



# Procedure

## Unattach from position

Implementation date : 16/01/2020

Version: 4.2

### Audience

All permanent department employees

### Purpose

To outline the steps to be followed when an employee is considering unattaching from their position, how the process is managed and the steps when returning to your substantive work unit after a period of absence.

### Overview

Unattach from position is when a permanent employee agrees to be unattached from their substantive position whilst still maintaining their permanent employment status.

If an employee is vacating their permanent position for an absence, in excess of 12 months, for reasons including secondment and special leave without pay they may request to unattach from their position or the employer may seek their agreement to unattach. This allows the department to fill the vacant role with another permanent employee ensuring service continuity.

As a result, it means the employee maintains their permanent status but has no funded substantive position to return to at the conclusion of their period of absence. Upon recommencing duty after attaching from their position, the employee's substantive role may be different to that previously held.

### Responsibilities

#### Employee

- Consider the implications of unattaching from a position prior to applying or considering the employer's request for you to unattach.
- Have open and honest discussions with your manager, principal or supervisor about the reasons for unattaching from your position.

#### Manager, principal, supervisor

- Manage an employee's application to unattach from position.
- Offer support services such as the [employee assistance program \(EAP\)](#) (DoE employees only) to employees who are considering unattaching from their position.
- Ensure the employee returns to a role within their substantive work location and within the budgeted establishment (i.e. funded role).

- Update relevant record management systems.

#### HR delegate

- Approve the request to unattach from position.
- Consider human rights when making a decision about a request to unattach.

#### Talent unit, Central Office HR

- Process the approved unattach from position form.

## Process

### 1. Consider a request to unattach from a position

- A request to unattach may be employee or department initiated.
- The manager, principal or supervisor and employee are to review the employee eligibility to unattach (see below) prior to considering submitting a request to unattach from their position.

#### Employee eligibility to unattach

- An employee must have been absent from their substantive position for more than 12 months due to circumstances including but not limited to a secondment or special leave without pay.
- An unattach from position request cannot be considered where an employee's absence is due to:
  - sick leave
  - maternity or family leave
  - where they are undertaking higher duties in their current branch/work unit.

Absences due to the above reasons are not included when calculating the total absence period from their substantive role.

### 2. Consideration of options

- Manager, principal or supervisor meets with the employee to discuss the request to unattach.
- Manager, principal or supervisor and employee discuss other possible options to ascertain if unattaching is the best outcome. Alternative options available may include:
  - returning to their substantive role
  - extension of the current arrangement without the need to unattach.
- Where unattach from position is being considered due to the employee being seconded (within or outside the department), the employee's manager, principal or supervisor should discuss the option of the employee being engaged in a permanent capacity with that work unit / department rather than an extension of the secondment.
- The decision to agree to extend a period of absence (through secondment in another department, undertaking a role at, below or above level in another work unit within the department or special leave without pay) is at the discretion of your manager, principal or supervisor. The appropriate HR delegate (who may be your manager) reserves the right to limit the period of time you may be absent from your substantive position to 12 months.
- If your manager, principal or supervisor agrees to an extension of a period of absence from your substantive position they may do so on the condition that you agree to unattach from your position.
- If you prefer to remain against the substantive position and not be unattached, your manager may give

consideration to the potential benefits you could provide the work unit and your substantive position on return to duty prior to approving further absence from your role. However, the manager still retains the right to limit the amount of time you may be absent from your position to 12 months.

- An employee's absence from the work unit will be managed with consideration to timeframes and workforce mix for current and future needs.
- Manager, principal or supervisor to discuss the outcomes of unattaching i.e. the employee no longer has a substantive role and at the end of their absence may be assigned to any role which is available in the work unit at the same level for which they have the skills to do.
- Manager, principal or supervisor provides the employee with information about how to access the EAP at any time should they require further support with their decision making.

### 3. Submit application

- Employee submits [unattach from position](#) form to their manager, principal or supervisor.
- Manager, principal or supervisor endorses the unattach from position form.
- Manager, principal or supervisor retains the unattach from position form for a cooling off period of 14 days (from time of the employee lodging the unattach from position form).

### 4. Process application

- After completion of the 14 day cooling off period, the manager, principal or supervisor seeks approval from the HR delegate for the unattachment.
- The completed application form is forwarded to Talent unit for processing.
- The Talent unit, Central Office HR provides written notification to the employee that they have been unattached from their position and provides advice to Payroll Services to update employee record in payroll system.

### 5. Employee returns to their substantive work unit after unattaching from their position

- When an unattached employee is intending to return to their substantive work unit (due to the cessation of their secondment or special leave without pay) they must contact their manager, principal or supervisor as early as possible to discuss return dates.
- Employees will be required to return to duty in the work unit from which they were unattached.
- An employee's substantive work unit is responsible for ensuring the employee returns to a role within their substantive work location and within the budgeted establishment (i.e. funded role). This is to minimize the risk of the work unit being over the budgeted / funded establishment upon your return to duty.
- If the employee is requesting a transfer at level, the employee will be given priority status for vacancies within their current branch / region only.

### 6. Appeals

Should an employee not agree with a decision made regarding unattaching from a position (including time limits placed on absences from their position or the role an employee is attached to on return to their substantive workgroup after unattaching from their position), the [managing employee complaints](#) procedure should be followed.

## Definitions

<b>Secondment</b>	The temporary appointment of a permanent employee for an agreed period of time to another DoE position (or position in an external department) at either the same, lower or higher classification level. Another position in the department does not include a different position within their substantive Division.
<b>Special leave</b>	Leave taken in accordance with the <a href="#">Special leave (Directive 05/17)</a> .
<b>Unattach from position</b>	Unattach from position is when a permanent employee agrees to be unattached from their substantive position whilst still maintaining their permanent employment status.

## Legislation

- [Public Service Act 2008 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Special leave \(Directive 05/17\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act 2019 \(Qld\)](#)

## Delegations/Authorisations

- [HR delegations manual](#) (DoE employees only)

## Related policies

- [Recruitment and selection](#)
- [Managing employee complaints](#)
- [Queensland Government Employment Security Policy](#)

## Related procedures

- [Managing employee complaints](#)
- [Transfer at level](#)

## Guidelines

- Nil

## Supporting information/websites

- [Unattach from position – FAQs](#)
- [Unattach from position](#) form
- [Employee assistance program](#) (DoE employees only)

## Contact

For all enquiries, contact Talent Unit, Human Resources:

Non-teaching

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## Review date

15/06/2020

## Superseded versions

*Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.*

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