

The New Armed Forces Covenant Duty: What it means for the Armed Forces Community.

What is the new Armed Forces Covenant Duty?

The new Covenant Duty means that local authorities, NHS Trusts and other local bodies across the UK will have to consciously consider the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when delivering key healthcare, housing and education services.

Who is the new Duty aiming to help?

The duty is here to help people like you in the Armed Forces community, which includes Service people (including Regulars and Reserves), Veterans and members of their family.

How does the Duty work?

The new Covenant Duty will raise awareness about how Service life can impact the Armed Forces community and how it can cause disadvantage when you or your families access these services.

This means public bodies will have to consciously consider the armed forces community and the impact of service when making decisions and developing new policies and programmes. This won't mean that you or your families will be placed at the front of the queue. But it will mean your circumstances will be considered more fairly.

Which organisations have to comply to the new Duty?

The new Duty applies to organisations responsible for delivering education, healthcare, and housing services. For example, in healthcare, National Health Service (England) dealing with healthcare waiting list policies; in housing, local authorities dealing with the allocation of social housing; and in education, bodies such as schools and academies dealing with school's admission criteria.

A full list of the organisations and functions covered by the new Duty is listed in Appendix 1 of the [statutory guidance](#).

What is the Armed Forces Covenant?

Recognising their unique obligations and sacrifices, the Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, along with their families, should be treated fairly. It is a promise that they should not be disadvantaged because of their service. It also allows for special provision, when justified, for those who have sacrificed the most such as the injured and bereaved.

What can you do if you think an organisation has failed to consider the Covenant Duty?

You should initially raise any concerns with the organisation concerned and follow their standard complaints process. If the complaint remains unresolved you can refer to the relevant Ombudsman. You can find further advice at Appendix 4 of the [statutory guidance](#).

Where can you find more information?

The MOD has produced [statutory guidance](#) to help affected organisations to understand and

Which organisations have to comply to the new Duty?

The new Duty applies to organisations responsible for delivering education, healthcare, and housing services. For example, in healthcare, National Health Service (England) dealing with healthcare waiting list policies; in housing, local authorities dealing with the allocation of social housing; and in education, bodies such as schools and academies dealing with school's admission criteria.

A full list of the organisations and functions covered by the new Duty is listed in Appendix 1 of the [statutory guidance](#).

What is the Armed Forces Covenant?

Recognising their unique obligations and sacrifices, the Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, along with their families, should be treated fairly. It is a promise that they should not be disadvantaged because of their service. It also allows for special provision, when justified, for those who have sacrificed the most such as the injured and bereaved.

What can you do if you think an organisation has failed to consider the Covenant Duty?

You should initially raise any concerns with the organisation concerned and follow their standard complaints process. If the complaint remains unresolved you can refer to the relevant Ombudsman. You can find further advice at Appendix 4 of the [statutory guidance](#).

Where can you find more information?

The MOD has produced [statutory guidance](#) to help affected organisations to understand and comply with the Covenant Duty. This explains the Armed Forces Covenant, and includes examples of where disadvantage can arise, of good practice, and other useful information.

The [Armed Forces Covenant website](#) has further information about the Covenant and specific advice on support to families can be found [here](#).