

The Armed Forces Covenant Legal Duty extension





Ministry of Defence

The Armed Forces Covenant Legal Duty extension

1. Duty extension update
2. Interactive quiz



Covenant Legal Duty now



- | Any function, such as |
|---|
| Making decisions about individual members of the AF Community |
| Planning, funding & delivering services |
| Developing a policy |
| Overseeing other organisations |
| Enacting or implementing legislation |
| Setting standards |
| Issuing guidance |

in the fields of

- | Policy area |
|--|
| Healthcare (specifically: provision of services, planning & funding, co-operation between bodies) |
| Education (specifically: admissions, attainment, well-being, transport, attendance, additional needs, SPP) |
| Housing (specifically: social housing, homelessness, Disabled Facilities Grants) |

they must have due regard to Covenant principles.

It came into force in November 2022.

‘Due regard to Covenant principles’



What is ‘due regard’?

It’s an obligation to **consciously consider** the Covenant principles.

It means placing **appropriate weight** on the Covenant principles when all relevant factors are considered.

It does not mean that any particular conclusions have to be reached, or specific public service delivery outcomes achieved.

Bodies should take the same action as for other ‘due regard’ duties, such as PSED and Prevent.

What are the Covenant principles?

The Covenant is the statement of the **moral obligation** between the country and its Armed Forces community.

- The **unique obligations and sacrifices** made by the Armed Forces community.
- **No disadvantage** arising from Service for the Armed Forces community, compared to the general population.
- **Special provision** can be appropriate, especially for those sacrificing the most (the injured and bereaved).

Covenant Legal Duty future



international law because of the security it brings. Britain will unequivocally remain a member of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Defending the UK's security

Labour's first duty in government will be to keep our country safe. We will launch a Strategic Defence Review to assess the threats we face and the capabilities needed to address them. At the heart of our security are the men and women who serve and risk their lives for this country. We will strengthen support for our Armed Forces communities by putting the Armed Forces Covenant fully into law and establishing an independent Armed Forces Commissioner to improve service life. Labour will ensure veterans have access to the mental health, employment, and housing support and in other areas they need. We will also scrap visa fees for non-UK veterans who have served for four or more years, and their dependents.

Strengthening Britain's security requires a long-term partnership with our domestic defence industry. Labour will bring forward a defence industrial strategy aligning our security and economic priorities. We will ensure a strong defence sector and resilient supply chains,

At the heart of our security are the men and women who serve and risk their lives for this country. We will strengthen support for our Armed Forces communities

including steel, across the whole of the UK. We will establish long-term partnerships between business and government, promote innovation, and improve resilience. We will prioritise UK businesses for defence investment and will reform procurement to reduce waste. Labour will support industry to benefit from export opportunities, in line with a robust arms export regime committed to upholding international law.

Strengthening our defences also requires stronger leadership, clearer accountability, faster delivery, less waste, and better value for money. Labour will establish a

We will strengthen support for our Armed Forces communities by putting the Armed Forces Covenant fully into law

This means:

- It will stay a duty of due regard to Covenant principles.
- Bringing UK Government departments & Devolved Governments into scope (in addition to the local bodies).
- More policy areas to be covered.
- Each policy area will be covered in a much broader way.

Policy areas

Healthcare

Education

Housing

Employment

Social care

Childcare

Welfare benefits

Pensions

Personal taxation

Criminal justice

Immigration

Citizenship

Service-related compensation

Transport

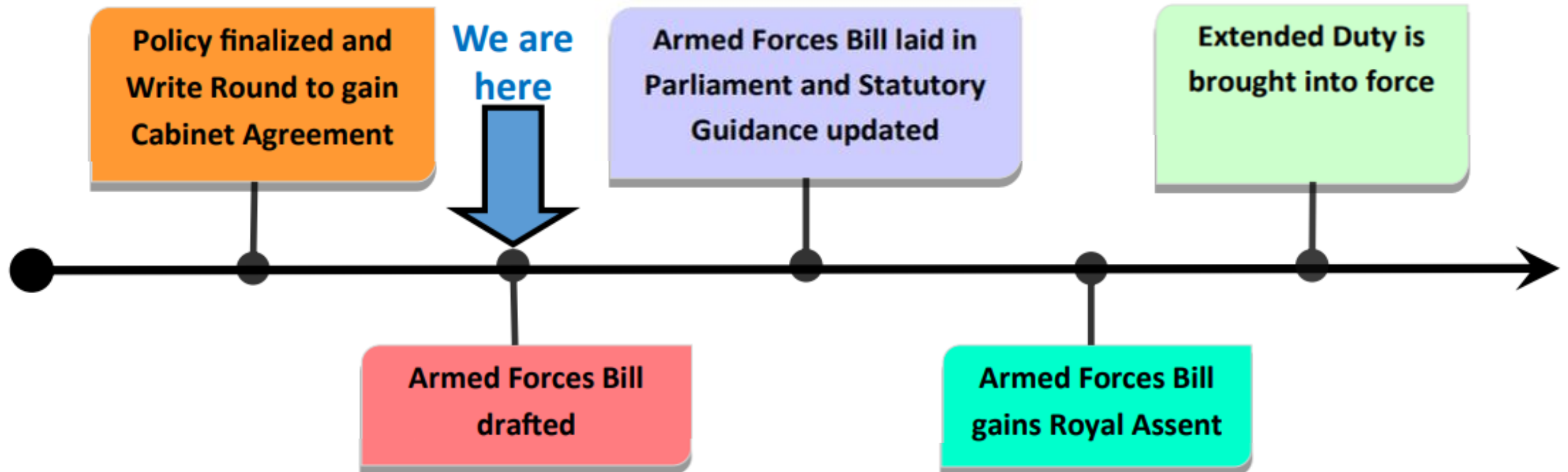
Stakeholder engagement programme



To decide what the additional policy areas should be, we conducted an extensive stakeholder engagement exercise with >150 organisations, including:

- UK Government departments
- Devolved Administrations
- Local authorities
- Military charities
- Families Federations
- Single Service representatives
- NHS Trusts
- Academics
- Forces in Mind Trust
- Defence Bereaved Families Group
- Businesses awarded the Employer Recognition Scheme gold award
- Written evidence about the Covenant previously submitted by stakeholders to Parliamentary committees

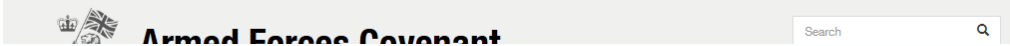
Roadmap



Sources of more information



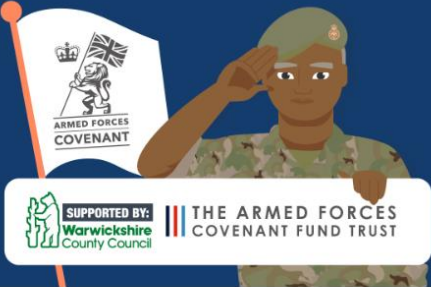
<https://covenant.gov.uk/covenant-legal-duty/armed-forces-covenant-duty-toolkit/>



The Armed Forces Covenant for Customer Facing Staff

Welcome to this module on The Armed Forces Covenant. Here you'll learn about the Covenant and Covenant Duty and how it applies to your role, with the aim of improving support and services to the Armed Forces Community.

Select a topic below to get started.



Service Life and Culture

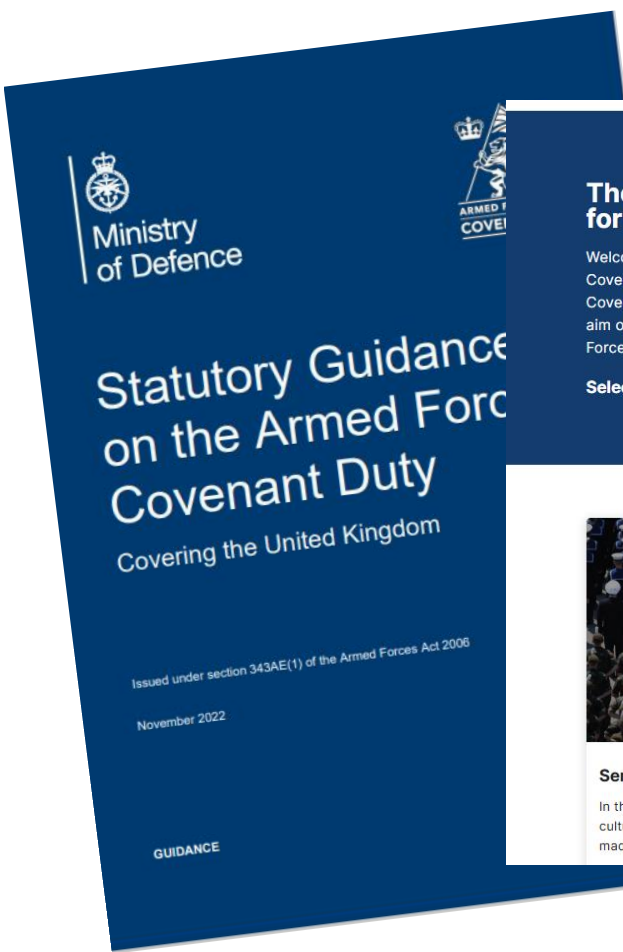
In this first topic we'll gain an insight into Service life and culture, learning about the unique obligations and sacrifices made by the Armed Forces Community.



The Armed Forces Covenant and the Armed Forces Covenant Duty

In the second topic we'll uncover the Armed Forces Covenant and the new Covenant Duty and explain what you need to be able to do to support the Armed Forces Community.

Quick guides



What can you do?



- Continue highlighting **examples of disadvantage and special provision** to us.
- Continue working to **remove disadvantage and offer special provision** in all policy areas.
- Take part in our stakeholder engagement on the **draft updated statutory guidance**, later this year.
- If you work for a body subject to the Duty, look at whether your decisions and policies in the relevant policy areas include **explicit consideration of the Covenant**.
- Tell us what **training and support** would benefit you most.
 - For example: webinars, quick guides, FAQs, website updates, published guidance, case studies, ‘train the trainer’ sessions, peer to peer sharing of best practice...?
- Find out about the latest Covenant developments by **regularly visiting our website** armedforcescovenant.gov.uk and our [latest news feed](#).
- **Send queries** to our team using the Contact Us form on our website.

Interactive quiz



- Please form small teams around your tables.
- 1 person from each team to access [slido.com](https://www.slido.com)
- Join as a participant, enter code [# 3817 789](#)
- Please enter the name of your organisation as your team's name.

Interactive quiz



- Please form small teams around your tables.
- 1 person in each team to access [slido.com](https://www.slido.com)
- Join as a participant, enter code [# 3817 789](#)
- Please enter the name of your organisation as your team's name.

Interactive quiz



- Please form small teams around your tables.
- 1 person in each team to access [slido.com](https://www.slido.com)
- Join as a participant, enter code # 3817 789
- Please enter the name of your organisation as your team's name.

The Covenant principles

Recognising the **unique obligations and sacrifices** made by the Armed Forces community:

- **No disadvantage** arising from Service for the Armed Forces community, compared to the general population.
- **Special provision** can be appropriate, especially for those sacrificing the most (the injured and bereaved).

Question 1



Amy's partner is in the RAF. Amy is on an NHS waiting list with an 8-month wait time.

After waiting 4 months, the RAF re-locates them. Amy's treatment is transferred to a hospital at their new location, which also has an 8-month wait time.

The hospital places Amy at the back of its 8-month waiting list, as this is what it does for all its new patients.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Amy?

- a) Yes
- b) No – Amy is not herself in the Armed Forces.
- c) No – The hospital is treating Amy the same as everyone else.

Question 2



Deena is an Army Reservist. She's in the middle of a course of NHS orthodontic treatment when she re-locates across the country to care for an elderly relative.

No NHS dentists in her new location have availability, so she travels back to her original NHS dentist several times to complete the treatment.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Deena?

- a) Yes
- b) No – It hasn't been caused by Service.
- c) No – Deena has completed the treatment uninterrupted.

Question 3



*Sam is the 15-year-old child of an RAF pilot.
He lives with his parents in Cyprus, where
they're posted.*

The posting ends; they return to the UK.

*Sam's new school uses some different GCSE
exam boards to his MOD school in Cyprus.*

*He finds he's studied a different set of
exam topics to his new classmates.*

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Sam?

- a) Yes
- b) No – He has as many lessons as everyone else.
- c) No – Non-military children also sometimes move school.

Question 4



Will is currently serving in the Royal Marines. His family is moving house.

He wants to take leave to help them move, but his request to take leave is denied, so he goes AWOL to help them move.

When he returns to base, he's arrested.

He complains if he worked in civvie street he wouldn't be arrested for missing work.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Will?

- a) Yes
- b) No – He could have hired house movers instead.
- c) No – This is part of the unique obligations and sacrifices of service life.

Question 5



Paul's father is a submariner in the Royal Navy. Due to long spells at sea, the family can't take a holiday together in the upcoming half-term.

They ask Paul's school for permission to take a term-time holiday.

The school's attendance policy does not allow term-time holidays in any circumstances.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Paul?

- a) Yes
- b) No – The school is treating Paul the same as everyone else.
- c) No – Paul's education always takes priority.

Question 6



A serving member of the RAF is posted to France for 2 years.

His partner Alex also moves to France with him.

Alex's UK employer isn't willing to even consider allowing full time remote working, so Alex has to resign.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Alex?

- a) Yes
- b) No – Alex is choosing to move to France.
- c) No – Alex can find other work.

Question 7



Ben is the husband of a member of the Army. They've moved house 10 times in the past 22 years.

When talking to some other military partners, Ben finds out he's moved house more often than all the others.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for Ben?

- a) Yes
- b) No – Ben's experience is quite common in the Armed Forces.
- c) No – Disadvantage is not about comparing groups within the Armed Forces.

Question 8



James will soon leave the Navy. He wants to move into social housing after discharge.

However, he's currently deployed to the Falklands, so cannot view available properties, sign a contract, or collect keys.

Also, the council's computer system doesn't register overseas addresses.

Therefore, he can't progress his application.

Is this Covenant disadvantage for James?

- a) Yes
- b) No – The Covenant only applies to Armed Forces in the UK.
- c) No – The national shortage of social housing means it's difficult for everyone.

Question 9



Farah is a veteran who lost both arms while serving in the Army 20 years ago.

He needs to have a blood sample taken.

The nurses are currently only trained to take blood from arms, so they undertake extra training so they can take blood from elsewhere on his body.

Is this Covenant special provision for Farah?

- a) Yes
- b) No – Farah doesn't count as someone who 'sacrificed the most'.
- c) No – This is removing a disadvantage.

Question 10



MOD's Armed Forces Bereavement Scholarship Scheme provides several different scholarships covering further and higher education.

These are for the children of Service personnel whose death is attributable to Service.

Is this Covenant special provision?

- a) Yes
- b) No – It's removing a disadvantage.
- c) No – They're still getting the same education as everyone else.

Question 11



A business gives all the veterans it employs an extra day off on 11th November so they can attend Remembrance Day events.

Is this Covenant special provision?

- a) Yes
- b) No – Only the public sector can offer special provision.
- c) No – It's neither removing disadvantage nor special provision.

Question 12



A local authority builds some social housing with special adaptations, reserved for injured veterans.

Is this Covenant special provision?

- a) Yes
- b) No – Other citizens also live in social housing.
- c) No – Other family members who haven't been injured will also benefit.

The Armed Forces Covenant Legal Duty extension

