

Supporting the armed forces community

Line Manager Guide



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Overview

This guide is designed to help you and your team take action, building on the commitments you made in the 'Supporting the armed forces community' e-learning module.

In the following slides, you'll find instructions on facilitating a one-hour discussion with your team, focusing on the steps they can take to honour the commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant. At the end of the session, you will work together to complete an action plan, with a clear timeline for next steps.



Preparation

Before running the session with your team, you should take the time to familiarise yourself with the materials in this guide.

You should also ensure that all of your team members have completed the 'Supporting the armed forces community' e-learning module, and that they have retained a copy of the notes they made at the end of the training.

Materials

To ensure your discussion is documented, and to encourage team members to remain engaged, it is recommended that you use a virtual whiteboard application (i.e. Google Jamboard, Miro, Microsoft Whiteboard, etc.) to facilitate the session. Alternatively, if you are running the session in person, you could use Post-Its or flipcharts to record your team's ideas.

At the end of the discussion, you will work as a group to complete an action plan. A template for the action plan has been provided along with this guide.

Logistics Checklist

In advance of running the session, make sure you have:

- Completed the 'Supporting the armed forces community' e-learning module and downloaded a copy of your reflection.
- Scheduled enough time for a meaningful discussion with your team. (At least 1 hour)
- Provided access to a virtual whiteboard and/or Post-It notes the group can use to share their ideas.
- Created a copy of the action plan template and shared it with the team.

Facilitation (1/5)

Introduction - 5 minutes

i) Explain that the purpose of this session is to explore the topics covered in the 'Supporting the armed forces community' e-learning module, focusing on the steps the team can take to support the armed forces and their families.

ii) Confirm that everyone has completed the module, making sure they have their downloaded commitment close to hand.

iii) Before moving on, point out that many of the sectors of the Covenant are interrelated, and they should consider how they might collaborate with other sectors in the discussions that follow.



Facilitation (2/5)

Personal reflections - 10 minutes

i) Start by sharing a short reflection on the 'Supporting the armed forces community' e-learning module.

ii) Next, ask the team to share their own thoughts on the module. You may wish to use the following prompts to stimulate discussion:

- Did the module spark any 'lightbulb moments' for them?
- Did anything in the module surprise them?
- Did it lead them to think differently about the challenges facing members of the armed forces community?
- Did it encourage them to consider any of their current working practices from a different perspective?
- Did it help them see connections between different sectors of the Covenant?

iii) Allow a few minutes for group discussion before moving on.



Facilitation (3/5)

*Identifying members of the armed forces community
- 15 minutes*

i) Now, it's time to think about how your team/organisation interacts with members of the armed forces community.

ii) Ask the group to think about the characters they were introduced to in the e-learning module. If your team were to come across these people in the course of their daily roles, how would they identify them as members of the armed forces community?

iii) After giving the group time to share their ideas, encourage them to reflect on changes they could make to their existing working practices. What could they do to facilitate identification of members of the armed forces community?*

**If you are using a whiteboard, the group should record their suggestions on Post-Its.*



Facilitation (4/5)

Challenges in our community - 15 minutes

i) Having discussed your approach to identifying members of the armed forces community, it's now time to start thinking about the specific challenges they might face in your area.

ii) Ask the group to reflect on these issues and share their ideas with the team. How do they know these issues exist? Why might they be particularly acute for members of the armed forces community? Which sector(s) of the Covenant would be best places to address them?

iii) Once everyone has had a chance to share their ideas, encourage them to reflect on the issues they have the ability to address in their role/team. How could they build on existing policies? What changes would they need to make to ensure members of the armed forces community do not suffer any disadvantage?*

**If you are using a whiteboard, the group should record their ideas on Post-Its.*



Facilitation (5/5)

Committing to action – 15 minutes

- i) Based on everything you've discussed so far, the final step is to commit to a clear action plan. What will you do differently going forward, and who will be responsible for making this happen?

- ii) As a team, agree on two or three steps you will take to honour those who serve, and ensure you uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant. (You may wish to refer to the commitments the team made at the end of the e-learning module.)

- iii) Record these commitments using the action plan template, ensuring each action has at least one person attached to it, as well as a clear deadline.

- iv) Before wrapping up, agree to reconvene in a few weeks' time to review progress and reflect on the impact of the changes you have made.



Next Steps

This short guide was designed to help you facilitate a meaningful discussion with your team, and encourage you to think about the impact you can have within your organisation.

However, this is just a first step! As public sector colleagues, we all have a duty to continually re-evaluate our working practices and ensure the needs of the armed forces community are being met.

To explore example of best practices and access additional learning materials, you may wish to direct your team to the [Armed Forces Covenant website](#).

