



20. Term Employment



CSIRO Staff Association

This is the twentieth in a series of fact sheets to assist CSIRO union members better understand and enforce our rights at work. The source of these rights is contained in the new CSIRO Enterprise Agreement 2011-2014 (EA) at schedule 2.

Know Your Rights

What is the standard form of employment in CSIRO?

Indefinite employment (tenure) is the standard form of employment for CSIRO officers (Clause 1(a))

Are there any specific categories of employment for which term employment must be used?

Yes. Where appointment is as a designated Post-doctoral Fellow for which a training/development program has been devised or where appointment is as a designated trainee in a bona fide apprenticeship scheme or a government sponsored employment and training scheme (1(d)).

Are there specified conditions for Post-doctoral Fellows?

Yes. These are contained at Clause 3 of Schedule 2 of the agreement and more information can be found in Know Your Rights no.17 Post Docs.

Under what other circumstances may CSIRO appoint an officer for a specified term?

CSIRO may appoint an officer for a specified term in the following circumstances:

where the appointment is to cover the temporary absence of another officer;

where the appointment is clearly of a limited term nature in that the work:

- has specifically designed objectives related to the period of the term; and
- requires skills which cannot be provided by existing employees or requires the commitment of resources beyond the capacity of the existing number of indefinite staff; and
- on the balance of probabilities, after the work is completed there will be no ongoing need for the skills being sought or there will be sufficient competent indefinite staff available to satisfy the requirements of ongoing existing and foreseeable funded activities.

to cope with seasonal periods of peak load;

- where CSIRO wishes to employ a recognised specialist in a field for a short period;
- where an external appointment is made to a management position;
- where a specified term appointment is preferred by the appointee and this is acceptable to CSIRO; and

- where an officer requests access to transition to retirement arrangements (1(b)).

There will be no link between the funding source (e.g. external funding for a project) and the decision to appoint a person on a term (1(c)).

What is the duration of specified term employment?

The duration of specified term employment can vary subject to the following:

- for Post-doctoral Fellows the term must not exceed 3 years (2(a));
- for all other officers, no single term of term employment shall exceed 5 years

However, CSIRO must conduct tenure reviews if it seeks to employ officers on single or multiple terms beyond 4 years (in the first instance) and then beyond 7 years (see overleaf).

Can term officers be considered for indefinite employment?

Yes, in the following circumstances:

- they are candidates for externally advertised positions; or
- they were originally recruited through a competitive selection process and are candidates for internally advertised positions or
- in the opinion of CSIRO it is desirable to offer indefinite employment without a position being advertised.

When does my term tenure employment status need to be reviewed?

Under Clause 9 of Schedule 2 of the agreement CSIRO must review within 3 months of the 4 year and 7 year term employment point whether further employment is appropriate and whether it will be offered on a term or indefinite basis. The details of this process are set out under this Clause.

Do term employees have particular rights specified in Schedule 2 of the agreement?

Yes. Specified term employees are entitled to be:

- informed of their rights and options in respect to applicable superannuation schemes on commencement or when their employment situation changes
- required to participate in the APA process when employed for periods exceeding 3 months
- eligible for performance rewards on the same basis as an indefinite officer
- exempt from a further probation period (subject to certain conditions)
- eligible for applicable relocation entitlements (subject to certain conditions) (Clause 5(a))
- paid a separation payment on completion of a period of term employment if CSIRO does not offer further employment (Clause 6 of Schedule 2 of the agreement).

What about if CSIRO terminates my specified term employment?

When CSIRO terminates an officer's employment prior to the completion of a specified term (except if it is due to inefficiency or misconduct) the officer shall:

- be given two weeks notice of early termination
- be given access to redeployment
- be entitled to the applicable separation payment and
- in respect of the period of service terminated, be able to negotiate compensation.

Do I have access to redeployment if I am a fixed term officer?

Yes providing that:

- you were appointed following a competitive recruitment process; and
- have at least 4 years aggregate employment, provided that no breaks between periods of service exceeds 6 months.

Consideration of any outplacement benefit will be at CSIRO's discretion.

Can I join the Staff Association if I am a term employee?

Absolutely! The Staff Association has run a number of successful campaigns on behalf of specified term employees and offers a lot of support and expertise to members on specified terms.