



United States Department of the Interior
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Instruction Memorandum No. FA IM-2013-007
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To: State and Center Directors

From: Assistant Director, Fire and Aviation

Subject: Department of the Interior (DOI) Medical Standards Program (MSP) Process for 2013

Program Area: Fire and Aviation Management

Purpose: This instruction memorandum provides Bureau of Land Management (BLM) specific direction supplemental to the DOI memorandum, "DOI Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards," dated November 26, 2012, and augments policy direction found in the 2013 *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*, chapters 2 and 13. The DOI memorandum is at: http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/Contact-Us/index.html.

Policy/Action:

Exam process:

The following employees must complete an annual medical exam as a condition of hire or condition of performing arduous duty wildland fire management activities:

- All new permanent employees (PFT, career seasonal, Term, Pathways interns)
- Permanent employees who have not had an exam in the past three (3) calendar years
- All who disclose health issues on the Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ)
- Administratively determined/emergency firefighters (AD/EFF) over 45 years old

The tracking for exams is done at the local level, so firefighters should check with their local unit for exam currency. If there is no record of an exam in the last three (3) years, one will be required in 2013.

Exams and medical clearances must be obtained prior to taking the work capacity test (WCT).

The DOI MSP Exam Matrix outlines exam and screening requirements based on employment categories and can be found at:

http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/Exam_Matrix_FY2013_20121106.pdf.

The 2013 annual exam packet can be found at:

http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/documents/NewExamProcess/Exam_Packet_FY2013_20121106.pdf.

The HSQ form can be found at: http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/Links/index.html

The HSQ and annual exam forms are legal documents. Falsification and/or withholding of information could lead to rescinding tentative job offers and/or termination of employment.

Completed annual exam forms and HSQs will be given to the servicing human resource officer (SHRO) for agency employees and incumbents. All AD/EFF records will be kept with the local hiring unit fire management officer (FMO).

Clearance process:

Firefighters who are given a “cleared” determination by the clinician, as identified on page 11 of the annual exam form, should provide a copy of page 11 **only**, not the entire exam packet, to their FMO and the WCT administrator prior to participating in the WCT.

Non-Clearance process:

If the determination is “not cleared” the SHRO should contact DOI MSP Customer Service and initiate the Risk Mitigation/Waiver process.

Any AD/EFF who has received a “not cleared” determination should contact their local unit FMO, and the FMO will contact DOI MSP Customer Service and initiate the Risk Mitigation/Waiver process.

Employees in “not cleared” status may submit further medical information for Medical Review Officer (MRO) review at any time by contacting the DOI MSP Customer Service Representative.

Medical Review Officer Review:

If the FMO or SHRO have concerns about the results of an examination, or have specific questions about an employee’s capacity to meet the physical and medical requirements of an arduous position, they may request a completed exam be reviewed by the MRO and/or request that the employee complete a specific medical evaluation based upon the Federal Interagency Wildland Firefighter Medical Standards.

Exam payment:

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, other payment methods may be established by the local unit.

Additional medical tests are not authorized. If examining clinician recommends further tests to determine firefighter medical clearance, prior agency approval is required. Additional testing or treatment requested by the employee/applicant shall be at their own expense.

The government estimate for the annual exam is \$180. The exam cost should be negotiated with the clinic by whoever is scheduling the exam or by the contracting officer who establishes the BPA.

Exam costs will be paid for by Fire and Aviation using the following code:
LLFA401000 LF1000000.HT0000 LXSS005R0000 (13X)

Tracking:

Local fire management programs should use the DOI MSP Employee Medical Clearance Tracker located on the MSP website: http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/Links/index.html.

Timeframe: Effective immediately.

Budget Impact: None

Background: The DOI MSP continues to explore options regarding the wildland firefighter medical exam process; this interim process has been in place since 2010.

Manual/Handbook Sections Affected: *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*, chapters 2 and 13.

Coordination: This instruction memorandum has been coordinated by the Division of Fire Operations with the Fire and Aviation Human Resources Officer and the Fire and Aviation Equal Employment Opportunity Manager.

Contact: Specific exam questions should be routed to the DOI MSP customer service representatives: 1-888-286-2521 or wlfcsr@blm.gov

Other program questions should be sent to John Owens, Fire Management Specialist (Safety), 208-387-5186, jowens@blm.gov.

Human resources or SHRO questions should be sent to Sheri Kososik, Acting Human Resources Officer, 208-387-5527, skososik@blm.gov.

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