

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOAA Aviation Medical Standards for Embarked Personnel

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Background Statement	1
A. VISION/HEARING	1
B. EARS, NOSE, MOUTH, THROAT and EQUILIBRIUM	2
C. PSYCHIATRIC CONDITIONS	2
D. NERVOUS SYSTEM	3
E. CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM	3
F. CHEST and RESPIRATORY SYSTEM	4
G. ABDOMEN and GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM	4
H. GENITOURINARY and REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM	5
I. ENDOCRINE and METABOLIC SYSTEMS	5
J. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	6
K. MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM	6
MEDICAL WAIVERS	7

NOAA Aviation Medical Standards for Embarked Personnel

Background: In general, working conditions can be life threatening, including potential loss of life or serious injury. This work requires a high level of mental alertness and is both physically and mentally stressful. Working conditions may involve deployment to remote areas with minimal access to medical help. Working hours are unstable and irregular and include prolonged or non-traditional shifts. Also, they may be exposed to infectious diseases.

Duties involve a number of adverse working conditions. These include exposure to adverse environmental and climatic conditions, such as: extreme heat and cold, adverse weather conditions including high winds, areas with high humidity or wet conditions, and rapid change from very hot to very cold conditions. Lighting conditions are changeable, frequently requiring employees to work in both indoor and outdoor variable lighting conditions, at night, under glare or flood Lights, and in fog or other poor visibility conditions. Exposure to toxic substances may include but is not limited to chemicals, smoke, fumes, and gasses. Conditions may expose employees to excessive noise on a routine basis.

A disease, condition, or impairment which interferes with the full performance of position duties in a safe and efficient manner, renders the individual unable to operate in an aviation environment, or places the individual at unacceptable risk may be disqualifying.

A. VISION/HEARING

The occupational significance of this area concerns the ability to see and be free of visual problems

The ability to see, hear, and comply with all crewmember instructions and commands is paramount.

The following is an example of an impairment(s) that may be disqualifying:

BLINDNESS

CURRENT CATARACTS

PROLIFERATIVE RETINOPATHY

RETINAL DETACHMENT

GLAUCOMA (not adequately controlled or with significant visual field loss)

DIMINISHED HEARING ABILITY

The inability to hear the whispered voice at three feet is a gross test of hearing ability and the inability to demonstrate this may be disqualifying

B. EARS, NOSE, MOUTH, THROAT, AND EQUILIBRIUM

The occupational significance is that distinct speech, odor detection, unimpaired sight, free breathing and the ability to see and maintain equilibrium are required. Any abnormalities or diseases of the eyes, ears, nose, mouth or throat that permanently interfere with the ability to perform duties aboard NOAA aircraft may be disqualifying.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

MUTISM
ARTIFICIAL LARYNX OR ESOPHAGEAL SPEECH
EXTREME MOTION SICKNESS

C. PSYCHIATRIC CONDITIONS

The occupational significance of this area is that the presence of serious mental disease which can adversely affect critical judgment and perceptive patterns necessary for safe performance of required duties. Any disorder which affects normal perceptual judgment and safe and acceptable behavior or if there is evidence of serious mental impairment may be disqualifying.

Any diagnosis must be consistent with the diagnostic criteria as established by the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV). The following are examples of impairments that may be disqualifying (must be based on established medical history or clinical diagnosis):

The following are examples of impairments that may be disqualifying:

SUBSTANCE ABUSE, SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCE AND RELATED SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS
SCHIZOPHRENIC DISORDERS
PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS NOT ELSEWHERE CLASSIFIED
ANXIETY DISORDERS, Including panic disorders
DISSOCIANT DISORDERS
DISORDERS OF IMPULSE CONTROL - including intermittent and isolated explosive disorder
PERSONALITY DISORDERS
ORGANIC BRAIN SYNDROME

NOTE: Medication requirements, including psychotropic medication, will be evaluated on an individual basis to ensure safe and efficient job performance as follows:

Medication(s) (type and dosage requirements) potential drug side effects drug-drug interactions adverse drug reactions (ADR) drug toxicity and any medical complications associated with long-term drug use

D. NERVOUS SYSTEM

The occupational significance area concerns the functioning of the central and peripheral nervous system. Dysfunction increases the probability of accidents and/or potential inability to perform a variety of tasks may be disqualifying.

The following are **examples** of impairments which may be disqualifying:

EPILEPSY OR CONVULSIVE DISORDERS

Must have been seizure-free with or without medication and meet the state requirements for operating a motor vehicle

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASE (includes aneurysms and vascular malfunctions)

PARKINSONISM

E. CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

The occupational significance of this area concerns the efficiency of the vascular system for maintaining adequate blood flow, and the ability of the heart to provide the functional work capacity to meet the oxygen demands of duties in pressurized and un-pressurized aircraft at altitude. Any condition which interferes with the vascular system's normal functioning may be disqualifying.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

ANEURYSM

ANGINA

CARDIOMYOPATHY

CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE

CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

UNCONTROLLED HYPERTENSION

ORGANIC HEART DISEASE

PERICARDITIS

MYOCARDITIS

F. CHEST AND RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

The occupational significance of this area concerns lung function, breathing capacity and freedom from airway obstruction. This is a key area for performance in terms of the respiration needed to perform duties and to be free to move about in various environments. Any disease or defect which significantly interferes with pulmonary function capacity may be disqualifying. Of special significance is the ability of individual to be able to function normally at altitudes between sea level and that altitude where supplemental oxygen is required.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

CHRONIC BRONCHITIS

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE ENTHYSEAU

PNEUMONECTOMY (FEV1 less than 55%)

PNELTMOTHORAX

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS active or with significant lung destruction; positive tuberculin skin tests require full documentation of appropriate follow-up

SARCOIDOSIS

G. ABDOMEN AND GASTROINTESTINAIL SYSTEM

The occupational significance of this area concerns a variety of gastrointestinal disorders that can affect performance of duties by imposing severe individual discomfort. Any functional disorders rendering the individual incapable of sustained attention to work tasks, i.e., chronic diarrhea and discomfort secondary to such disorders, may disqualifying.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

ACTIVE PEPTIC ULCER DISEASE not adequately controlled on medication)

CROHN'S DISEASE

G.I. BLEEDING

FEMORAL HERNIA (not surgically repaired)

INGUINAL HERNIA (not surgically repaired)

PANCREATITIS

H. GENITOURINARY AND REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

The occupational significance of this area concerns renal failure and genitourinary dysfunction. Any functional disorders rendering the individual incapable of sustained attention to work tasks, i.e., urinary frequency and discomfort secondary to such disorders, may be disqualifying.

Pregnancy will not disqualify the individual. However, some training and assignments may be deferred pending ongoing medical finding until the individual is no longer pregnant.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

NEPHROSIS
POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE
RENAL FAILURE

I. ENDOCRINE AND METABOLIC SYSTEMS

The occupational significance of this area concerns any abnormality of the endocrine system that affects job performance. Any excess or deficiency in hormonal production can produce metabolic disturbances affecting weight, stress adaptation, energy production, and a variety of symptoms such as elevated blood pressure, weakness, fatigue and collapse. Any condition affecting normal hormonal/metabolic functioning and response may be disqualifying.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

ADRENAL DYSFUNCTION (in the form of Addison's Disease or Cushing's syndrome)
THYROID DISEASE (not controlled and unstable)
PITUITARY DYSFUNCTION
DIABETES MELLITUS uncontrolled
Uncontrolled Insulin dependent diabetes is disqualifying (due to the dependence on food intake at regularly scheduled intervals and the unpredictable nature of time involved when carrying out the duties)

J. HEMATOPOIETIC SYSTEMS

The occupational significance concerns chronic disorders affecting overall health in a disabling manner. Any disorder which can lead to reduced capability to perform physical exertion or place the employee at undue risk may be disqualifying.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying:

SEVERE ANEMIA
THROMBOCYTOPENIA OR CLOTTING DISORDERS
HEMOPHILIA

K. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The occupational significance of the disease must be related to the individual's ability to adequately function and safely perform the work tasks of the position. Any communicable disease which directly affects individual performance and/or directly threatens the health and safety of others is disqualifying.

L. MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM

The occupational significance of this area concerns the mobility, stability, flexibility and strength to perform duties efficiently in confined spaces with minimum risk of injury. Disorders affecting the musculoskeletal system which adversely affect the individual meeting the basic movement, strength, flexibility, use of extremities and coordinated balance criteria may disqualifying.

The following are examples of impairments which may be disqualifying

HERNIATED DISK

LOSS IN MOTOR ABILITY FROM TENDON OR NERVE INJURY

MAJOR EXTREMITY AMPUTATION

RHEUMATOID AND OSTEOARTHRITIS RESULTING IN LOSS OF RANGE OF MOTION

MEDICAL WAIVERS

Request for waiver of disqualifying defect may be initiated by the examinee, the examinees supervisor or potential supervisor. The request including all supporting documentation in support of the waiver request must be submitted by memorandum to the Director, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO), via the supervisor and the Director of NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations Centers (MAOC). The Director, MAOC should provide a recommendation. The Director, OMAO in consultation with NOAA Health Services, will grant or deny the waiver. Expenses involved in obtaining all supporting documentation will be the responsibility of the requestor/originator.

Waivers shall be granted in increments of one year, or for a shorter period, as recommended by the examiner, and approved or extended by the waiver authority.

Potential Outcome of Waiver Requests

Waiver Not Recommended

When the defect would preclude satisfactory performance of the duties or would cause unacceptable risk to the life, health, or safety of the examinee or other persons, or would be likely to jeopardize the mission of NOAA or the organization to which the examinee is or would be assigned, the examinee should be considered unfit for flight duty and an entry should be made on the form used to record the examination or other appropriate form, that the defect is considered disqualifying and the fact that a waiver is not recommended.

Conditional Waiver Involving Restrictions

When the defect would not preclude performance of duties of the specific position only under certain specified conditions, a conditional waiver should be recommended, such as recommending that a waiver be granted for defective vision on condition that the examinee wear appropriate corrective lenses while on duty.

Waiver Involving Improvement and/or Correction

When the examinee is unfit for duty in the specific position pending improvement or correction, the examinee is considered unfit for duty, but the disqualifying defect is considered to be temporary or correctable. With the concurrence of the Director OMAO, in consultation with NOAA Health Services, the decision as to physical fitness may be held in abeyance and arrangements may be made for the examinee to return for reevaluation either at a specified time or following action taken to correct the defect.

Reasonable Accommodation

In all waiver review processes and decisions regarding qualified handicapped employees or applicants, the employer will examine options for reasonable accommodation, in accordance with applicable law.