

Armed Forces Covenant Duty

In November 2022 a statutory duty was introduced which applies to specific bodies in the areas of Healthcare, Housing and Education to pay due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Covenant Duty

The Armed Forces Covenant Duty is a legal obligation for specified bodies in exercising relevant functions to have due regard to:

- a. The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces.
- b. The principles that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
- c. The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

The Covenant Duty applies whether or not the specific body has signed the Covenant.

The Covenant duty applies across the whole of the UK.

The bodies subject to the Duty are expected to consciously consider the Covenant when developing, delivering, and reviewing policies and decisions which may impact the Armed Forces Community and help improve their access to public services.

The duty applies to the following housing functions: allocations policy for social housing; tenancy strategies (England only); homelessness; and disabled facilities grants.

The Government has published guidance to assist the specified bodies comply with their legal obligations, by providing information about the Duty and those people within the Armed Forces Community who are beneficiaries of the Duty (links to the guidance are on this slide). The guidance is really clear and helpful, including highlighting the issues these people can face as a result of Service life, who the Duty covers, as well as illustrating good practice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-covenant-duty-statutory-guidance>