RELIEF POOL – ADMINISTRATIVE STREAM –
GUIDELINES

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

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ATTACHMENT ONE Example models of relieving arrangements

Please note that any material printed is regarded as an uncontrolled copy. It is the responsibility of the person printing the document to refer frequently to the Queensland Health Internet site for updates.
1 PURPOSE

To outline the process for effective operation and management of administrative relief pools.

2 APPLICATION

This policy applies to administrative staff.

3 GUIDELINES

Guidelines may be developed to facilitate implementation of this policy. The guidelines must be consistent with this policy.

4 DELEGATION

The ‘delegate’ is as listed in the Queensland Health Human Resource Delegations Manual as amended from time to time.

5 REFERENCES

- Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 7) 2008 (EB7)
- Temporary Employment HR Policy B25
- Casual Employment HR Policy B26
- Appointment of Permanent Relief Staff to Non-Relieving Positions - Administrative Stream HR Policy B31
- In-house Relief Process for Administrative Staff at Classification AO3 and Above HR Policy B33

6 SUPERSEDES

- IRM 4.5-2 Relief Pool – Administrative Stream – Guidelines

7 POLICY

The Director-General has endorsed the following guidelines for implementation throughout Queensland Health.

The effective operation and management of administrative relief pools is to assist in supporting the provision of high quality health services by providing a more cost effective and efficient process for ensuring continuity of administrative services.

Administrative relief pools are to:

- provide work areas with administrative support from appropriately skilled staff
- reduce backlogs and workload issues in certain areas
- enhance training opportunities for administrative staff.

The structure, location and coordination of the administrative relief pool needs to be flexible and take account of individual work area needs, as it is acknowledged that some work areas already provide built-in arrangements to cover leave.
Examples of administrative relief pool arrangements currently operating in various locations throughout Queensland Health have been identified in attachment one for consideration.

When relieving opportunities exist for extended periods in administrative positions at classification AO3 and above, refer In-house Relief Process for Administrative Staff at Classification AO3 and Above HR Policy B33.

8 APPLYING THE POLICY

The purpose of the relief pool is to provide Queensland Health with a mechanism to backfill position vacancies to meet service delivery needs, which occur as a result of various forms of planned or extended leave, including but not limited to:

- annual leave
- sick leave
- training
- short periods of long service leave
- higher duty appointments
- secondments.

The following are guiding principles for the creation and operation of relief pools in Queensland Health:

8.1 Consultation

- Consultation on the creation and operation of relief pools is to occur through district consultative forums (DCFs), local consultative forums (LCFs), or other relevant staff consultation processes.
- Consultation is to occur with the relevant unions in relation to development of relief pools.

8.2 Establishment of pool/organisational requirements

- Every effort is to be made to establish a pool of permanent relief staff when practical and appropriate.
- Queensland Health is committed to maximising permanent employment:
  - The use of casual employment in relief pools is to be in accordance with Casual Employment HR Policy B26, and the EB7 Implementation Group (EB7IG) endorsed protocols.
  - Temporary positions in relief pools are to comply with the requirements of Temporary Employment HR Policy B25.
- Relief pools are to be adequately staffed and resourced. The operational demands on relief pool resources are to be considered in annual funding/budget allocation processes.

8.3 Determination of relief needs

The establishment of the relief pool is to assist in backfilling absences in order to avoid impacting on other staff workloads.
• Business and service requirements of each organisational area are to be considered when determining the relief requirements, in line with resource management processes.
• Positions with direct patient/client contact are to be back-filled (e.g. ward reception, admissions, clinics, emergency departments).
• In consultation with staff, a planned leave roster arrangement is to be implemented to identify when and where relief requirements exist.
• The relief pool is to be structured (when no other built-in arrangements exist), to manage absences on the basis of an average of six weeks per employee full-time equivalent (FTE):
  o The relief requirements may be greater than six weeks per FTE employee when leave on half pay arrangements are accessed.

8.4 Remuneration arrangements

• Administrative employees appointed within the relief pool are to be remunerated at AO2 level as a minimum. Permanent AO3 relief pool positions may also be appropriate.
• When relieving opportunities at higher classification levels exist, arrangements are to be determined in accordance with the provisions of In-house Relief Process for Administrative Staff at Classification AO3 and Above HR Policy B33.
• Persons appointed to permanent relieving positions are also to be considered for appointment opportunities to permanent non-relieving positions, in accordance with Appointment of Permanent Relief Staff to Non-Relieving Positions - Administrative Stream HR Policy B31.

8.5 Training and development

• Staff development and performance within these pools is to be managed in accordance with Queensland Health processes.
• The relief pool make-up is to reflect the skills required to work and relieve in the areas being covered. There may need to be cluster relief pools where specialist skills/knowledge is required (e.g. mental health, ward clerks).
• All relief pool staff are to receive training prior to commencing their relief duties. This training is to be structured and cover the range of skills required for relieving. The training program for relief staff is to be documented and developed by the coordinator of the relief pool, in conjunction with the supervisor/s of those work areas where relief is to be provided.
• When on-the-job training is required, such training is to be provided by an appropriately skilled and authorised person in line with the administrative training framework.

8.6 Coordination of relief opportunities/requests

• All relief pools are to have an appointed coordinator who manages the needs of the relief pool and coordinates relief pool placement.
• The relief pool coordinator is to be provided with the necessary resources to manage the relief pool in accordance with this policy.
• Relief pool arrangements are to have the ability to be shared across locations/work areas/Shared Service Partner (SSP) where practical, in accordance with the appropriate consultation processes as contained within this policy.
8.7 Dispute processes

Disputes which arise from the creation, implementation or operation of the relief pool arrangements are to be managed in accordance with grievances and dispute resolution processes determined under the current enterprise bargaining (EB) agreement.

8.8 Establishing the pool

The following considerations are useful to effectively establishing the pool:

- A planned leave roster is to make operation of the relief pool more effective.
- When a planned leave roster is being considered, consultation with staff is to be undertaken to develop and implement the roster.
- The terms and conditions of the relief requirements are to be communicated, particularly when these relate to changed working hours, travel etc.
- Relief staff are to be paid in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument for the time they are performing relief (e.g. when travel or shift entitlements are applicable, these are to apply for the period of the relief).
- Applicants for the pool are to be aware of and accept the terms and conditions of the pool.
- When there is a business need to change the terms and conditions of the relief requirements, relief pool members are to be consulted about these changes and the new terms negotiated with them prior to implementation.

8.9 Review processes

- The requirements of the relief pool are to be reviewed at least annually (e.g. in January or in accordance with the planning cycle) in line with consultation processes contained within this policy.
- On a six monthly basis, a report is to be provided to the local DCF for consultation purposes only and action when appropriate detailing the following information:
  - number of instances when relief has not been provided due to unavailable resources
  - turnover rates of staff within the relief pool
  - reasons for staff leaving the relief pool.
- In addition to the local review, a report is to be generated for submission to the EB7IG on a 12 monthly basis which details:
  - number of instances of relief provided
  - number of instances when relief has not been provided due to unavailable resources
  - turnover rates of staff within the relief pool
  - reasons for staff leaving the relief pool.

9 HISTORY

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Protected IRM 4.5-2 reformatted as part of the HR policy consolidation project in accordance with EB7.- Amended to allow for AO3 relief pool positions</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>IRM 4.5-2 Relief Pool – Administrative Stream – Guidelines (as per Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 6) 2005 (EB6))</td>
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Example models of relieving arrangements

Administrative relief pools are a recommended approach to sustain continuity of administrative services supporting high quality health services.

Administrative relief pools are to:

- Provide work areas with administrative support from appropriately skilled staff.
- Reduce backlogs and workload issues in certain areas.
- Enhance training opportunities for administrative staff.

Metropolitan

- Built-in relief arrangements within divisions/units/clusters where possible.
- Permanent administrative relief pool to cover planned leave supported by casual relief pool to cover other specific leave periods.
- Business/unit manager role in ensuring adequate orientation and training to relievers in consultation with team leaders and the relief pool coordinator.
- Relief pool coordinator role to manage needs of relief pools, recruit to pool through merit selection processes, and coordinate relief pool training and placement.
- Learning centre/staff development role in accessing, delivering and the provision of administrative training.

Regional

- Built-in relief arrangements within districts/facilities/units where possible.
- Permanent administrative relief pool to cover planned leave supported by casual relief pool to cover other specific leave periods.
- Business/unit manager role in ensuring adequate orientation and training to relievers in consultation with team leaders and the relief pool coordinator.
- Relief pool coordinator role to manage needs of relief pools, recruit to pool through merit selection processes, and coordinate relief pool training and placement.
- Learning centre/staff development role in accessing, delivering and the provision of administrative training.

Rural/remote

- Built-in relief arrangements and permanent relief pools within units where possible.
- Casual relief pool to cover specific leave periods and planned leave.
- Shared relief pool across district/locations/SSP where practicable.
- Human resources unit manage/maintain relief pool – recruitment, merit selection processes, needs of relief pools.
- Director corporate services/finance manager/business manager(s) – manage relief pool orientation, training and placement.
- Human resources manager/staff development officer or equivalent role in sourcing, accessing and coordinating administrative training in consultation with business manager or equivalent.