

Secondment

Policy Number: B42 (QH-POL-224)

Publication date: June 2020

Purpose: To specify the principles for the secondment of Queensland Health employees.

Application: This policy applies to all permanent Queensland Health employees, with the exception of:

- employees engaged under the *Public Service Act 2008* who are released to perform duties under section 147 (the provisions of section 184 of the *Public Service Act 2008* relating to interchange arrangements may be applied in these circumstances – refer to the Recruitment and Selection HR Policy B1)
- casual employees, temporary employees and employees engaged on contract
- public service officers seconded to ministerial offices.

Delegation: The 'delegate' is as listed in the Department of Health Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, or Hospital and Health Services Human Resource (HR) Delegations Manual, as amended from time to time.

Legislative or other authority:

- *Public Service Act 2008*
- *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*
- *Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986*
- Directive 15/13 – Recruitment and Selection
- Directive 4/11 – Higher Duties

Related policy or documents:

- Recruitment and Selection HR Policy B1 (QH-POL-212)
- Transfers in Queensland Health HR Policy B41 (QH-POL-246)
- Relinquishment of Role HR Policy B43 (QH-POL-216)
- Salary Packaging – Providing options on how to use your money – Queensland Health

Policy subject:

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Human Rights Act 2019 applies
Public Sector Act 2022
applies on 1 March 2023
Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work
Code of Practice 2022
applies 1 April 2023

1 Term of secondment

A Queensland Health employee may be seconded to fulfil a role in another government entity or Queensland Health work unit, at the discretion of the appropriate delegate. The secondment is not to exceed 12 months from the date of duty, except when written consent to a specified end date longer than 12 months is established prior to the commencement of the secondment.

2 Employment conditions – other government entities

A Queensland Health employee on secondment to another government entity is required to accept the employment conditions of that government entity.

Definitions:

External secondment	When a Queensland Health permanent employee temporarily occupies a position in another Queensland Government entity at the same, higher or lower classification level.
Government entity	Any government entity under section 24 of the <i>Public Service Act 2008</i> .
Internal secondment	When a Queensland Health permanent employee temporarily occupies another position in Queensland Health at the same, higher or lower classification level.
Open merit	A merit based selection process whereby the applicant pool is not restricted. This is achieved through advertising a position internally (base-grade) and externally (non-base grade) to Queensland Health. Open merit is to include an assessment of merit, not just advertising.
Secondment	Unless stated otherwise, the term secondment in this policy includes both internal and external secondments.

History:

June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy application amended as a result of changes to the Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019.
March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy formatted as part of the HR Policy Simplification project. Policy amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> remove section on relinquishment – refer to Relinquishment of Role HR Policy B43 clarify relevant HR forms to be submitted remove secondment reporting requirements to the Health Service Chief Executive – reporting requirements to be determined by the Hospital and Health Services update references and naming conventions.
September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> update Directive 3/09 – Recruitment and Selection s8.14 to include salary packaging information.
February 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed as a result of the HR policy consolidation project.

Secondment – Schedule One

Secondment processes and requirements

The following information is provided as the minimum mandatory standard practice, procedure or process to enable satisfactory compliance with this Queensland Health HR policy.

Local guidelines/procedures may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. Any local guidelines/procedures must be consistent with this policy and schedule and ensure employee entitlements continue to be met.

1. Selection for secondments

In accordance with Directive 15/13 – Recruitment and Selection, a Queensland Health employee is able to occupy a vacancy of up to 12 months without having to undergo a formal selection process.

A person may not be seconded to a position for a period in excess of 12 months (including extensions to secondments resulting in a total period of over 12 months) without being selected in accordance with the requirements of Recruitment and Selection HR Policy B1 and Directive 15/13 - Recruitment and Selection. This provision applies to both the secondment period and any subsequent temporary transfer/movement at level and relieving arrangements (e.g. an extension to a secondment resulting in the total period in excess of 12 months).

2. Applications

All requests for internal and external secondments of employees of Queensland Health are to be made in writing and submitted through the appropriate line manager. All decisions are to be made taking into account the merits of the request.

The relevant HR form (e.g. Employee Movement Form) is to be completed with evidence that the secondment is supported by the delegate for release of the employee, and approved by the delegate for the secondment of the employee. The HR form is to be forwarded to the relevant payroll hub. HR forms also need to be completed for extensions to internal and external secondments, as well as when an employee returns from an external secondment from another government entity.

3. Approval

The decision to agree to second a Queensland Health employee, or extend a secondment, is at the discretion of the appropriate delegate.

In making decisions about an employee's mobility, the relevant managers are to take a Queensland Health-wide and not a local perspective, including the recognition of the value of staff mobility and professional development.

Wherever possible, an employee will be released to other duties they have won, in open merit selection, an opportunity for secondment. However, consideration will be given to the length of the secondment and factors outlined in section 4 of this schedule when making the decision.

4. Refusal

Except for the provisions of section 5 of this schedule, the release of a Queensland Health employee on secondment can be refused by Queensland Health only when there are significant operational reasons. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- unavailability of replacement staff with skills, knowledge and expertise at an appropriate level
- detriment to necessary service levels or important initiatives
- unacceptable impact on workloads of other staff
- operational disruption caused by serial secondments
- premature loss of the recruitment and training investment in a recent appointee.

5. Notice

Discussions in relation to a secondment are to provide Queensland Health with a release date which provides sufficient time to implement consequential staffing arrangements.

Queensland Health may refuse to agree to a secondment, or delay releasing a Queensland Health employee on secondment, when the notice given by the receiving government entity or other Queensland Health work unit is unreasonable in the particular circumstances.

6. Extension of secondment

When a secondment is proposed to be extended, reasonable notice is to be provided to the employee's substantive government entity/work area and the extension negotiated between the releasing and receiving work areas. All agreed secondment extensions are to be in writing, and the relevant HR form submitted to the payroll hub.

Extensions to secondments resulting in a total period of over 12 months must be advertised and selected in accordance with section 1 of this schedule.

7. Cessation of secondment

If a secondment is to be ceased earlier than the previously agreed end date, sufficient notice of the cessation is to be provided to the employee and the substantive Queensland Health work unit to allow for the appropriate and reasonable management of staff. The relevant HR form must be submitted to the relevant payroll hub.

8. Transfer to another government entity following secondment

A chief executive of another government entity wishing to employ a Queensland Health employee for a period exceeding 12 months is to, with the approval of the delegate, transfer the employee at their substantive level, except when there is written consent to a longer secondment period (as per section 1 of this policy).

The date from which a transfer at level takes effect is to depend on the circumstances of the secondment, but is not to be later than the first working day following the expiry of the maximum secondment period.

A Queensland Health employee transferred at their substantive level to a receiving government entity which has different salary arrangements or other conditions determined by enterprise agreement is required to accept the salary arrangements or other conditions of the receiving government entity.

9. Responsibilities of managers

The manager of the work unit seeking to arrange a secondment is to:

- negotiate the administrative arrangements with the releasing government entity or Queensland Health work unit, such as the length of the secondment, the start date and the end date, and provide written confirmation of the arrangement
- ensure any internal administrative arrangements are made for the secondment of the public service employee into Queensland Health, e.g. network and information systems access, HR forms, etc.

The releasing manager of a seconded employee is to:

- monitor the expected date of return, liaise with the employee concerning their return and manage placement of the employee on completion of the secondment
- liaise with the receiving government entity/work unit manager regarding the return or permanent transfer/movement of the employee – refer to section 8 of this schedule and Transfers in Queensland Health HR Policy B41.
- complete the relevant HR forms (including an employee movement form when an employee is extended or returns from an external secondment from another government entity).

10. Salary packaging arrangements

If an employee's previous substantive position within Queensland Health was eligible for the public hospital Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) exemption cap and they are seconded to a position within Queensland Health or an external secondment that is not eligible, they are to amend their salary packaging arrangements. This is a requirement under the *Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986* and can be done by contacting RemServ.

Eligible areas are listed in the Salary Packaging – Providing options on how to use your money – Queensland Health booklet on the RemServ website.

11. Transition

Secondments authorised in writing prior to the effective date of this policy may continue until the agreed end date.

In advance of the date of conclusion of the secondment, Line managers are responsible for liaising with the government entity or Queensland Health work unit to which the employee has been seconded. Arrangements are to be made for the employee's return, extension (refer to section 6 of this schedule) or permanent transfer/movement at level to the other entity or work unit (refer to section 8 of this schedule and Transfers in Queensland Health HR Policy B41).