

Reservist Programme

Frequency Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is a Reservist?

A Reservist is a newly developed role to complement the existing NHS workforce, aimed at people who want to continue working for NHS with a limited time commitment, and seek an opportunity to deploy their experience and knowledge in a variety of health and social care settings.

What is the commitment?

- Minimum of 30 deployed days (225 hours) per year
- Training requirements and development for all roles
- Engagement at reservist 'keep in touch' events
- Ability to work in across Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Where will I be required to work?

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is a community trust supporting patient care across a variety of settings. Your work base will be dependent on the role you are carrying out.

You will be assigned to areas to meet increased shift demand in a range of health and social care settings across Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. This could include working within community, mental health, and inpatient settings

What roles can I work for?

The roles will differ and depending on the demand, surge times and the roles available at Berkshire Healthcare.

The key reservist opportunities in our areas are:

- Reservist Clinical Professional
- Reservist Administrators
- Reservist Ward Ambassador

No matter what your role, you will be part of a Reservist community, working with like-minded people, undertaking meaningful work, and helping patients in your local community. You'll also support our permanent clinical staff who could be your friends, neighbours, and former colleagues.

Will I work alone or with others?

You will benefit from the knowledge and support of colleagues and will work with teams. There may be occasions where you will be deployed to cover a shift where demand for care is higher than usual, and this will require you to work as part of a ward-based team.

I do not have NHS experience can I join the reservist programme?

Absolutely – there are a variety of roles on offer which do not require NHS experience. All mandatory trainings will be provided before deployment.

Who do I need to contact to work as a Reservist?

Simply email BHFT.Reservist@berkshire.nhs.uk and we will be in touch to guide you through the simple process of becoming a Reservist.

Will I receive an induction or briefing before being deployed?

You will receive a thorough training before being deployed. Local inductions will be a comprehensive briefing about uniform policy, wearing masks, use of PPE and other local protocols and where required undertake a shadow shift.

What is the length of a Reservist shift?

This will vary according to the shift requirements at the time and will be notified to you in advance of committing to work the shift. You will be required to work a mix of day and evening shifts across the working week as well as weekends

What happens during ‘keep in touch’ sessions?

Our keep in touch sessions will be both learning and socially themed and allow you the opportunity to meet fellow Reservists, share knowledge, experience, and celebrate success.

What if I need to raise a concern during my deployed days?

Raising concerns is an essential part of the NHS Freedom to Speak Up campaign and there is a protocol in place for doing so. You will have access to our Practice Educator who can assist in investigating your concerns and providing all important pastoral care during your time as a Reservist.

What if I want to work more frequently and in a specialist role?

If your desire is to work in a more specialist role and more frequently, our bank services will allow you to do that in several locations in community, mental health, social care and acute settings. We can refer you to 'join the bank' schemes which are a straightforward process.

What will I be paid if I work as a Clinical Professional or Ward Ambassador Reservist?

Pay arrangements for Reservist workers will be detailed in your contract letter. You will be paid the Top of Band.

Does working as a Reservist affect my tax?

The tax position for each individual will be different as this depends on if you have other roles outside of the scheme, receive a pension or other income.

We are not able to give you individual advice regarding your tax position and you should consult HMRC for clarity. Please contact HMRC by telephone 0300 200 3300 and keep your National Insurance number handy.

How will I get payment for my Reservist hours worked?

This will be automatically generated from the electronic rostering system once the worked shift has been verified/finalised for payment.

What period does weekly pay cover?

Bank payments are weekly.

Bank weeks are Friday to Thursday. All shifts completed within this bank week must be authorised by managers the following Sunday.

What if my circumstances change and I need to stop working or increase my working days?

We fully appreciate that individual circumstances change, and you can pause or resign from your Reservist assignment. If you wish to work more frequently, we can look to convert your assignment to join the bank and this will give you the flexibility to do so.

What pre-employment checks need to take place?

Before you can start work as a reservist, we need to satisfy a number of pre-employment checks including DBS, verifying professional registration, proof of address and right to work in the UK. The scheme will meet the cost of the DBS

Do I need health clearance to work in specific areas of the hospital?

Pre-employment screening will be undertaken as part of the pre-employment checks with Occupational Health team.

Relevant clearance and immunisations will be arranged before you undertake work.

How will my time be managed as a reservist?

Your deployed days will vary according to demand, this many involve a block of days or single working days on a sporadic basis. Our team will work with you to understand your availability.

It is important that you make sure you have sufficient time off from work to have a healthy balance between work and home life. This means that in line with working time regulations you should:

- not be working more than an average of 48 hours per week
- have an 11-hour gap between shifts
- have one day a week off or two days over a fortnight
- utilise your annual leave entitlement

Contact Information

Scan the QR Code to complete
our Expression of Interest Form



If you want to contact us or need more information...
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