



## AFP National Guideline on compassionate assignment

Metadata	
<b>Caption</b>	Compassionate assignment
<b>Document Identifier</b>	HN00069
<b>Description</b>	This guideline outlines AFP policy and procedures regarding requests for employees for compassionate assignment
<b>Governance Function</b>	Human Resources
<b>Owned by</b>	National Manager Human Resources
<b>Date First Approved</b>	29/02/2008 12:00 AM
<b>Contact Person</b>	Coordinator Human Resource Strategies
<b>Date Published</b>	4/03/2008 10:24 AM
<b>Date Modified</b>	27/4/2011
<b>Date Last Reviewed</b>	16/04/2010 12:00 AM
<b>Authorised by</b>	National Manager Human Resources
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	16/04/2012 12:00 AM
<b>Review Notification</b>	'GovernanceHR@afp.gov.au'
<b>Instrument Type</b>	National Guideline
<b>Replaces</b>	HN00051
<b>Stakeholders</b>	

Metadata	
Instrument Classification	UNCLASSIFIED

## 1. Disclosure and compliance

This document is classified **UNCLASSIFIED** and is intended for internal AFP use.

Disclosing any content must comply with Commonwealth law and the [AFP National Guideline on disclosure of information](#).

### Compliance

This instrument is part of the AFP's professional standards framework. The [AFP Commissioner's Order on Professional Standards \(CO2\)](#) outlines the expectations for appointees to adhere to the requirements of the framework. Inappropriate departures from the provisions of this instrument may constitute a breach of AFP professional standards and be dealt with under Part V of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth).

## 2. Acronyms

<b>AFP</b>	Australian Federal Police
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources

## 3. Definitions

**Assignment** – means an assignment of duties, including the place or places at which the duties are to be performed, under s.40H(1) of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#).

**Compassionate assignment** – means an assignment to another location for compassionate reasons, that may be either at level (either temporarily or otherwise) or at a lower or higher level for a specified term.

**Employee** – means a person engaged under s. 24 of the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979*.

**Supervisor** – means an employee's team leader or other direct supervisor.

**Manager** – means an SES employee in the employee's direct chain of command or management line.

## 4. Authority to create guideline

This guideline was issued by National Manager Human Resources using power under s. 37(1) of the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979* (Cth) as delegated by the Commissioner under s. 69C of the Act.

## 5. Introduction

This guideline outlines the AFP's policy on requests by employees for compassionate assignment. It outlines the administrative process to be followed by the AFP and requesting employees.

## 6. Policy

The AFP recognises that there may be occasions when employees face compelling personal circumstances which may be best addressed by assignment (usually temporarily) to a location other than that in which they normally reside and are employed. In such circumstances, employees may apply to be considered for a compassionate assignment.

Compassionate assignments are generally only approved on the basis that they are temporary in nature and usually for no more than 6 months in duration.

However, employees must remain aware that the AFP has a responsibility to ensure the most effective deployment of resources, and an assignment (whether temporary or otherwise) may not be a feasible option for the AFP at the time it is requested. Any decision concerning a request for compassionate assignment will be based on balancing the employee's personal needs with the AFP's workforce planning requirements to retain the employee's skills and experience and to deploy them to such areas as there is operational demand.

## 7. Application

If compelling personal circumstances arise (e.g. serious illness of a partner or other family member):

- without prior warning
- calling for a temporary move to another location

employees should discuss leave options (in line with the [AFP Collective Agreement 2007-2011](#)) or any other options with their supervisor in the first instance.

If the employee (or supervisor) is unsure of what leave or other options are available to them, they should contact their [local HR Business Delivery team](#) for assistance and advice.

If leave cannot be approved (e.g. due to a lack of sufficient leave credits) and no other options are available (e.g. utilising external care providers or other family members etc), employees may consider requesting a temporary assignment on compassionate grounds on an 'AFP request for compassionate assignment' form (Attachment 1).

The form and associated paperwork should be submitted following the 'Flow chart procedure – AFP compassionate assignment' (Attachment 2) to the employee's Coordinator and Manager, for:

- support (or otherwise)
- a short assessment by each person of what particular skills and/or experience the employee has to offer the AFP.

Where an employee is outposted (e.g. part of the IDG hub), the local Coordinator that the employee reports to must complete their part of the application (as per Attachment 2) and forward the application to the employee's owning business area manager (e.g. MIDG).

An employee may also contact their [local HR Business Delivery team](#) for help to complete the application form or to facilitate the application process.

## 8. Wellbeing Services consultation

When applying for a compassionate assignment, the employee is to contact AFP Wellbeing Services to arrange for an assessment prior to submitting the 'AFP request for compassionate assignment' form (Attachment 1). This assessment independently considers the employee's grounds for requesting the assignment and determines whether further Wellbeing support may be required by the employee.

Wellbeing Services are to provide two sealed reports on the requested assignment back to the employee, one addressed to the employee and the other to Coordinator Human Resource Strategies. Both are to be marked 'in-confidence'.

The employee must include the sealed report addressed to Coordinator Human Resource Strategies with their application. An application will not progress unless this has occurred.

## 9. Human Resource processing

On completion of part B of the form, the manager must forward the application to the employee's [local HR Business Delivery team](#) for further processing.

On receiving an application, HR Business Delivery will contact the relevant business areas to try and identify possible options for facilitating the request. This may include whether:

- an advertised vacancy is available at the proposed assignment location, for which the employee may apply
- an appropriate role is or may become available (in either the short or long term) at the proposed assignment location that could be performed by the employee
- the employee's current assignment location would be willing to consider an outposted role to the new assignment location.

HR Business Delivery will forward all applications to Coordinator Human Resource Strategies, who will complete recommendation action before forwarding applications to Manager Human Resource Strategies for decision. HR Business Delivery will also maintain contact with the employee to ensure they are kept informed of any progress or changes to their application, including when their application is being forwarded for decision.

## 10. Decision

In considering whether to approve or not approve an application, Manager Human Resource Strategies may make any further enquiries as necessary.

Manager Human Resource Strategies will inform HR Business Delivery of their decision concerning the application. HR Business Delivery will then contact the employee and business area(s) concerned and will make any relevant arrangements necessary.

## 11. Record keeping

The [local HR Business Delivery team](#) will record details of all applications for compassionate assignment for both monitoring and reporting purposes.

Once Manager Human Resource Strategies has completed the decision making process, all associated documentation will be retained on the employee's personal file.

## 12. Additional information

If the employee's circumstances surrounding the original request have altered significantly before a decision has been made by Manager Human Resource Strategies, the employee is encouraged to submit additional information to their [local HR Business Delivery team](#) without delay. This additional information will be passed to Coordinator Human Resource Strategies for inclusion in the employee's request.

If the employee's circumstances surrounding the original request alter significantly after a 'Not approved' decision has been made by Manager Human Resource Strategies, the employee is encouraged to re-submit their application with additional information to their local HR Business Delivery team without delay. The re-submitted application will be passed to Coordinator Human Resource Strategies for final recommendation action by Manager Human Resource Strategies.

Once a decision has been made, if the employee wishes the decision be reviewed (e.g. because they believe that some element of that decision was faulty), they should contact their [local HR Business Delivery team](#) for advice.

## 13. Costs and staffing

Employees must be aware that should a request for an assignment for personal reasons (including a compassionate assignment) be approved, all financial costs associated with the move are the employee's responsibility. This must be acknowledged on the original request form (Attachment 1).

Standard practice is that the receiving business area will take on the salary costs for the organisation. However, where the employee is outposted, the business area at the old assignment location will retain responsibility for the salary costs.

## 14. Withdrawal from compassionate assignment

Employees are required to advise their [local HR Business Delivery team](#) immediately if personal circumstances change and they no longer need to pursue or continue a compassionate assignment.

Should an employee already be on a compassionate assignment, their further assignment will be dependent on organisational need.

## 15. End of compassionate assignment

Unless otherwise approved by Manager Human Resource Strategies, employees must return to their original location and owning business area at the end of the approved compassionate assignment.

Should the employee fail to do this, National Manager Human Resources may give consideration to the employee's future suitability for employment.

## 16. Further advice

Queries about the content of this guideline should be referred to Coordinator Human Resource Strategies.

## 17. References

- [\*Australian Federal Police Act 1979\*](#)
- [\*AFP Collective Agreement 2007-2011\*](#)

## 18. Attachments

- Attachment 1 – [AFP request for compassionate assignment form](#) (DOC, 90KB)
- Attachment 2 – [Flow chart procedure – AFP compassionate assignment](#) (XLS, 30KB)