1 PURPOSE

To outline the employment and specific arrangements applying to temporary staff.

2 APPLICATION

This policy applies to temporary employees of Queensland Health.

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

- Nurses and Midwives (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (EB7) 2009
- Queensland Public Health Sector Certified Agreement (No. 7) 2008 (EB7)
- Health Practitioners (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 1) 2007
- Appointments – Permanent &/or Temporary – Commonwealth &/or State Funded Programs HR Policy B24
- Separation of Employment HR Policy H1
- Conversion of Temporary Employees to Permanent Status HR Policy B52

6 SUPERSEDES

- IRM 1.2 Temporary/Fixed Term Employment

7 POLICY

7.1 Circumstances for a temporary appointment

While permanent employment is the preferred form of engagement for employees within Queensland Health, temporary employment may be used in the following circumstances:

- unexpected/unplanned illness
- long term illness
• unplanned leave where a permanent reliever cannot be justified (permanent relief staff will be the preferred mode of relief staffing and is to be used wherever possible)
• fixed term projects
• to address seasonal workload changes
• in the event of organisational change
• employees undertaking an accredited fixed term course of study
• fixed term program funding
• employment of a graduate nurse pending the availability of a permanent position
• backfilling where a legitimate recruitment process is occurring, without limiting access to higher duties.

In the event of organisational change, full consultation on the employment arrangement is to be included during the planning process. The aim is to minimise the use of temporary employment during the organisational change process.

7.2 Engagement of temporary employees

Temporary base grade appointments may be established for periods less than 12 months on the basis of operational convenience, in accordance with the provisions of Directive 3/09 – Recruitment and Selection.

In circumstances exceeding 12 months, and when there is a sufficient applicant pool identified from within existing casual and temporary pools, the selection process may be limited to the specific health facility or work unit.

7.3 Checking voluntary early retirement (VER) status

Prior to re-employment within the Queensland public sector, the line manager is to check with the potential employee as to whether they have received a VER, and take appropriate action.

If the temporary employee is in receipt of a VER in which the severance benefit period has not expired, a total accumulative period not greater than 20 days can be worked without any further action being required.

An appointee who was paid a VER and works greater than 20 working days is required to refund the Crown that unexpired portion of the severance benefit period to which the employee is not entitled. Refer Separation of Employment HR Policy H1.

7.4 Appointment letters

The terms of any temporary engagement are to be clearly stated in writing and given to the employee prior to the commencement of employment.

Letters of appointment are to include:

• starting and finishing dates of employment, or in lieu of a finishing date notification of the specific circumstance/s or contingencies relating to a specific task, project, or reason upon the occurrence of which the term of employment is to expire
• details of the conditions of employment, including the relevant Award
• a copy of the Code of Conduct
• a statement articulating the expected compliance with the policies and protocols of Queensland Health and the health service district or equivalent
• the provisions and working arrangements normally applying to permanent employees within the discipline/work unit
• the hours to be worked per week shown as part of the ordinary hours of the work unit
• the anticipated hours of duty (when they are less than full-time) are to be shown as a part and/or component of the ordinary working day/week/fortnight, i.e. engaged for a four hour period as part of the standard shift/day being eight hours.

7.5 Probation

Temporary employees are not required to serve a probationary period.

7.6 Extensions to temporary engagements

Temporary engagements are not to be extended for any reason other than when there is a continued need to meet the temporary circumstances specified in the original appointment letter. When temporary positions are extended, the temporary employee is to be advised in writing of the new finishing date and/or conditions of the extension as outlined above.

7.7 Permanent appointment to temporary positions

When a permanent employee is appointed to a temporary position, the employee is to retain their permanent status and their substantive classification level. During the term of the temporary appointment, all entitlements and conditions of employment are to be paid at the rate applicable to the temporary position.

For information on temporary funded programs, refer Appointments – Permanent and/or Temporary – Commonwealth and/or State Funded Programs HR Policy B24.

7.8 Recognition of previous service

Any period of employment for a temporary/fixed term employee is to be counted as continuous service for the purpose of calculating entitlements, having regard to arrangements in relation to breaks in service.

7.9 Cash equivalent payments

When the services of the temporary employee are continued or are expected to be continued, leave entitlements are to continue to accrue in accordance with the relevant Award.

A cash equivalent payment for recreation leave and long service leave is not to be made unless the temporary employee permanently ceases duty.

When a cash equivalent payment is made, and the employee is then re-employed during a period of cash equivalent, that person is not required to pay back the cash equivalent payment.
8 DEFINITIONS

| Temporary employee | A person appointed to meet temporary circumstances existing within the organisation. Reference to relevant Awards and Agreements is to be made to ensure adherence to specific provisions. |

9 HISTORY

| April 2010 | Protected IRM 1.2 reformatted as part of the HR policy consolidation project. |
| December 2004 | Amended IRM 1.2 Temporary/Fixed Term Appointment |
| September 2003 | IRM 1.2 Temporary /Fixed Term Appointment |