

# **Forest Service Medical Examination Transition Plan**

## **March 26, 2009**

### **Intent**

The purpose of this transition plan is to lay out the tasks and activities that need to take place to efficiently maintain continuity of operations and enable firefighters to become cleared to take the Work Capacity Test (WCT) and perform Arduous duties. Note: This plan does not apply to firefighters in Region 5 (R5) since R5 has not implemented the Interagency Medical Standards Program.

All Incumbents/Applicants (permanent, career-seasonal, term, temporary seasonal, and AD/EFF age 45 and older) who completed a medical examination, and were cleared through the Interagency Medical Standards Program (IMSP) PRIOR to April 1, 2009 will not be affected. Employees medically cleared via the IMSP can receive an Incident Qualification Card after completing Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training and successfully completing the WCT. Incident Qualification Cards issued during this period will remain valid for one year from date of issuance in accordance with FSM 5120 and FSH 5109.17.

### **A. Individuals Who Have Not Yet Completed a Medical Exam or HSQ:**

All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF firefighters (current and new hires) 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 WCT process established in the “Work Capacity Tests for Wildland Fire Qualifications – Implementation Guide” located at [http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct\\_index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html)

### **B. Employees/Applicants who are in “Pending Further Medical Evaluation” Status through Comprehensive Health Services as of 4/1/09:**

Pending status indicates a need for further medical evaluation based on the results of a previously administered IMSP medical exam.

If an employee or applicant is in **PENDING status** as of April 1, 2009, they will need to complete an SF-78 examination and be cleared by a physician in order to take the Work Capacity Test and be carded for Arduous positions. Employees in this category are to take copies of their pending notification letters from Comprehensive Health Services to their SF-78 examinations and provide them to the physician conducting that examination.

### **C. Individuals in the Waiver/Accommodation Process:**

Individuals actively pursuing a waiver or accommodation will not be affected. The IMSP waiver process has not been affected by the lapse in the clinic services contract. Current waiver requests will be processed as rapidly as possible.

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**D. Employees in “Not Cleared” Status:**

An employee or applicant in NOT-CLEARED status who has not initiated a waiver/accommodation request by April 1, 2009 will remain NOT-CLEARED for arduous duty. If an employee in this category develops additional medical information that they believe could lead to a medical clearance, they need to send in this information to: ASC-HCM ATTN: MSP at Mailstop 321, 3900 Masthead NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109. Upon receipt, you will be contacted by the MSP HR Specialist.

**SF-78 Exam Process:**

When the results of a Health Screening Questionnaire indicate that an employee or applicant should be sent for an SF-78 exam, the following items in Block 4 of the Form are to be reviewed by the physician:

- A. Functional Requirements: 1, 4, 8, 10-14, 17-22, 27, 28, 33-35
- B. Environmental Factors: 2-4, 6-10, 12, 17-19, 22, 23, 26-29

**NOTE: Effective immediately, only the SF 78 form revised in March 2009 is to be used for the Arduous level firefighter medical exams.**

The document “Essential Functions and Work Conditions of a Wildland Firefighter” should accompany the SF-78 paperwork sent to the physician’s office for review. SF-78 medical exams will be paid for via a WO funding code; current employees will be on official time for authorized SF-78 medical exams, per page 5 of the WCT Implementation Guide dated December 13, 2007.