

- (1) Understand the physiological, psychological, and environmental demands placed on fire fighters
- (2) Evaluate fire department candidates and members to identify medical conditions that could affect their ability to safely respond to and participate in emergency operations
- (3) Utilize the essential job task descriptions supplied by the fire department to determine a candidate's or a member's medical certification
- (4) Identify and report the presence of Category A or disqualifying Category B medical conditions if present in candidates
- (5) Inform the fire chief or his/her designee whether or not the candidate or current member is medically certified to safely perform the essential job tasks
- (6) Report the results of the medical evaluation to the candidate or current member, including any medical condition(s) identified during the medical evaluation, and the recommendation as to whether the candidate or current member is medically certified to safely perform the essential job tasks
- (7) Forward copies of any abnormal results along with patient instructions regarding primary care follow-up to candidates or current members who were instructed to seek (as appropriate) medical follow-up to address any medical conditions, or lab abnormalities, identified during the medical evaluation
- (8) Review results of the annual occupational fitness evaluation as described in Chapter 8
- (9) Provide or arrange for a prescriptive rehabilitation and/or fitness program when indicated to aid a member's recovery from illness or injury and enhance his/her ability to safely perform essential job tasks

**4.2.2** When medical evaluations are conducted by a physician or medical provider other than the fire department physician, the evaluation shall be reviewed and approved by the fire department physician.

**4.2.3** The fire department physician shall review individual medical evaluations and aggregate data from member evaluations in order to detect evidence of occupational exposure(s) or clusters of occupational disease.

**4.2.4** The fire department physician shall be a member of the Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Committee chaired by the health and safety officer as required by NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*.

**4.2.5** The fire department physician shall provide medical supervision for the fire department fitness, return-to-duty rehabilitation, and physical conditioning programs as required by NFPA 1583, *Standard on Health-Related Fitness Programs for Fire Department Members*.

**4.2.6** \* The fire department physician shall ensure adequate on-scene medical support at the incident scene rehabilitation sector for members during emergency operations as required by NFPA 1500, *Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Program*; NFPA 1561, *Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System*; and NFPA 1584, *Standard on the Rehabilitation Process for Members During Emergency Operations and Training Exercises*.

**4.2.7** The fire department physician shall provide supervision for the fire department infection control program as required by NFPA 1581, *Standard on Fire Department Infection Control Program*.

**4.3 Candidate and Member Responsibilities.** Each candidate or member shall adhere to the following requirements:

- (1) Cooperate, participate, and comply with the medical evaluation process
- (2) Provide complete and accurate information to the fire department physician and other authorized medical care provider(s)
- (3) Report any occupational exposure such as exposure to hazardous materials or toxic substances and exposure to infectious or contagious diseases
- (4) Report to the fire department physician any medical condition that could interfere with the ability of the individual to safely perform essential job tasks, such as illness or injury, use of prescription or nonprescription drugs, and pregnancy

#### **4.4 Confidentiality of Medical Information.**

**4.4.1\*** Specific information concerning medical diagnosis shall be released by the fire department physician only with written permission from the candidate or member.

**4.4.2** No fire department personnel, other than the fire department physician or appropriate medical staff, shall have access to another member's medical records without the express written consent of that member.

## **Chapter 5 Essential Job Tasks**

### **5.1 Essential Job Tasks and Descriptions.**

**5.1.1** The fire department shall evaluate the following 13 essential job tasks against the types and levels of emergency services provided to the local community by the fire department, the types of structures and occupancies in the community, and the configuration of the fire department to determine the essential job tasks of fire department members and candidates:

- (1)\*While wearing personal protective ensembles and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), performing fire-fighting tasks (e.g., hoseline operations, extensive crawling, lifting and carrying heavy objects, ventilating roofs or walls using power or hand tools, forcible entry), rescue operations, and other emergency response actions under stressful conditions including working in extremely hot or cold environments for prolonged time periods
- (2) Wearing an SCBA, which includes a demand valve-type positive-pressure facepiece or HEPA filter masks, which requires the ability to tolerate increased respiratory workloads
- (3) Exposure to toxic fumes, irritants, particulates, biological (infectious) and nonbiological hazards, and/or heated gases, despite the use of personal protective ensembles and SCBA
- (4) Depending on the local jurisdiction, climbing six or more flights of stairs while wearing a fire protective ensemble, including SCBA, weighing at least 50 lb (22.6 kg) or more and carrying equipment/tools weighing an additional 20 to 40 lb (9 to 18 kg)
- (5) Wearing a fire protective ensemble, including SCBA, that is encapsulating and insulated, which will result in significant fluid loss that frequently progresses to clinical dehydration and can elevate core temperature to levels exceeding 102.2°F (39°C)

- (6) While wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA, searching, finding, and rescue-dragging or carrying victims ranging from newborns to adults weighing over 200 lb (90 kg) to safety despite hazardous conditions and low visibility
- (7) While wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA, advancing water-filled hoselines up to 2½ in. (65 mm) in diameter from fire apparatus to occupancy [approximately 150 ft (50 m)], which can involve negotiating multiple flights of stairs, ladders, and other obstacles
- (8) While wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA, climbing ladders, operating from heights, walking or crawling in the dark along narrow and uneven surfaces that might be wet or icy, and operating in proximity to electrical power lines or other hazards
- (9) Unpredictable emergency requirements for prolonged periods of extreme physical exertion without benefit of warm-up, scheduled rest periods, meals, access to medication(s), or hydration
- (10) Operating fire apparatus or other vehicles in an emergency mode with emergency lights and sirens
- (11) Critical, time-sensitive, complex problem solving during physical exertion in stressful, hazardous environments, including hot, dark, tightly enclosed spaces, that is further aggravated by fatigue, flashing lights, sirens, and other distractions
- (12) Ability to communicate (give and comprehend verbal orders) while wearing personal protective ensembles and SCBA under conditions of high background noise, poor visibility, and drenching from hoselines and/or fixed protection systems (sprinklers)
- (13) Functioning as an integral component of a team, where sudden incapacitation of a member can result in mission failure or in risk of injury or death to civilians or other team members

**5.1.2** The fire department physician shall consider the physical, physiological, intellectual, and psychological demands of the occupation when evaluating the candidate's or member's ability to perform the essential job tasks.

**5.1.3** Medical requirements for candidates and members shall be correlated with the essential job tasks as determined by 5.1.1.

**5.1.4** The fire department shall provide the fire department physician with the list of essential job tasks to be used in the medical evaluation of members and candidates.

## **5.2 Essential Job Tasks for Specialized Teams.**

**5.2.1** If the fire department operates specialized teams such as hazardous materials units, self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) teams, technical rescue teams, emergency medical services (EMS) teams, or units supporting tactical law enforcement operations, the fire department shall identify for each team it operates additional essential job tasks and specialized personal protective equipment (PPE) not specified in 5.1.1(1) through 5.1.1(13) that would apply to the members of that team.

**5.2.2** The fire department shall provide the fire department physician with the list of essential job tasks and specialized PPE specific to each specialized team.

**5.2.3** When performing the medical evaluation of members of a specialized team, the fire department physician shall consider the following:

- (1) Additional medical and/or physical requirements that are related to the job tasks being performed by the team that are not enumerated in this standard
- (2) The impact on members of having to wear or utilize specialized PPE that can increase weight, environmental isolation, sensory deprivation, and/or dehydration potential above levels experienced with standard fire suppression PPE

## **Chapter 6 Medical Evaluations of Candidates**

**6.1 Medical Evaluation.** A medical evaluation of a candidate shall be conducted prior to the candidate being placed in training programs or fire department emergency response activities.

**6.1.1\*** The medical evaluation of a candidate shall include a medical history, examination, and any laboratory tests required to detect physical or medical condition(s) that could adversely affect his/her ability to safely perform the essential job tasks outlined in 5.1.1.

**6.1.2** \* This standard shall provide specific requirements for candidates based on medical conditions that can affect a candidate's ability to safely perform the essential job tasks of a fire fighter.

## **6.2 Medical Conditions Affecting Ability to Safely Perform Essential Job Tasks.**

**6.2.1** Medical conditions that can affect a candidate's ability to safely perform essential job tasks shall be designated either Category A or Category B.

**6.2.2** Candidates with Category A medical conditions shall not be certified as meeting the medical requirements of this standard.

**6.2.3** Candidates with Category B medical conditions shall be certified as meeting the medical requirements of this standard only if they can perform the essential job tasks without posing a significant safety and health risk to themselves, members, or civilians.

## **6.3 Head and Neck.**

### **6.3.1 Head.**

**6.3.1.1** Category A medical conditions shall include the following:

- (1) Defect of skull preventing helmet use or leaving underlying brain unprotected from trauma
- (2) Any skull or facial deformity that would not allow for a successful fit test for respirators used by that department
- (3) Any head condition that results in the candidate not being able to safely perform one or more of the essential job tasks

**6.3.1.2** Category B medical conditions shall include the following:

- (1)\*Deformities of the skull such as depressions or exostoses
- (2)\*Deformities of the skull associated with evidence of disease of the brain, spinal cord, or peripheral nerves
- (3)\*Loss or congenital absence of the bony substance of the skull

