



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER
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March 18, 2009

Memorandum

To: All Regional Directors, All Regions
Attention: Forestry/Fire Management
Human Resource Officers
Contracting Officers

From: Director, Branch of Wildland Fire Management

Subject: Interim Medical Standards Program Transition Plan

Introduction

The Interagency Medical Standards Program (IMSP) expires March 31, 2009. All examinations under the existing medical examinations contract should have been completed on or before March 13, 2009. (See NWCG #008-2009 Memorandum – Medical Standards Program Transition Plan) <http://www.nwcg.gov/general/memos.htm>.

Purpose

This transition plan establishes interim procedures to efficiently maintain continuity of operations and minimize operational risks to the field until the new Medical Standards Program contract is in effect. The guidance applies to personnel maintaining Incident Qualification and Certification System (IQCS) qualifications with an arduous fitness level.

Firefighter Medical Qualification Processes

All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) employees, and Administratively Determined/Emergency Firefighter(s) (AD/EFF) who have not yet received an exam and/or whose qualification will expire during the lapse of the Medical Standards Program contract will utilize the Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ), http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/OMB%200596_0164_HSQ.pdf process.

If any "Yes" boxes are checked on the HSQ, a medical examination is required prior to the employee participating in the Work Capacity Test (WCT) at the arduous level. Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the U.S. Civil Service Commission Certificate of Medical Examination Form, SF-78, http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/SF78%20Fire%20Control.pdf.

Permanent/Career Seasonal/Term/New Hire Applicants

Applicants for Permanent/Career Seasonal/Term, and New Hire positions during the lapse of Medical Standards Program contract will use the HSQ process as stated above.

During the transition period "New Hires" for permanent, Career Seasonal and Term positions in, or supporting wildland fire programs (arduous duty) which require the applicant to pass a "Baseline" medical examination under the IMSP as a condition of hire will complete the HSQ, and participate in the medical examination process. Individuals will be required to complete, and pass the "Baseline" examination as required by IMSP within **60 days** of the new Medical Standards Program contract re-initiation.

Temporary Seasonal and AD/EFF Applicants

Temporary Seasonal applicants and AD/EFFs, less than 45 years old will complete the HSQ form and follow the HSQ/SF-78 Documentation process.

Individuals 45 years of age and older, shall use the HSQ, and complete the medical examination. Incident Qualification Cards will remain valid for one year from date of issuance.

Firefighters in "Not Cleared" or "Pending" Status

Firefighters who previously received a "Not Cleared", (in the waiver/accommodation process), or "Pending", (more medical information is required by the applicant), medical determination may not use the HSQ process to gain clearance for arduous duty. The waiver/accommodation process will be initiated through the Servicing Human Resource Officer (SHRO) or Fire Management Officer (FMO) under the standard IMSP process.

For more information, refer to the Medical Examination matrix:

[http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/Final Exam Type Matrix 20090316.doc](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/Final_Exam_Type_Matrix_20090316.doc)

All forms and documents can be accessed at:

[http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG transition.htm](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG_transition.htm)

HSQ/SF-78 Documentation Process

- Individuals that answer "No" to all questions on the HSQ will create three (3) copies for documentation. The original will be retained by the applicant, a copy will be sent the SHRO, and the last will be issued to the WCT Administrator prior to the WCT.
- Individuals that answer "Yes" to any questions on the HSQ will submit the HSQ to the SHRO for review and the physical examination process will be initiated. The SHRO will provide the SF-78, a copy of the completed HSQ by the individual, physicians cover letter, Supplement to the SF-78, http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/1400-108.pdf and the "Essential Functions and work conditions of a Wildland Firefighter", http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/essential_functions_arduous_fftr.doc for the medical provider. The individual will be responsible for requesting the examination with the medical provider of their choice.

- Individuals cleared by their medical provider in the physical examination (SF-78) process will be eligible to participate in the WCT. A memorandum from the SHRO/FMO will be issued to the applicant for participation in the WCT.
- Individuals that receive comments in the Conclusions section and have the box checked "Limiting conditions as follows" by the medical provider will not be eligible to participate in the WCT. Individuals that meet the criteria listed above will be required to participate in the Medical Standards Program when it is re-initiated.
- All HSQ's and examination forms will be retained in the employee's medical file at the respective SHRO office.
- If additional testing beyond the examination is required by the medical provider, the costs will be assumed by the examinee.

This interim process will be abolished when the Medical Standard Program contract is resumed. A memorandum cancelling the interim program will be issued with instructions when the new contract is initiated.

During this interim transition period, BIA-NIFC has established the following account structure for the payment of all medical examinations:

K00441/2009/92140/MEDSTDS/25.6

Payment will be made at the local unit. Fire Management Officers need to work directly with their regional contracting office for establishing procedures for payment of these services prior to contacting medical providers. Contracting Officer's have warrant authority delegated to them and are able to make payment above the micro-purchase level up to their open market warrant level.

Payment can also be made using the government charge card for totals that do not exceed the micro-purchase threshold of \$2,500 for services. Medical examinations should, to the extent possible, be coordinated by the local unit and one invoice should be submitted by the medical provider. The invoice should include a manifest http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/MedStandardswksht.pdf of individuals who participated in the medical examination process. Copies of the manifest shall be provided to Tony Beitia, Wildland Fire Safety Specialist..

For questions or more information, please contract Tony Beitia, NIFC Wildland Fire Safety Specialist at 208.387.5177 or via email at tony_beitia@nifc.gov.