



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Fire and Aviation
3833 South Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354
<http://www.nifc.gov>

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To: BLM Assistant Directors and State and Center Directors
From: Deputy Assistant Director (NIFC), Fire and Aviation
Subject: Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Process for Managing Medical Standards Program Transition Plan

Program Area: Interagency Firefighter Medical Standards Program (IMSP)

Purpose: This memorandum provides BLM direction and information on the implementation of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group's (NWCG) memorandum #008-2009, "Managing Medical Standards Program Transition Plan." (Refer to: http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/NWCG_008-2009_Memo_MSP_Transition_Plan.pdf)

Fire and Aviation wants to provide a seamless transition between medical services contract providers and to provide BLM units with Bureau-specific guidance during this transition period. The foremost goal is to ensure firefighter safety and health while meeting the needs of the wildland fire program during this period of lapse of firefighter medical exam contract services.

Policy/Action: The BLM will implement the NWCG Transition Plan, in addition to the following Bureau-specific process:

- Newly hired personnel in permanent, career seasonal and term positions that require arduous duty for wildland fire who would have received a baseline medical examination under the IMSP as a condition of employment:
 - Must pass a medical examination as a condition of employment, as per the SF-78 process as established in the NWCG Transition Plan;
 - Must complete the baseline examination as required by the IMSP within 60 days of the new medical services contract being reestablished.

- Firefighters who receive a medical exam using the SF-78 process, the servicing human resource officer (SHRO) will provide the following documents to the firefighter to take to their exam, or will send the documents directly to their examining physician:
 - SF-78 (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG_transition.htm;
 - BLM Supplemental Form 1400-108, “Physical Requirements for Firefighters and Smokejumper Positions” (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/1400-108.pdf)
 - BLM Cover Letter to Physicians (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/BLM_CL_Physicians.doc)
 - Essential Functions and Work Conditions for Wildland Firefighters (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/essential_functions_arduous_fftr.pdf)
 - A completed Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ). (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/OMB%200596_0164_HSQ.pdf)
- Firefighters who have “limiting conditions” noted on the SF-78 from their examining physician will not be eligible to participate in the work capacity test (WCT), and thus may not participate in wildland firefighting at the arduous level. Those firefighters will be required to participate in the IMSP when the new medical exam contract for services is available.
- The SHRO will notify the respective fire management officer (FMO) of individual firefighter clearance or non-clearance status based on examining physician’s findings, as noted on the SF-78.
- Firefighters that answer “No” to all questions on the HSQ will retain one copy of the HSQ, provide one copy to the SHRO, and provide one copy to the WCT administrator prior to the test.
- A matrix, “Medical Examination Requirements During Lapse in Medical Contract Service,” is provided to further describe the medical examination requirements based on employment category. (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/Final_Exam_Type_Matrix.pdf)
- The SHRO will retain all HSQs and exam forms in the employee’s medical file. Administratively-Determined (AD) and Emergency Firefighter (EFF) records shall be kept at the local hiring unit, following records security procedures.
- The preferred method of obtaining medical exam services is through the utilization of local unit blanket purchase agreements (BPA) with local medical clinics. If this is not an option, firefighters may select a physician of their choice. In either case, the firefighter will be responsible for requesting the exam. The payment method will be established by the local unit (e.g., government purchase card or convenience check). If additional testing is needed beyond the customary examination, the costs will be assumed by the examinee.
- Exam costs will be paid for by Fire and Aviation through the code LLFA401000 LF10000PP.HT0000 LXSS005R0000.

- Use the Firefighter Medical Examination Log for exam tracking and cost accountability. (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG/MedStandardswksht.pdf). This log shall be submitted to Michelle Ryerson, Fire Safety Specialist, Fire and Aviation, by September 1, 2009.

When the new firefighter medical exam contract for services is available, the protocols of the IMSP will be resumed.

For more information, please refer to the Interagency Medical Standards Program website (http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/NWCG_transition.htm)

Timeframe: Effective immediately.

Budget Impact: None.

Background: The IMSP medical service contract provides for medical exam scheduling, clinic visits and a qualified determination of ability. This contract expires on March 31, 2009 and has no provision for renewal or extension. In addition, the contract that supports staffing for the customer service representatives is subject to the same constraints. Solicitation is occurring to acquire a new contract, but the new contract will likely not be operational until May 1, 2009 or later. Due to this lapse in service, agencies are providing interim IMSP management direction.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations.*

Coordination: This instruction memorandum has been jointly developed by the Fire and Aviation branches of Budget and Evaluation, Contracting, Records Administration and Human Resources, as well as the Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team (FFAST).

Contact: Michelle Ryerson, Safety and Health Manager, Fire and Aviation, 208-387-5175 or Michelle_Ryerson@nifc.blm.gov.

Signed by:
Timothy M. Murphy
Deputy Assistant Director (NIFC), Fire and Aviation

Authenticated by:
Erin K. Maskalick
Records Management Specialist

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