



This Guide provides key information on the use of secondments across the Public Sector. This Guide should not be used as a substitute for the Secondment Policy and all template and associated documents are listed in the Secondment Policy.

Exclusions

This Policy does not apply to Ministerial Support Offices.

Employer Responsibilities

- Administering this Policy and ensuring employees have access to the Policy.
- Developing and implementing personnel policies which ensure fair and proper treatment of employees.

Employee Responsibilities

Ensuring that they read, understand, and adhere to the Secondment Policy and any relevant government policies.

SECONDMENTS

- A Secondment is the transfer of an employee either externally to a Host Agency, or internally to another division or section of the employees Home Agency.
- A Seconded employee should return to their Home agency upon completion of the secondment, unless an extension or transfer of employment is agreed by all parties in writing, and the seconded period is no more than 12 months, including any extensions.
- A Host Agency can advertise secondments using the Streamlined Recruitment Process provided in the Recruitment Policy.

REASONS AND BENEFITS OF SECONDMENTS

Secondments may be arranged to provide capability for Capital projects, National or regional events, special projects, cover off short-term staff absences or a short-term need of an agency, including to assist with meeting statutory and Business as Usual functions. Secondments also permit employees to be seconded for capability development purposes.

Benefits of Secondments:

- A recruitment mechanism for employers requiring employees on a temporary basis.
- Enables the movement of human resources across the public sector to carry out statutory Government functions and/or deliver desired agency priorities.
- Employees gain a broader understanding of the work of other public sector agencies.

MANAGING SECONDMENTS

Factors to consider before a secondment is finalised:

- Purpose, duration and costs of the secondment.
- Any Fixed Term contractual terms or obligations.
- Specified outcomes and outputs.
- Clarity on reporting lines during the period of secondment.
- Financial and people resourcing to cover the employee absence from the Home Agency.
- Impact on the capacity of the Home Agency to continue delivering services and outputs.
- Any professional capability or development opportunities.
- Termination of the secondment.
- Whether there are any conflicts of interests between any of the parties that may affect the secondment.
- The Host Agency agrees, in consultation with the Home Agency, to the apportionment of costs documented in the Secondment Terms of Reference

Duration:

- A secondment period should be clearly defined and agreed in writing by all parties involved.

- The duration of a secondment should not be renewed or extended beyond 12 months in total.
- Secondments are not intended to be a long-term solution for vacancies or recruitment issues.

OBLIGATIONS OF AN EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE

Employer Obligations

- Home and Host Agency and the Seconded Employee must agree to the secondment terms and conditions in writing by completing the Seconded Terms of Reference Template.
- Host Agency must ensure there are clear outcomes and outputs included in the Secondment Terms of Reference.
- The Home Agency must continue the initial employee agreement and benefits during the period of secondment and be responsible for:
 - Tax and superannuation statutory requirements.
 - Performance appraisals for secondments less than 6 months in duration with the Host Agency providing input and support where applicable.
- Assist the Seconded Employee with Employment Disputes that have been reported by them.

The Host Agency during the period of the secondment is responsible for:

- Performance Appraisals more than six months with relevant input from the Home Agency
- Reporting employment disputes to the Home Agency and resolving them with input from the Home Agency if required.

Employee obligations

- Employees must obtain approval from their Home Agency before proceeding with an application for secondment.
- Employees must follow policy requirements for employment disputes with the Host Agency.
- Any confidentiality obligations that the Employee falls under as a result of their initial employee agreement continues in full during the term of their Secondment.

TERMINATION OF SECONDMENTS

Secondments may be terminated:

- At the end of the secondment contract period or term.
- If both employers and the seconded employee agree to end the secondment.
- If there is a serious breach of the secondment agreement by either party.
- Where an emergency or exceptional circumstances provide it is necessary; or
- In accordance with the written terms and conditions of the secondment.

When a secondment ends, the employee returns to work for the Home agency.

OTHER PROVISIONS

- All documentation relating to the recruitment process of successful applicants must be placed on the employee's personnel file and kept for at least 7 years.

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS AND TEMPLATES

Secondment Terms of Reference
 Conflict of Interest Declaration Form
 Recruitment Policy
 Employment Dispute Policy
 Code of Conduct Policy
 Remuneration Policy

For Policy queries or issues and to access the full policy and annexed documents go to L:\Shared Data for Everyone\OPSC\HRM Polices, Guides, Standards and Pamphlets or contact the Office of the Public Service Commissioner on phone (682) 29 421 or email: opsc.policy@cookislands.gov.ck