

## § 339.202

## 5 CFR Ch. I (1–1–03 Edition)

### § 339.202 Medical standards.

OPM may establish or approve medical standards for a Governmentwide occupation (i.e., an occupation common to more than one agency). An agency may establish medical standards for positions that predominate in that agency (i.e., where the agency has 50 percent or more of the positions in a particular occupation). Such standards must be justified on the basis that the duties of the position are arduous or hazardous, or require a certain level of health status or fitness because the nature of the positions involve a high degree of responsibility toward the public or sensitive national security concerns. The rationale for establishing the standard must be documented. Standards established by OPM or an agency must be:

- (a) Established by written directive and uniformly applied,
- (b) Directly related to the actual requirements of the position.

[54 FR 9763, Mar. 8, 1989, as amended at 66 FR 66710, Dec. 27, 2001]

### § 339.203 Physical requirements.

Agencies are authorized to establish physical requirements for individual positions without OPM approval when such requirements are considered essential for successful job performance. The requirements must be clearly supported by the actual duties of the position and documented in the position description.

### § 339.204 Waiver of standards and requirements.

Agencies must waive a medical standard or physical requirement established under this part when there is sufficient evidence that an applicant or employee, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential duties of the position without endangering the health and safety of the individual or others.

### § 339.205 Medical evaluation programs.

Agencies may establish periodic examination or immunization programs by written policies or directives to safeguard the health of employees whose work may subject them or others to significant health or safety risks

due to occupational or environmental exposure or demands. The need for a medical evaluation program must be clearly supported by the nature of the work. The specific positions covered must be identified and the applicants or incumbents notified in writing of the reasons for including the positions in the program.

### § 339.206 Disqualification on the basis of medical history.

A candidate may not be disqualified for any position solely on the basis of medical history. For positions with medical standards or physical requirements, or positions subject to medical evaluation programs, a history of a particular medical problem may result in medical disqualification only if the condition at issue is itself disqualifying, recurrence cannot medically be ruled out, and the duties of the position are such that a recurrence would pose a reasonable probability of substantial harm.

## Subpart C—Medical Examinations

### § 339.301 Authority to require an examination.

(a) A routine preappointment examination is appropriate only for a position which has specific medical standards, physical requirements, or is covered by a medical evaluation program established under these regulations.

(b) Subject to § 339.103 of this part, an agency may require an individual who has applied for or occupies a position which has medical standards or physical requirements or which is part of an established medical evaluation program, to report for a medical examination:

(1) Prior to appointment or selection (including reemployment on the basis of full or partial recovery from a medical condition);

(2) On a regularly recurring, periodic basis after appointment; or

(3) Whenever there is a direct question about an employee's continued capacity to meet the physical or medical requirements of a position.

(c) An agency may require an employee who has applied for or is receiving continuation of pay or compensation as a result of an on-the-job injury

or disease to report for an examination to determine medical limitations that may affect placement decisions.

(d) An agency may require an employee who is released from his or her competitive level in a reduction in force to undergo a relevant medical evaluation if the position to which the employee has reassignment rights has medical standards or specific physical requirements which are different from those required in the employee's current position.

(e)(1) An agency may order a psychiatric examination (including a psychological assessment) only when:

(i) The result of a current general medical examination which the agency has the authority to order under this section indicates no physical explanation for behavior or actions which may affect the safe and efficient performance of the individual or others, or

(ii) A psychiatric examination is specifically called for in a position having medical standards or subject to a medical evaluation program established under this part.

(2) A psychiatric examination or psychological assessment authorized under (i) or (ii) above must be conducted in accordance with accepted professional standards, by a licensed practitioner or physician authorized to conduct such examinations, and may only be used to make legitimate inquiry into a person's mental fitness to successfully perform the duties of his or her position without undue hazard to the individual or others.

#### **§ 339.302 Authority to offer examinations.**

An agency may, at its option, offer a medical examination (including a psychiatric evaluation) in any situation where the agency needs additional medical documentation to make an informed management decision. This may include situations where an individual requests for medical reasons a change in duty status, assignment, working conditions, or any other benefit or special treatment (including reasonable accommodation or reemployment on the basis of full or partial recovery from a medical condition) or where the individual has a performance or conduct problem which may require

agency action. Reasons for offering an examination must be documented. An offer of an examination shall be carried out and used in accordance with 29 CFR 1613.706.

#### **§ 339.303 Examination procedures.**

(a) When an agency orders or offers a medical examination under this subpart, it must inform the applicant or employee in writing of its reasons for doing so and the consequences of failure to cooperate. (A single notification is sufficient to cover a series of regularly recurring or periodic examinations ordered under this subpart.)

(b) The agency designates the examining physician or other appropriate practitioner, but must offer the individual an opportunity to submit medical documentation from his or her personal physician or practitioner. The agency must review and consider all such documentation supplied by the individual's personal physician or practitioner.

#### **§ 339.304 Payment for examination.**

Agencies shall pay for all examinations ordered or offered under this subpart, whether conducted by the agency's physician or the applicant's or employee's physician. Applicants and employees must pay for a medical examination conducted by a private physician (or practitioner) where the purpose of the examination is to secure a benefit sought by the applicant or employee.

#### **§ 339.305 Records and reports.**

(a) Agencies will receive and maintain all medical documentation and records of examinations obtained under this part in accordance with instructions provided by OPM, under provisions of 5 CFR part 293, subpart E.

(b) The report of an examination conducted under this subpart must be made available to the applicant or employee under the provisions of part 297 of this chapter.

(c) Agencies must forward to the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), Department of Labor, a copy of all medical documentation and reports of examinations of individuals who are receiving or have applied for injury compensation benefits including