



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Avenue
Boise, Idaho 83705

MEMORANDUM

Reference: NWCG#008-2009

To: NWCG Executive Board

From: NWCG Chair *Brian McManis*

Date: March 11, 2009

Subject: Medical Standards Program Transition Plan

As announced on March 6, 2009, medical examination appointments in accordance with the Interagency Medical Standards Program (IMSP) are suspended after March 13th, 2009 (See NWCG #007-2009 Memorandum – Health Screen Appointments in IMSP Suspended after 3/13/2009). A provision of that direction was the development and issuance of a Transition Plan to provide specific guidance for how medical examinations and program administration would be handled until a new contract is established.

The IMSP Council, working with Federal Fire and Aviation Safety Team (FFAST) members and IMSP staff, has developed the attached Transition Plan. This Plan establishes interim procedures to efficiently maintain continuity of medical screening operations.

This direction is prepared for agency use in implementing the wildland firefighter medical qualification process for exams completed on or before March 13th, and during the lapse in exam service after this date while a new contract is established. In summary:

- All exams completed on or before March 13th will follow the current IMSP protocol for processing and notification.
- No exams can be performed under the current medical qualifications contract after March 13th.
- The waiver/accommodation process will continue uninterrupted for medical exams already completed or already scheduled for completion by the March 13th deadline.
- After March 13th, the Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) process will be used.

The NWCG, IMSP Council, FFAST and the IMSP recognize the inconvenience this places on IMSP customers and requests your patience while the program is reinstated.

Please contact your agency FFAST representative on the list below, or the IMSP Program Office at (208) 947-3750 (e-mail: wlfcsr@blm.gov) if you have specific questions or concerns.

Agency	Representative	Phone	E-mail
BIA	Tony Beitia	208-387-5177	tony_beitia@nifc.gov
BLM	Michelle Ryerson	208-387-5175	michelle_ryerson@nifc.blm.gov
FWS	Rod Bloms	208-387-5599	rod_bloms@fws.gov
NPS	Chad Fisher	208-387-5967	chad_fisher@nps.gov
USFS	Larry Sutton	208-387-5970	lsutton@fs.fed.us

Attachment

**Federal Interagency Wildland Firefighter
Medical Qualification Standards Program (IMSP)**

Medical Examinations Contract Transition Plan

Introduction

The medical examination contract for the Interagency Medical Standards Program (IMSP) expires March 31, 2009. All exams under the existing medical exams contract must be completed on or before March 13, 2009. (See NWCG #007-2009 Memorandum – Health Screen Appointments in the Interagency Medical Standards Program Suspended after March 13th, 2009). It is anticipated that there will be a lapse in medical exam service for up to eight (8) weeks until a new contract is established.

Purpose

The purpose of this Transition Plan is to establish interim procedures to efficiently maintain continuity of medical screening operations. Those units who have not yet implemented the Medical Standards Program must continue to comply with their current agency standards. The guidance below only applies to personnel maintaining ICS qualifications with an arduous fitness level.

Firefighter Medical Qualification Processes:

Exams completed on or before March 13, 2009

For all firefighters who take a medical exam on or before March 13, 2009, the protocol will be to follow the standard IMSP process including the waiver/accommodation process.

Once an employee is medically cleared through the IMSP exam process (Annual, Periodic, or Baseline) for FY09, they can receive an Incident Qualification Card upon completing the Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training and successfully completing the Work Capacity Test (WCT).

After March 13, 2009

All permanent, career-seasonal, temporary, Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) employees, and AD/EFF firefighters who have not yet received an exam and/or whose qualification will expire during the lapse of the medical exam contract services will utilize the Health Screen Questionnaire (HSQ) (<http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/2006/5100-31.pdf>) process as identified in the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book) or Wildland Fire and Aviation Program Management and Operations Guide (BIA Blue Book).

If any “Yes” answer is indicated on the HSQ, a medical examination is required prior to the employee taking the Work Capacity Test (WCT). Medical examinations will be performed utilizing the U.S. Civil Service Commission Certificate of Medical Examination Form, SF-78 (http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/safety/wct/2002/wct_SF_78_Arduous.pdf) and the supplemental form Physical Requirements for Firefighters and Smokejumper Positions. Medical clearance and exam payment method will be determined on an agency by agency basis.

Once the medical services contract is re-established, it will be at the discretion of each agency to determine when to begin implementing the exam process for those individuals who were cleared using the HSQ process.

Temporary Seasonal and AD/EFF Applicants

Temporary Seasonal applicants and AD/EFFs, less than 45 years of age, hired during the lapse of medical exam contract service, shall use the HSQ process as outlined above. Those Temporary Seasonal applicants and AD/EFFs, 45 years of age and older, hired during the lapse, will complete the HSQ process as outlined above and the SF-78. Incident Qualification Cards issued during this period will remain valid for one (1) year at agency discretion.

Firefighters in Not Cleared or Pending Status

Firefighters who previously received a “Not Cleared” (in the waiver/accommodation process) or “Pending” (more medical information is required by the applicant) medical determination may not use the HSQ process during the lapse of contract service to gain clearance for arduous duty. The waiver/accommodation process will be initiated through the SHRO/FMO under the standard IMSP process.

Each agency distributing this Transition Plan will provide agency-specific guidance for the following issues: 1) new hires for permanent/career-seasonal/term positions, 2) record retention for HSQ and SF-78, and 3) payment for services.