

## MEDICAL EVALUATIONS

**Page Number:** Page 1 of 3    **Effective Date:** 04/01/2011    **Reviewed with No Changes:** 04/01/2007    **Supersedes Editions:** 01/01/2005, 01/01/97, 04/01/93

**Purpose:** *The program will provide the physical examinations and laboratory work to assess the health of the Department's members, and comply with the statutory requirements of the County Employees Retirement System for Hazardous Duty Personnel.*

**Procedure:**

1. All members who are engaged in hazardous duty positions, including all duties considered support duties, shall participate in the Medical Evaluation Program.
2. The Medical Evaluation includes the following elements:
  - Medical History profile
  - Physical Examination
  - Blood Profile (SMA 24, CBC)
  - Urinalysis
  - Audiometry
  - Resting EKG
  - Pulmonary Function Study
  - Tetanus shot (if needed)
  - Chest X-ray (PA and Lateral)
  - Screening for Drug/Alcohol Abuse
  - Hepatitis B Immunization (may be refused by member if release is signed)
  - Cardiac Stress Testing

**MEDICAL EVALUATION SCHEDULE:**

1. The medical evaluations shall take place on an annual basis and scheduled by the health and wellness officer. The member shall report to the fire department physician for evaluation within the time designated by the department health and wellness officer. The fire chief or health and wellness officer may approve the annual medical evaluation to be conducted by the member's primary care physician (at the member's expense), provided that a "Fitness for Duty" letter is provided.

Should the medical evaluation not be done within the time designated, then the member will not be allowed to work, respond to fire runs, or attend training of any type until the medical evaluation has been completed.
2. The fire department reserves the right to require a member to undergo medical evaluation whenever the fire department deems medical evaluation appropriate for safety considerations.

**MEDICAL RECORDS:**

1. Following a member's medical evaluation, the Chief, or his designee, will receive a letter from the evaluating physician(s) which will include the following information: the member's certification or failure to certify to use a breathing apparatus and the member's ability to perform full firefighting duties, or whatever limitations need be imposed.

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2. All members will receive a copy of their medical evaluation results and shall have the opportunity to speak with the Department's physician(s) regarding their results. The evaluation results will be mailed from the physician's office to the member's home in a sealed envelope. It is recommended that the member share the results with their personal physician.
3. Medical records generated from this program will be retained by the fire department, in accordance with law, in a secured location separate from other personnel records and will be kept confidential.
4. Medical Evaluation records shall be made available to the Kentucky Retirement Systems, upon their request, which is a legal requirement.

### MEDICAL CONDITION DISCOVERED:

1. In the event that a clinically significant medical condition is discovered which would affect the firefighter's ability to safely perform assigned duties, the following steps will be taken:
  - A. The Department's physician(s) will attempt to contact the member on the same day that the medical condition is discovered. The physician will explain the medical condition and refer the member to his/her private physician for further evaluation.
  - B. After the physician has contacted the member, and if the condition is significant to preclude the member from safely perform assigned duties, the physician will contact the fire chief or his designee, on the same day that the medical condition is discovered, to inform him that the member should be relieved of his/her firefighting duties. The physician will not inform the fire chief of the specific medical condition unless authorized by the member.
  - C. The physician shall advise the fire chief of any limitations that are necessary due to the medical condition. This member shall be restricted to performing those duties that have been approved by a physician.
  - D. A member may return to full duty when approved by a physician. The fire chief or his designee may require a member to go through full medical evaluation before returning to full duty if recommended by the physician.
  - E. In the event a determination has been made that the member has a substance abuse condition, the member will be directed to utilize the Employee Assistance Program. If the member refuses, and the abuse may impair the member from performing safely performing his/her assigned duties, this may be the grounds for termination. If the member is undergoing counseling, and the abuse problem does not impair the member from safely performing his/her assigned duties, then the member may continue to attend trainings and respond to incidents. The Board of Trustees has the authority to determine a reasonable amount of time for treatment of substance abuse problems.

### NEW MEMBERS AND THE EVALUATION PROGRAM:

1. Prior to the beginning of recruit training, the new member shall submit a letter of approval from his or her family healthcare provider stating that the new recruit has no physical limitations from fire department duty. This will be at the new member's expense.

*Standard Operating Procedures are meant only to be guidelines. Actual conditions may warrant alternative actions.*

Okolona Fire Department  
Standard Operating Procedure

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2. Upon completion of recruit training and prior to being released to ride apparatus for firefighting activity, the new member shall undergo the above medical evaluation program.
3. The evaluation program may be performed by the member's personal physician provided that the medical evaluation is at least as comprehensive as that provided by the fire department. The member's personal physician must be willing to do the same certifications, and advise of any limitations on a member's duties, as the fire department physician would. The fire department may share in the cost of the member using his own physician however the fire department will not pay more than if the medical evaluation was performed by the fire department physician. Any cost in excess of this amount will be the responsibility of the member.

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