



## United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS  
NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER  
3833 South Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705-5354



March 16, 2011

### Memorandum

To: Regional Directors, all Regions  
Attention: Forestry and Fire Management,  
Human Resource Officers,  
Contracting Officers

From: Director, Branch of Wildland Fire Management

Subject: Medical Standards Program Exam Process and Payment Protocol

#### Introduction

The process for medical examinations and payment process with the Medical Standards Program (MSP) has changed. The updated Wildland Firefighter Exam and Screening process will be effective March 14, 2011. All individuals who have not completed a medical examination for the 2011 field season will be required to follow the new MSP process.

#### Purpose

This plan establishes procedures to efficiently maintain continuity of operations and minimize operational risks to the field for the 2011 wildland fire season. This guidance applies to personnel maintaining Incident Qualification and Certification System (IQCS) qualifications at the arduous level.

Specific changes to the MSP include:

- The medical exam process will be initiated at the local level with examinees scheduling their own exam, allowing the individual to select the health care provider of their choice.
- The Medical Standards Program Risk Mitigation/Waiver process will remain intact and individuals with previous Waivers and those in the new Risk Mitigation/Waiver process will continue to follow those processes.

#### Individuals in "Not Cleared" or "Pending Further Evaluation" Categories

Fire Management Officers are encouraged contact the Customer Service Representatives (CSR) at [wlffcsr@blm.gov](mailto:wlffcsr@blm.gov), or 1-888-286-2521 and request a list of individuals at your Agency that fall into the "Not Cleared" or "Pending Further Evaluation" (PFE) category.

Individuals listed as "Not Cleared" or in PFE status will not be allowed to participate in the Work Capacity Test (WCT) or other arduous red card activities until their status has been resolved with the MSP.

Individuals listed as "Not Cleared" must go through the Risk/Mitigation process to change their clearance status with the MSP to mitigate the medical standard they do not meet.

The Risk Mitigation/Waiver process will be initiated through the Servicing Human Resource Officer (SHRO) and Fire Management Officer (FMO) at the local unit using the **Interactive Risk Assessment Process**.

Persons who fall in the PFE category must submit medical documentation to the MSP for review by a Medical Review Officer (MRO) to have their status changed to "Not Cleared" or "Cleared." Refer to "Medical Review Officer Request Form" (Attachment 1) for directions on process to submit supporting medical documentation.

Once an individual has been "Cleared" or participated in the Risk/Mitigation Waiver process they may complete a Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ) for 2011.

#### **Wildland Firefighter Medical Qualification Process**

All Permanent, Full Time (PFT), Career-Seasonal, Term, Temporary, Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) employees and Administratively Determined/Emergency Firefighter(s) (AD/EFF) who have not yet received an exam in the previous MSP process, and/or whose arduous wildland fire qualification will expire during 2011 will follow the process outlined in the attached datatable (Attachment 2).

#### **Returning Permanent/Career Seasonal/Term/Temporary/SCEP/AD/EFF < 45 Years Old**

Incumbent PFT, Career-seasonal, Term, Temporary, SCEP employees, and returning AD/EFF firefighters under the age of 45 years will use the **Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ)**, as the first line of screening. If any "Yes" boxes are checked on the HSQ, an **Annual Medical Examination** will be required.

#### **New Hires Applicants**

New hire Permanent, Career Seasonal, Term, and SCEP employees will be required to participate in the Annual Medical Examination process. All Temporary employees are considered a new hire annually and will be required to take the Annual Medical Exam as part of the hiring process.

A Baseline Exam will be required for new hire Permanent, Career Seasonal, Term, and SCEP positions when processes are in place to support this level of exam through the MSP. Successful completion of the exam is mandatory as a condition of hire.

#### **Temporary/AD/EFF Applicants > 45 Years Old**

Individuals 45 years of age and older will be required to complete the Annual Medical Examination.

All forms, exams, documents and Risk/Mitigation information can be accessed at [http://www.nifc.gov/medical\\_standards/index.html](http://www.nifc.gov/medical_standards/index.html).

#### **HSQ Documentation Process**

- Individuals that answer "No" to all questions on the HSQ will create three (3) copies for documentation. The original will be retained by the applicant, a copy will be sent the SHRO, and the last will be given to the unit FMO.
- Prior to taking the Work Capacity Test (WCT), and after successful completion of the HSQ by the examinee, the FMO will complete the **Informed Consent Form**, [http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct\\_index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/wct_index.html) for the applicant to present to the WCT Administrator prior to participation in the WCT.
- All HSQ forms will be retained in the employee's medical file at the respective SHRO office.

#### **Successful Completion of Medical Examination Process**

- Individuals cleared by their medical provider in the Annual Medical Exam process will be eligible to participate in the WCT.
- Prior to taking the WCT, the FMO will complete the Informed Consent Form for the applicant to present to the WCT Administrator prior to WCT participation.
- All completed exams will be retained in the employee's medical file at the respective SHRO office.

#### **Payment of Exams**

BIA NIFC has established the following account structure for the payment of all medical examinations: K00441/2011/92140/MEDSTDS/25.6.

Payment will be made at the local unit. Fire Management Officers need to work directly with their regional contracting office for establishing procedures for payment of these services prior to contacting medical providers. Contracting Officers have warrant authority delegated to them and are able to make payment above the micro-purchase level up to their open market warrant level. The Government estimate for an Annual Medical Exam is \$180.00 and should be negotiated prior to scheduling of exams with medical provider.

Payment can also be made using the government charge card for totals that do not exceed the micro-purchase threshold of \$2,500 for services. Medical examinations should, to the extent possible, be coordinated by the local unit and one invoice should be submitted by the medical provider.

If additional testing is required by the medical provider for a clearance determination, the request for specific tests will be submitted to the Wildland Fire Safety Specialist for authorization prior to additional testing. The cost of additional testing will be paid for by BIA-NIFC, any unauthorized

costs will be assumed by the examinee.

For questions contact Tony Beitia, NIFC Wildland Fire Safety Specialist, at 208-387-5177 or via email at [juan.beitia@bia.gov](mailto:juan.beitia@bia.gov).

Attachments:

1. Medical Review Officer (MRO) Request Form
2. DOI Wildland Firefighter Exam and Screening Protocol Datatable

**Attachment 1**

**Medical Review Officer (MRO) Request**  
**Department of the Interior Medical Standards Program**



**Employee Instructions:** Please follow the below instructions for requesting a MRO Review for Pending Further Evaluation (PFE) or Non Clearance determinations.

1. Obtain completed copy of Annual exam from Clinician or Non Clearance, PFE notification from CHS or MDI.
2. Gather additional supporting medical records from your primary Physician that would support your request for a change in clearance status.
3. If medical exam and records contain personal identifiable information (PII) like a date of birth or social security number, please conceal the information by crossing it out with a dark marker or pen before sending.
4. Complete the contact information section on this form (below) entirely. All information is needed for ensuring communication during the MRO process.
5. Send the DOI Medical Standards Program (DOI MSP) all documentation.
  - a. Email (Preferred) – Please scan and email all documents, including this completed cover sheet to [wlfcsr.blm.gov](mailto:wlfcsr.blm.gov).
  - b. Fax – Please fax all documents, including this completed cover sheet to, 208-433-6423
  - c. Mail – Please mail all documents, including this completed cover sheet to;

US Department of the Interior  
National Interagency Fire Center  
Attn: Medical Standards Program  
2350 Robinson Rd, Bldg. 106  
Boise, ID 83705

<b>Employee Name (First, Middle, Last)</b>	<b>Employee Telephone Number:</b>
<b>Employee Address (including City, State and Zip):</b>	
<b>Employee Email Address (needed for notification of MRO review results):</b>	<b>Today's Date (Month, Day, Year):</b>

Attachment 2

DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR  
WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER EXAM AND SCREENING PROTOCOL

The following chart summarizes the requirements for arduous duty Wildland Firefighters (WLFF).	Incumbent Permanent Employees (PFT, Career Seasonal, Term, SCEP)	New Permanent Employees (PFT, Career Seasonal, Term, SCEP)  All Temporary Employees	All AD/EFF Hires	
			<i>Less than 45 years of age</i>	<i>45 years of Age and older</i>
Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ)	YES	NO	YES	NO
DOI MSP Annual Medical Examination	YES, if indicated by a "Yes" answer on the HSQ	YES	YES, if indicated by a "Yes" answer on the HSQ	YES

**Annual Medical Examination:** Employment categories identified above are required to undergo an Annual Examination.

If the result of the Annual Exam is a Not Cleared determination the agency FMO or SHRO should contact the DOI MSP immediately ([wlfcsr@blm.gov](mailto:wlfcsr@blm.gov) or 1-888-286-2521) and begin the Waiver/Risk Mitigation process or request a review of further medical information by the Medical Review Officer contracted with the DOI MSP.