.

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

Your business 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 will be able to scroll through the directory of supportive employers to see the list of businesses who will support their reserve 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.

You will also receive a merchandise pack, which includes a certificate to display in your workplace and we encourage you to use the Supportive Employer Program logo on your webpage and recruitment portals to convey your support also.

Silver members will also experience other benefits, such as virtual event invites and the opportunity to hear from senior ADF Officers.

Gold members will be invited to an annual presentation and media opportunity to receive their gold member certificate, merchandise pack and network with other supportive organisations.

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

Employers and businesses 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. Businesses can move up through the tiers over time through the continued demonstration of active support 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 <i>Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001</i> for a period of 12 months prior to applying for the program. 	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer has achieved Bronze membership and has a current Defence Leave Policy (DLP) that is compliant with the <i>Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001</i>, The employer must have met their reserve service protection obligations for a period of 2 years prior to applying for the program. 	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employer has achieved Silver membership, and not only demonstrates, but also positively advocates 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 demonstrates recognition and utilisation of the skills, knowledge and experiences that reservists can bring to their organisation The employer proactively advocates and demonstrates that their recruitment and selection process considers reservists and ADF veterans equitably The employer actively ensure that their workforce is aware of their positive policies supporting ADF Reserve service, and The employer must have met their reserve service protection obligations for a period of 2 years prior to applying for the program.

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 ten minutes. We encourage you to gather all of your employer information prior (such as your businesses 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 this invitation is 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 businesses who 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 business?

Defence will be advertising your business 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 businesses 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 the program! 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 reserve leave policy is a great way to aid in meeting you 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. 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 are able to 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 businesses which are members of the program?

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

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

Large public 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 are meeting the requirements of the Program.

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 to know more information, they can contact the ADF Reserves and Employer Support team at jssd.drs@defence.gov.au

Need more info?

Contact the ADF Reserves and Employer Support team at jssd.drs@defence.gov.au