

Administrative Circular

N595/16

31 March 2016

Distribution All Staff to see

Cc -

EDRMS Reference [s47E\(d\)](#)

Responsible Branch [Women in Leadership Team](#)

Subject: Staying in touch with DFAT - options for staff on extended leave

The Women in Leadership strategy includes a commitment to engage with staff on extended leave who wish to stay in touch with the department. This commitment responds to feedback from staff who asked for more options for staying in touch while on maternity, parental and adoption leave, and extends to staff on leave without pay, long service leave or other extended leave. The options outlined below enable staff to stay in touch as they wish and do not impose new expectations of staff on extended leave.

Access to DFAT buildings in Canberra

2. Staff on extended leave are welcome to attend departmental events and may access DFAT buildings in Canberra by retrieving their pass from a DFAT security desk at the time of their visit [s47E\(d\)](#)

[s47E\(d\)](#)

SATIN Low access

4. Staff who wish to access their SATIN Low accounts while on leave may request [s47E\(d\)](#) remote access to SATIN Low from a personal computer [s47E\(d\)](#)

[s47E\(d\)](#)

s47E(d)

Information to personal email accounts

10. Staff on extended leave can elect to have DFAT administrative circulars sent to their personal email addresses. Staff who wish to join this distribution list should subscribe using the [self-subscribe form on the intranet](#) prior to commencing leave. Staff already on extended leave can ask to join this distribution list by emailing [s47E\(d\)](#) directly from their personal address. Other departmental messages relevant to staff on leave may also be sent. Staff who wish to have access to the full range of departmental information are encouraged to access SATIN Low as previously outlined.

Other measures

11. There are several departmental networks with which staff may wish to maintain contact during their period of leave, such as the DFAT Families Network and DFAT Babies (Facebook page). More information on these and other networks can be found on the DFAT intranet.

12. Under the Women in Leadership strategy there are a range of actions underway to foster an inclusive workplace and ensure all staff feel valued.

John Fisher
Chief People Officer
Corporate Management Group

Staying in touch

Within this section:

s22(1)(a)(ii)

- [Staying in touch](#) Currently selected
s22(1)(a)(ii)

Keeping informed while on leave

Even when you are on extended leave you may want to stay up-to-date with developments in the department.

The department offers a number of services to facilitate you staying up-to-date and engaged with developments in the department. Prior to leave, employees and respective managers should agree on a strategy to keep in touch for the period that the staff member will be away from the workplace.

You can subscribe to receive Administrative Circulars and Payslips through to your personal email address.

To be placed on the Administrative Circulars and or Payslip e-mail distribution list please submit a People Service Request via the link to the HR Homepage in the footer below.

If you have an RSA token, make sure you keep it active while on leave. This will allow you to connect to the ICN low network and access to your emails. To get an RSA token log a job with MyIT which will need to be approved by your Director.

Stay in touch with your supervisor

Prior to leave, employees and their manager should agree on a strategy to keep in touch for the period that the staff member will be away from the workplace.

Employees may also wish to keep in touch on issues and changes at work by nominating regular catch-ups with their manager – this might be via regular phone calls, emails or catching up over a coffee.

Accessing JobConnect when not on the ICN system

If employees wish to seek another position when returning from long term leave they should apply through JobConnect.

JobConnect can be accessed from outside the ICN system - just make sure to save or email yourself the [JobConnect link](#) so you can search and apply for jobs while offline.

Parental & Maternity Leave

Congratulations!

Congratulations on your upcoming birth, fostering or adoption. The department is committed to assisting colleagues with family responsibilities and has policies in place to support you whether you – or a partner – are expecting a child, or adopting or fostering one.

This page provides information on Maternity and Parental leave provisions, processes to apply for these types of leave and support for parents returning to work.

On this page:

[s22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

8. [Staying in touch / Keeping in touch \(KIT\)](#)
[s22\(1\)\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

Staying in Touch/Keeping in Touch (KIT)

While you are on Maternity, Adoption or Foster Parents' Leave you are welcome to attend departmental events and may access DFAT buildings in Canberra by retrieving your pass from a DFAT security desk at the time of your visit. [s47E\(d\)](#)

[s47E\(d\)](#)

You can also elect to have DFAT administrative circulars sent to your personal email address. If you wish to join this distribution list you can subscribe using the [self-subscribe form](#) on the intranet prior to commencing leave. Here is a [link](#) to add your personal email address to the Staff on Leave Mailing List.

While on unpaid parental leave you can attend training, participate in a planning day, attend a conference or perform work approved by your supervisor on a [Keeping in Touch \(KIT\)](#) day. This is for the purpose of facilitating your return to work after parental leave. You can work up to 10 KIT days in each 52 week period. Remuneration will be organised by your supervisor, who will advise HR and Payroll via email of the days/hours you worked.

Any work you do will be counted as a whole KIT day, e.g. if you go into work for an hour, you will be paid only an hour but will have utilised one whole KIT day. There are restrictions on when you can access KIT days, i.e. not within the first six weeks after the date of birth or day of placement of the child. You won't be paid for more than 10 KIT days.

Staff-on-leave mailing list

The staff-on-leave email list is used to distribute administrative circulars and other important corporate messages to staff while on leave (without access to SATIN). Complete the below fields with your full name, private email address and expected return to duty date.

After submitting your details, an email will be auto-generated requesting you to click on a link to confirm your subscription. **If you do not confirm, your subscription will not be complete.** Once this is done, you will receive another email confirming your inclusion on the mailing list. If you do not receive either of these emails, please check your junk mail folder.

If you wish to unsubscribe, the email confirming your inclusion on the mailing list, as well as any emails you receive as part of this mailing list will have a link to unsubscribe.

Your email address will only be used for the purpose of receiving corporate updates and administrative circulars. We will not use your email address for any other purpose or share it without your consent. For more information see our [privacy statement](#).

(required) Email address:

(required) Your name:

(required) Expiry Date:

***Please note: We are aware of an issue that affects Edge Chromium browser when submitting your information above. Internet Explorer or Google Chrome browser can be used in the meantime while the fix is implemented.

If this self-subscribe page is not functioning correctly - please send your details to [s47E\(d\)](#)

- Email address:
- Full name:
- Return to normal duties date:

54. RETURN FROM PARENTAL LEAVE

54.1 KEEPING IN TOUCH DAYS

54.1.1 The provisions for Keeping in Touch (KIT) days are set out in the Fair Work Act 2009, and the Paid Parental Leave Act 2010. Employees who are taking either paid or unpaid parental leave are eligible to apply for KIT days. These are for employees to refresh their skills, stay up-to-date and facilitate a smooth return to work. KIT days must be agreed by the both the employer and employee.

54.1.2 Applications for KIT days requested are considered against the provisions of the Fair Work Act 2009.

54.1.3 Examples of duties that meet the KIT day requirements are:

- a. undertaking training for new IT systems or procedures
- b. participating in training or briefings when selected for posting before or during the period of leave
- c. undertaking language training if selected for posting before or during the period of leave
- d. language immersion training
- e. completing security clearance documentation requested by the department
- f. completing e-learning in accordance with the frequency in the mandatory training checklist
- g. applying for vacant positions via posting or placement rounds
- h. attending meetings, planning or team building days arranged by the return to duty work area
- i. attending major events and announcements in Canberra where all Canberra Employees have been invited
- j. undertaking work to become familiar with the workplace or role before returning to work, and
- k. applying for remote work

54.1.4 Examples of tasks that will not be approved as KIT days include:

- a. applying for promotion, and
- b. undertaking language training for personal reasons i.e. not related to a known upcoming posting.

54.1.5 Under the legislation a KIT day is not permitted within the first two weeks of the birth of an employee's child. An employee can apply for a KIT day from two weeks after the birth (subject to employer approval). An employer is not permitted to offer an employee to participate in a KIT day that occurs within the first 6 weeks after the birth or adoption. An employee applying to participate in a KIT day between two and six weeks after the birth of their child will be required to provide a medical certificate certifying fitness for duty.

54.1.6 A maximum of 10 KIT days can be used by an employee in the first 12 months of parental/maternity leave, and an additional 10 KIT days in the second 12-month period of parental leave. One hour or more of paid work on a day for the purposes of KIT counts as one day towards the 10 day annual limit. An employee's entitlement to unpaid parental leave is not extended by paid leave or keeping in touch days (FWA Section 79B).

54.1.7 KIT days must be agreed in advance by both the employer and employee. Employees are paid their usual salary for the hours worked on KIT days, which is in addition to any payments from the Department of Human Services under the Paid Parental Leave scheme.

54.1.8 Hours of work on a KIT day are treated as hours of duty and counted towards the accrual of leave entitlements, including annual leave and personal leave. Employer and employee superannuation contributions may also be paid. Time worked on a KIT day will break the period of approved leave, however the entitlement for eligible employees to the maximum period of parental or maternity leave is not extended when returning to duty for KIT purposes.

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING KIT DAYS

54.1.9 When requesting the use of KIT days, the following process must be undertaken to enable correct salary payment and recognition of KIT days:

- a. undertaking training for new IT systems or procedures
Prior to attending for your KIT days, seek endorsements/enrolments for your KIT days from either:
 - i. the Diplomatic Academy (DAC) - if undertaking training, or
 - ii. your Hub - if returning for other reasons>
- b. Clearly outline the proposed dates and hours of KIT days, and include details of the work to be undertaken and how this will help the transition back to work
- c. Undertake your approved KIT days
- d. On completion of your KIT days - please submit a People Service request for payment of KIT days and attach all approved emails.

54.1.10 If no prior approval is granted for KIT days no payment will be actioned.