

Phase 2 | Period of Time Between the Receipt of the Medical Release Decision and the Actual Release Date

Note: The following is meant to serve as a guideline for medically-releasing Canadian Armed Forces members. It is not a policy or set of instructions that must be followed. The order of events and steps may vary depending on the circumstances of the medical release.



Key Events, Key Steps and Resources

I have received a decision message following the Director Military Careers Administration (DMCA) Administrative Review of Medical Employment Limitations (AR/MEL)

✓ If your medical employment limitations are found to breach the Universality of Service¹ requirements, there are three possible medical release outcomes of your Administrative Review of Medical Employment Limitations (AR/MEL):

- Release due to medical reasons within 6 months – Non-complex transition² (Transition)
- Release due to medical reasons within 3 years – Employable full-time in some capacity in your rank and the Military Occupational Structure ID (MOSID) in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) based on CAF requirements, if your MOSID is in critical shortage, and a position is available ([Retention](#))
- Release due to medical reasons between 6 months and 3 years – Complex transition (Transition)

✓ Note that your release item can be changed up to and including your effective release date to better describe the most appropriate reason for release.

✓ Discuss your MELs with your CAF Nurse Case Manager to better plan for your transition to civilian life, and consider applying for [Service Income Security Insurance Plan \(SISIP\) Long Term Disability \(LTD\)](#).³

1 DAOD 5023-1

2 CAF Health Services Nurse Case Managers use a comprehensive Complexity Assessment process using a standardized tool, which helps determine the complexity of a member's transition. It is done during the initial case management assessment and is reassessed if the member's condition changes or if more than one year passes. It is finalized with the support of the clinical team, under the professional guidance and responsibility of the local base/wing surgeons. The final assessment of complex vs non-complex takes into account information about the illness or injury, functional limitations, mental health, the psycho-social factors and the ability of the healthcare system that will be responsible for the member's care after release to meet the member's needs.

3 The CAF Nurse Case Manager will provide you the application and arrange the medical assessment.

- ✓ You may choose to release before the end of the period indicated in your release message.
 - You should discuss this with your case manager, local IPSC staff, and/or orderly room support staff (B/W Admin O) prior to making your decision, as there may be an impact on benefits and the CAF will not change your release category after you have released.
 - For members wishing to cease a period of retention, a memo requesting this change must be sent to the Director Military Careers Administration (DMCA) via your chain of command
 - If you choose to advance your release, inform your [SISIP Vocational Rehabilitation Program \(VRP\)](#) Counsellor, even if your application is not yet complete so that timely support is provided.

- ✓ If you haven't already, find out what benefits and services you and your family may be entitled to with the [Military Benefits Browser](#).

- ✓ If you haven't already, consider contacting your Personnel Selection Office or Education Office to obtain information on the services available to you and/or to register for a [Second Career Assistance Network \(SCAN\)](#) Program seminar (you can also register online if you have access to the Defence Information Network [DIN]⁴).

- ✓ If you are a Reservist, you may want to review the [Before You Go](#) repository, which provides links to the sources for various programs available specifically to the Reserve Force and Reserve Force Veterans.

- ✓ Apply for an occupancy extension if you are living in a [Canadian Forces Housing Agency \(CFHA\)](#) unit and think you may need to stay past your release date.⁵

4 The DND/CAF's Intranet site is available only to individuals with access to the DND/CAF network.

5 You will be considered a Priority 1 applicant if you are eligible to move to an Intended Place of Residence (IPR) or if you are enrolled in an approved career transition or training program. Extensions may be authorized based on the availability of housing units and at the discretion of the Housing Services Centre manager.



- ✓ Consider making a civilian Last Will and Testament and a Power of Attorney, as your military Will may no longer be valid after your release.⁶
- ✓ If you haven't already, speak with a Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) representative to see if you are eligible for [VAC benefits and to set up your transition interview](#); and create your [My VAC Account](#) online.
- ✓ If you plan on using your priority hiring entitlement and your upcoming medical release is related to your CAF service, you can initiate the "VAC 1002 - Medical Release Attributable to Service Determination" prior to your planned date of release.⁷
 - This submission can be done through [My VAC Account](#), or by downloading the "[VAC 1002](#)" form from the VAC website and mailing it in.
 - Note that it may take up to **16 weeks** for VAC to determine whether your medical release is the result of a service-related injury or disease or a non-service-related injury or disease that was aggravated by service, for the purposes of statutory priority hiring.
 - This can be done as early as 30 days prior to your final release date, but you will not be considered a priority person until your final paid day of service has passed.

6 The CAF provides each member with the opportunity, at enrolment, to make or review a will. A yearly review is also part of the Annual Personnel Readiness Verification (APRV).

7 This process does not have to be done after release. A member acting proactively can have the VAC determination completed in time to line up with his/her date of release. This can help members who want to seek priority hiring status for a job in the Federal Public Service (see the section "I am preparing for the civilian workforce").

I have my initial release interview with the CAF Release Section (Part I)

✓ Read the Release Statement of Understanding (SOU) that is provided to you at the interview; if you have questions, seek answers **prior** to your final release interview, which takes place on your last working day.

I am preparing for the civilian workforce

- ✓ Consider applying to the CAF [Vocational Rehabilitation Program for Serving Members \(VRPSM\)](#) in consultation with your Chain of Command.
 - If eligible, request approval from your Commanding Officer to participate in an approved transitional activity (such as on-the-job training, work experience, or a civilian vocational rehabilitation training program) for up to six months prior to your release, or the start of your retirement leave, if applicable.
 - Financial support for approved educational transitional activities may be available through the CAF (such as the [Skills Completion Program – Regular Force](#) and the [Education Reimbursement – Primary Reserve Program](#)) and through SISIP⁸ – see the section below titled “[I need financial support post-release.](#)”
 - You can obtain VRPSM information packages and planning materials from the closest [IPSC of the JPSU](#).
 - You will receive an application for SISIP LTD/VRP from the CAF Case Manager or you may download it from [SISIP’s website](#)

8 SISIP can also provide funding support for some aspects of the VRPSM



- ✓ If you are interested in a job in the Federal Public Service, get information about [priority hiring](#).
 - You can read the [Members of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police released or discharged for medical reasons – Guide on Priority Administration](#).
 - If applicable, contact your SISIP VRP Counsellor to get help preparing a priority hiring résumé.
 - Contact Director Casualty Support Management (DCSM) at 1-800-883-6094 or DCSM-DGSB@forces.gc.ca to request a letter stating that you are medically released.
 - Once a competent authority⁹ provides you with a letter¹⁰ certifying you as fit to return to work, you can register/activate your priority status by contacting your local DND Civilian Human Resources Service Centre.
 - Note that you must activate the priority entitlement within five years of being released, and the entitlement period is a maximum of five years (which may be started any time within the five years) based on the date indicated in the certification of fitness.
 - Hiring organizations may request that you be assessed through interviews, written exams or other assessment methods, just like candidates in a regular appointment process; your HR advisor can provide you with information on different assessment methods and how to prepare.
- ✓ Consider applying for [VAC's Rehabilitation Services](#) within 120 days of release from the CAF.

9 DCSM considers a competent authority to be “a medical professional who is familiar with your medical history”

10 Note that you must have a fitness letter dated within the five-year window following the final date of your release. Even if VAC's determination process for statutory priority eligibility goes beyond the five year window, you must still have a fitness letter dated within that period following medical release.

I need to obtain key documents

- ✓ Request copies of your personnel file,¹¹ medical and dental documents, and “CF-98, *Report of Injury, Disease or Illness*” form (if applicable)¹².
- ✓ Apply for a [provincial or territorial health card](#) as soon as possible in order to avoid a gap in health care coverage.

11 Your personnel file will be audited following your release. You should request another copy after the audit.

12 Your personnel (including your F-98 form), and medical and dental documents are available from your orderly room clerk/support staff, medical officer administrative staff and dental administration staff, respectively.



I need financial support post-release

- ✓ Be informed of the current [CAF pension timelines](#)¹³ and [SISIP LTD timelines](#),¹⁴ and plan for your financial needs during the period of time immediately after release until receipt of your first payment, if applicable.

- ✓ Check to see what financial benefits are available to releasing members – such as and [Intended Place of Residence \(IPR\)](#) – and apply for the ones for which you believe you are eligible.
 - Note that some [VAC benefits](#) are available to still serving members; VAC is also able to render many New Veterans Charter Program eligibility decisions pre-release so that services and benefits are available immediately after release.

- ✓ If you will be participating in the CAF VRPSM, contact SISIP as early as nine months before your release date.
 - [SISIP LTD VRP](#) funding can start up to six months pre-release and covers expenses such as tuition and books (up to \$25K) and certain allowances and other needs and supports.
 - Note that SISIP VPR is available as long as the member qualifies for SISIP LTD and the need for VRP exists.¹⁵

- ✓ Tax credits and deductions are available for persons with disabilities, their supporting family members, and their caregivers; look into the [disability tax credit](#) to see if you are eligible.

13 According to the Canada.ca webpage on CAF pensions, the Government of Canada Pension Centre normally issues your first pension payment by direct deposit within 45 calendar days after the date of retirement, provided that all of your documents have been received by the Pension Centre.

14 Once you are approved, the LTD benefits are paid starting the day following your effective date of release from the CAF.

15 The initial 30-month VRP period can be extended if the former member qualifies as totally disabled at the end of their post release 4-month period.

I need health and dental coverage post-release

- ✓ CAF members in receipt of a pension, annuity or annual allowance are eligible to receive health and dental coverage through the [Public Service Health Care Plan \(PSHCP\)](#) and the [Pensioners' Dental Services Plan](#).
 - If interested, fill out the application forms that come with your pension package.
 - Note that it can often take two or three months for both health and dental coverage to start on new pensions, but coverage will be backdated to the day after release in most cases.
- ✓ VAC [Group Health Insurance](#) helps eligible veterans and their families who would not otherwise qualify for the PSHCP after their release from the CAF; you can apply if you are:
 - A former CAF member who released on or after April 1, 2006, and been approved for SISIP LTD.
 - A former CAF member who is eligible for the Rehabilitation Program but not eligible for the PSHCP post-release.
 - The survivor of a CAF member or veteran who died after April 1, 2006, as a result of a service-related injury or illness, and you are not otherwise eligible for the PSHCP.

I need life insurance post-release

✓ Released CAF members can apply for term life insurance coverage under the SISIP [Insurance for Released Members \(IRM\)](#).

- You will have 60 days from your effective release date to transfer existing coverage as a serving CAF member.
- For further information, Regular Force members can call 1-800-267-6681; Reserve Force and released members can contact Manulife Financial at 1-800-565-0701.

I have my final release interview with the CAF Release Section (Part II)

- ✓ Provide the release section with your most recent mailing address, phone number and e-mail address; this will ensure that all your pay and pension-related documents and payments will be sent to the right place.

- ✓ Should you need information regarding your last CAF pay, you can contact the Released Personnel Pay Office.
 - For Regular Force: DND.RPPOREG-LRDTSA.MDN@forces.gc.ca or 1-800-773-7705.
 - For Reserve Force: RPPOReserve@forces.gc.ca or 1-800-773-7705.

Contact Us

If at any time during this process you need more information or have questions, the Ombudsman Offices are ready to help.

Office of the Ombudsman for National Defence and the Canadian Forces

1-888-828-3626

ombudsman-communications@forces.gc.ca

Office of the Veterans Ombudsman

1-877-330-4343

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