

1 Title: Decentralisation Program – Workforce Arrangements

2 Purpose:

This directive establishes a transparent and consistent workforce management process for decentralisation programs by providing a framework for:

- relocation of employees under a decentralisation program; and
- management of employees who require placement as a result of a decentralisation program.

3 Application:

This directive applies to:

- public service officers engaged under section 119 of the *Public Service Act 2008*; and
- tenured general employees engaged under section 147 of the *Public Service Act 2008*

whose work units and/or functions and associated roles are selected for relocation, or who have indicated interest in relocating to a decentralisation location as part of a decentralisation program.

4 Legislative Provision:

Public Service Act 2008 – sections 25, 26, 46, 53, 133 and 134

5 Effective date: 23 January 2012

6 Expiry date: 31 December 2013

7 Definitions:

For the purposes of this directive, the following definitions apply:

- **Decentralisation location** – a location designated by Government under its decentralisation program which is outside the inner Brisbane precinct.
- **Decentralisation opt-out employee** – is an employee whose substantive role is within a work unit and/or function approved for relocation to a decentralisation location, and who has indicated their preference not to relocate.
- **Decentralisation pool** – is a consolidated group of decentralisation opt-out employees either at agency level or central level who must be considered for placement.
- **Inner Brisbane precinct** – is a location identified by an agency that is within close proximity to the Central Business District including Woolloongabba, Spring Hill, Fortitude Valley and Bowen Hills.
- **Suitable alternative role** – is a role specified by the Public Service Commission as being sufficiently similar to relocating roles for a particular decentralisation program.

- **Opt-in employee** – is an employee whose substantive role (inner Brisbane based) is not within a work unit and/or function approved for relocation to a decentralisation location or an employee (inner Brisbane based) being managed under the directive relating to workplace change, and who indicates their interest in relocating to the decentralisation location.
- **Participating agency** – an agency that is relocating work units and/or functions and transferring employees to a decentralisation location.
- **Relocating role** – a role that has been identified as part of a work unit and/or function which is to be relocated to a decentralisation location.
- **Relocation date** – the date nominated upon which an agency's functions are to be relocated to a decentralisation location.
- **Suitable** – a decentralisation opt-out employee is suitable for a role at the same classification level if they demonstrate the appropriate skills necessary to meet the requirements of the role to a satisfactory level, given a reasonable period of training and on-the-job experience, and are fit to undertake the role with reasonable adjustment if necessary.

8 Provisions:

8.1 Principles

The Queensland Government's decentralisation program aims to relocate workplaces from inner Brisbane to urban locations to improve service delivery access, stimulate local economies, reduce urban congestion, improve workplace flexibility, and provide opportunities for employees to reduce commuting time.

To effectively manage decentralisation programs within the Queensland Government:

- Public service agencies must work together co-operatively and collaboratively;
- Employee relocation will be on the basis of work units and/or functions;
- Employees' preferences will be canvassed and factored into the process of selecting work unit and/or functions;
- Employees will be provided with sufficient information to inform their preferences;
- Decisions will be made in a timely manner to ensure maximum opportunities for employees to indicate preferences;
- Workforce management decisions must be made openly and transparently;
- Decisions about workforce arrangements must be flexible enough to achieve the decentralisation aims and focus on ensuring workforce resources are used effectively;
- Employee support programs will be provided to employees whose preference is not to relocate to support their employment security and facilitate their earliest possible placement in a suitable alternative role, either in their current location or another location by agreement, to support their own work location preferences;

- The level of support provided to employees will take into consideration their individual circumstances, including whether or not substantial and real hardship is evident; and
- Decentralisation opt-out employees will actively participate in employee engagement processes with a view to maximising their opportunities for alternative placement in a suitable alternative role to support their own work location preferences.

8.2 **Relationship to other directives**

- (a) This directive must be read in conjunction with the directives relating to workplace change and to recruitment and selection.
- (b) In the event of any inconsistency, this directive shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

8.3 **Agency Workforce Management Process**

(a) *Work units and/or functions nominated for relocation*

A number of criteria will form the basis for determining which work units and/or functions, and from which agencies, will relocate. These include:

- The process of canvassing employee preferences to either work or not work at a particular location;
- Agency's strategic direction – work units where there is a sound business case for them to relocate;
- Agency's service delivery outcomes – work units where the relocation offers opportunities to provide localised and/or improved service delivery to customers; and
- Agency's workforce demographics – work units where the relocation offers closer proximity to employee residences and flexibility.

(b) *Roles nominated for relocation*

- (i) Once the work units and/or functions to be decentralised have been determined and approved, the agency will notify employees in writing that their role will be relocating (relocating roles) and provide such employees with specific information about the decentralisation location including:
 - Facilities and services;
 - Transition processes and support services to be provided by the agency; and
 - Expected timeframes.
- (ii) Following provision of such information, employees whose preference is not to relocate must formally advise the agency of this preference as soon as practicable, but no later than within three (3) months of receiving formal notification under clause

8.3(b)(i), to optimise their opportunities for alternative placement. Employees will not be able to indicate a preference not to relocate following the expiry of this specified period, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

- (iii) Once work units have been determined, the agency must undertake specific employee engagement processes with decentralisation opt-out employees. A range of employee support programs will be available to decentralisation opt-out employees to achieve the earliest possible placement. Agencies will take into account decentralisation opt-out employees' individual circumstances (including whether or not substantial and real hardship is evident) in determining the level of support to be provided in this process.

During the Central Workforce Management Process under clause 8.5, employee support will increase to the extent that it maximises the opportunity for placement of employees at a service-wide level. Employee support and placement strategies will be consistent with the provisions of the directive relating to workplace change.

- (iv) Consistent with the directive relating to workplace change, decentralisation opt-out employees will participate in employee engagement processes for placement in a suitable alternative role either in their current location or another location by agreement, to support their own work location preferences.

(c) Agency placement process

(i) **Agency responsibilities:**

- Where a decentralisation opt-out employee has indicated a preference to remain in their current location, the agency will wherever possible, match the decentralisation opt-out employee with opt-in employees identified under clause 8.4 and/or vacancies on the basis of suitability. This matching process will be based on the decentralisation opt-out employees and opt-in employees' substantive level.
- Agencies are to provide employee support to decentralisation opt-out employees to facilitate their earliest possible placement. The level of support provided will take into account each decentralisation opt-out employee's individual circumstances (including whether or not substantial and real hardship is evident).

(ii) **Employee responsibilities:**

- Consistent with the directive relating to workplace change, decentralisation opt-out employees will actively participate in employee engagement processes with a view to maximising their opportunities for placement, in a suitable alternative role, to support their own employment security.

(d) Referral to the Central Workforce Management Process

- (i) Where a decentralisation opt-out employee has not been placed in another suitable alternative role six (6) months prior to the relocation date, the agency may refer the employee to the Central Workforce Management Process under clause 8.5 provided:
- The agency demonstrates it has taken all reasonable actions to support the placement of the employee; and

- The employee has actively participated in the employee engagement processes.
- (ii) The Public Service Commission (PSC) will review the referral request and register the decentralisation opt-out employee in the decentralisation pool if satisfied the criteria at clause 8.3(d)(i) have been met.

8.4 Opt-in process for decentralisation location

- (a) Employees whose substantive role is not within a work unit and/or function approved for relocation, or employees being managed under the directive relating to workplace change, may indicate their personal interest in relocating to the decentralisation location (opt-in employee).
- (b) The PSC will facilitate the opt-in process, coordinate a register of employees who nominate interest in the decentralisation location and provide information to participating agencies on a regular basis.
- (c) Employees will provide relevant details e.g. skills, work history in an approved format for consideration by participating agencies.
- (d) Employees who nominate to opt-in are not guaranteed they will transition to the new location.
- (e) Agencies will consider the nominations of interest as part of the arrangements for vacancies under clause 8.6 and the agency placement process under clause 8.3(c). Agencies must consider opt-in employees from within their own agency in the first instance.

8.5 Central Workforce Management Process

- (a) The Central Workforce Management Process is intended to support the placement of decentralisation opt-out employees by:
 - Where possible, matching decentralisation opt-out employees registered in the decentralisation pool with opt-in employees at level from any agency; and
 - Ensuring that agencies' vacancies in suitable roles in specified locations are made available to this central process to maximise the opportunity for placement of employees registered in the decentralisation pool prior to such vacancies being advertised externally in accordance with the directive about recruitment and selection.

- (b) Each agency must establish a single point of accountability to ensure vacancies are identified and made available on an ongoing basis to the Central Workforce Management Process according to the requirements of this directive.
- (c) The Central Workforce Management Process will operate from date of registration of a decentralisation opt-out employee in the decentralisation pool to the relocation date.
- (d) In parallel with the Central Workforce Management Process, agencies will continue their internal placement process under clause 8.3(c). Assessment will continue to be on the basis of suitability.
- (e) Following the relocation date, agencies will retain responsibility for the ongoing management of any of their remaining decentralisation opt-out employees and continue to seek placement opportunities either in their current location or another location by agreement to support their own work location preferences and maximise their employment security.

8.6 Vacancies within work units and/or functions to be relocated

- (a) Agencies must be clear in recruitment processes for any relocating roles approved under clause 8.3(b)(i) that such roles will be relocating to the decentralisation location at the relocation date.
- (b) In accordance with clause 8.4, agencies are to consider opt-in employees at level from within their own agency for any vacant relocating roles in the first instance. This consideration will be based on the opt-in employee's suitability for the relocating role.
- (c) Where no internal opt-in employees are deemed suitable for vacancies in accordance with clause 8.6(b), agencies are to consider service-wide opt-in employees at level on a suitability basis prior to such vacancies being advertised externally in accordance with the directive about recruitment and selection.

- (d) Employees appointed to relocating roles following approval under clause 8.3(b)(i) are expected to relocate to the decentralisation location, unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- (e) The PSC Commission Chief Executive may exempt certain vacancies from the provisions of this subclause in exceptional circumstances.
- (f) These arrangements for vacancies will operate until the relocation date.

8.7 Summary of workforce arrangements

A summary of the workforce arrangements provided in this directive is attached for information.

8.8 Reporting requirements

Agencies must report to the Public Service Commission Commission Chief Executive as part of good governance during specific decentralisation programs. The detail of specific reporting requirements will be established for each location under the decentralisation program.

Decentralisation

Summary of Workforce Arrangements

