



AFP National Guideline on medical, psychological and physical competency assessments

1. Disclosure and compliance

This document is classified **UNCLASSIFIED** and is intended for internal AFP use.

Disclosing any content must comply with Commonwealth law and the [AFP National Guideline on the disclosure of information](#).

Compliance

This instrument is part of the AFP's professional standards framework. The [AFP Commissioner's Order on Professional Standards \(CO2\)](#) outlines the expectations for appointees to adhere to the requirements of the framework. Inappropriate departures from the provisions of this instrument may constitute a breach of AFP professional standards and be dealt with under Part V of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth).

2. Acronyms

AFP	Australian Federal Police
CMA	Consultant Medical Adviser
OSA	Operational safety assessment
SAP	Systems, Applications and Products

3. Definitions

AFP appointee - means a Deputy Commissioner, an AFP employee, special member, special protective service officer and includes a person:

- engaged overseas under s. 69A of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) (AFP Act) to perform duties as an AFP employee

- seconded to the AFP under s. 69D of the AFP Act
- engaged under s. 35 of the AFP Act as a consultant or contractor to perform services for the AFP and who has been determined under s. 35(2) of the AFP Act to be an AFP appointee.

(See s. 4 of the AFP Act.)

AFP Consultant Medical Adviser - means a medical practitioner, registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, engaged by the AFP.

Medical exemption - means a waiver granted by the AFP Consultant Medical Adviser to an AFP appointee, restricting them from participating in operational safety assessments for a specified period of time.

Registered AFP psychologist - means a psychologist, registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, engaged by the AFP.

Systems, Applications and Products (SAP) - means the information system used by the AFP to support human resource and financial functions.

4. Guideline authority

This guideline was issued by the National Manager Human Resources using power under s. 37(1) of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) as delegated by the Commissioner under s. 69C of the Act.

5. Introduction

This guideline outlines the obligations for AFP appointees for medical, psychological and physical competency assessments and should be read in conjunction with the [AFP Commissioner's Order on operational safety \(CO3\)](#).

6. Policy

The AFP has a duty of care to both its appointees and the public to ensure that AFP appointees with police and protective service officer powers possess competencies that enable the safe application of those powers to meet the diverse demands of operational policing and protection duties. All AFP appointees must comply with the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) (Cth).

All AFP appointees should possess and maintain a standard of health, wellbeing and physical fitness that enables them to fulfil their job requirements competently and safely.

7. Requirements

Sections 24, 40C and 40EB of the [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#) (Cth) allow the AFP to establish various conditions and competency requirements for engagement, including a:

- medical assessment
- psychological assessment
- physical competency assessment.

These requirements are part of the standard gateways related to appointment, deployment overseas, or redeployment across specialist functions. AFP appointees may be directed to undergo such an assessment by the AFP Consultant Medical Adviser.

8. Psychological clearance

Written psychological clearance must be obtained from a member of Wellbeing Services working under the direction of the AFP Principal Psychologist. Certain psychological assessments must be conducted by a registered AFP psychologist:

- prior to an applicant progressing through the recruitment or re-engagement gateways
- prior to an AFP appointee being assigned to designated specialist operational roles (e.g. Specialist Response Group) and designated non-operational support
- following a long-term deployment/mission.

For any queries about the requirement for psychological clearance or assessment, contact Wellbeing Services.

9. Medical clearance

Written medical clearance must be obtained from the AFP Consultant Medical Adviser:

- prior to an applicant progressing through the recruitment or re-engagement gateways
- prior to an appointee being assigned to designated specialist operational roles (e.g. Specialist Response Group) and non-operational support roles in overseas missions
- following long-term deployment/mission.

For any queries about the requirement for medical clearance or assessment, contact Medical Services.

10. Physical competency assessment

The physical competency assessment is an additional health risk screening tool focussing particularly on musculoskeletal and loco motor functioning. This tool is used for assessing level of fitness, injury prediction and as an assessment applied to recruits and appointees employed within designated specialist roles (e.g. Specialist Response Group, AFP dog handlers).

11. Medical exemptions

Medical exemptions from the operational safety assessment (OSA) may be either temporary or permanent. The AFP Consultant Medical Adviser (CMA) may grant an AFP appointee exemption from the OSA when a medical, psychological or physical condition is likely to present either:

- a risk to the AFP appointee
- an unacceptable liability for the AFP.

These risks may be present to the appointee either:

- when undertaking the OSA
- in the safe performance of operational duties, including being a risk to co-workers or members of the public.

AFP appointees may request a medical exemption from the OSA, or from operational duties, by completing the AFP Medical Form 880-OSA (contact Medical Services) or by attaching supporting medical information from their treating health practitioner and submitting it to Health Services.

When assessing the request, the AFP CMA:

- may direct AFP appointees to undergo a separate medical assessment
- must determine the duration of the medical exemption based on the supporting medical evidence. The exemption:
 - can only be approved for a minimum of 12 months
 - is to be reviewed every 12 months.

The AFP CMA must note any medical exemption in the SAP personnel management system.

The medically exempt AFP appointee must be restricted from full operational duties for the duration of the exemption.

When it is determined that the AFP appointee is able to undertake the OSA, they must provide medical clearance documentation from their treating health practitioner. This must be at the AFP appointee's cost.

Redeployment of AFP appointees issued with permanent medical exemptions must be managed by the relevant National Manager, in consultation with Health Services. Permanent medical exemption may result in a change of role and/or a change in working pattern or sworn status at the discretion of the National Manager Human Resources. AFP appointees who move to a support working pattern must be remunerated in accordance with the provisions contained within the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2012-2016](#).

12. Fitness for continued duty

Where the Commissioner and/or their delegate is concerned about an AFP appointee's fitness for continued duty, a referral must be made to Medical Services in accordance with the provision contained within s. 43(11) of the [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2012-2016](#).

13. Further advice

Queries about the content of this guideline should be directed to the Coordinator Health Services.

14. References

Legislation

- [Australian Federal Police Act 1979](#)(Cth)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)(Cth).

AFP governance instruments

- [AFP Commissioner's Order on operational safety \(CO3\)](#)
- [Australian Federal Police Enterprise Agreement 2012-2016](#).