20.01 **PURPOSE:**
The Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (MDFR) Wellness-Fitness Program is designed to encourage and facilitate optimal physical fitness and overall wellness for all firefighters. This is achieved through education, annual physicals, nutritional counseling, fitness evaluations, and participation in physical conditioning and rehabilitation. The program is geared to be progressive, constructive, and non-punitive based on the current recommendations of the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF), International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Wellness-Fitness Initiative, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1582 *Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program,* and NFPA 1583 *Standard on Health Related Fitness Programs for Firefighters.*

20.02 **POLICY:**
The MDFR Wellness-Fitness Program is designed to encourage and facilitate optimal physical fitness and overall wellness for all firefighters throughout the course of their career and beyond retirement.

20.03 **AUTHORITY:**
The authority vested in the Fire Chief by Florida Statute 125.01, Sections 4.01 and 4.02 of the Miami–Dade County Charter, Section 2-181 of the code of Miami-Dade County, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between Miami-Dade County Association of Firefighters Local 1403 and Miami-Dade County.

20.04 **RESPONSIBILITY:**
It is the responsibility of the Assistant Chief for Technical and Support Services or designee to review and update this policy.

20.05 **DEFINITIONS:**
**Fitness Coordinator:** Sworn personnel responsible for all the components of the firefighters health and fitness programs who is assigned to the OSHB Training Division.

**Medically Fit for Duty:** Physical condition suitable to meet job description without undue stress and harm to self or other personnel.

**Negative Improvement:** Any lack of improvement or worsening of physical conditions either with or without appropriate effort.
Peer Fitness Trainer (PFT): A fire rescue professional trained under the IAFF/IAFC Joint Management Wellness-Fitness Initiative (WFI) guidelines and certified by the American Council on Exercise (ACE) which implements and oversees fitness programs to recruits and to incumbents as directed by the Fitness Coordinator.

Positive Improvement: Any improvement in relation to current condition secondary to interventions.

Reassignment: Assigned not medically fit for duty per Wellness Center Physician.

Wellness Center Physician: The physician contracted by the Wellness Center responsible for annual physicals and fit for duty examinations.

20.06 PROCEDURE:
Participation in the physical conditioning program is critical. All sworn firefighters will participate in the program. If a firefighter is sick or disabled to the point of not being able to participate, then consideration should be given in regards to his/her ability to complete their job functions. Participation in the Firefighters Wellness-Fitness Program will ensure that each member is capable of meeting the physical demands of the job, reduces the risk of injury, and extends the health and longevity of active members.

I. ANNUAL WELLNESS MEDICAL EVALUATION FOR FIREFIGHTERS

Medical examinations will be administered annually by the Department while the employee is on duty. Medical examinations will commence during the first week of January. The annual physical will be done in accordance with NFPA 1582 and the current CBA. The information collected in this examination is specific to fire department uniformed personnel. The data collected at the Wellness Center will be gathered to track the natural history and health status of firefighters. The information will be stored in a confidential database accessed only by the Wellness Center and Occupational Safety and Health Bureau (OSHB).

A. The annual medical evaluation will consist of the following parameters identified in Article 19 of the CBA with Local 1403:

1. 12 lead EKG.
2. Complete blood test.
3. Hearing test.
4. Lung volume test.
5. Treadmill stress test if recommended by the examining physician, the employee's physician, or upon request.
6. Other diagnostic tests as required by the Wellness Center.
8. Chest X-ray at employee's option.
| 9.       | Mammogram upon request                               |
| 11.      | Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) tests will be provided to all males age 50 or over and to other males if recommended by the examining physician. Upon request by the employee, the test will be provided to those males age 40 or over. |
| 12.      | Heavy Metals testing for all Hazardous Material (Haz Mat) Technicians, Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force (TF) members, and any other employee upon request. |

**B.** In addition to the annual medical evaluation, the employee will fill out a *Past Medical History* form that will be included with the medical record.

**C.** Once medically evaluated by the Wellness Center Physician, the employee may be referred to the Fitness Coordinator by the physician.

1. This will be coordinated through the OSHB.

2. The decision to remove the individual from their regular assignment versus to allow an individual to participate in physical conditioning on duty resides with the Wellness Center Physician.

**D.** The urine sample provided during the regular annual physical will not be used for drug use screening unless it is provided during the mandatory physical year and the employee is advised prior to its collection.

**II. FITNESS EVALUATION**

**A.** Following the annual medical evaluation, all uniformed personnel will participate in a mandatory, periodic, non-punitive, and confidential fitness evaluation. The fitness evaluation will follow protocols established in the IAFF/IAFC Wellness-Fitness Initiative and will include the following assessments:

1. Aerobic capacity
2. Body composition
3. Muscular strength
4. Muscular endurance
5. Flexibility

**B.** Once the fitness evaluation is completed the employee will receive feedback regarding their current level of fitness, positive improvement, or negative improvement since the last assessment and a realistic evaluation of their physical abilities to safely perform assigned duties with suggestions on how
to improve their functional capacity. Personnel must understand that the objectives of these evaluations are to facilitate improvements in personal fitness. All uniformed members are expected to see improvements in their fitness levels through regular exercise and periodic fitness evaluations. A confidential file will be established and maintained for each employee. Group statistical data will be processed and evaluated for administrative purposes while ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

C. Employees will be required to complete a fitness evaluation prior to returning to full duty from any injury, illness, or other extended leave from full duty greater than six (6) months.

III. PEER FITNESS TRAINER (PFT)

A. A PFT will be available to uniformed personnel for assistance in their exercise program and development. The PFT can be assigned to uniformed personnel through the Fitness Coordinator via self-referral or the OSHB.

B. Uniformed personnel must have a recent (less than one (1) year) medical evaluation completed and must complete a health history questionnaire prior to having a PFT assigned to them.

C. Once assigned, the PFT will conduct a fitness evaluation at the beginning of the program and update the Fitness Coordinator on the individual’s progress ranging from one to three month intervals. An individual’s information obtained by the PFT will be maintained confidential at all times.

D. The PFT may also be assisting in the areas of the Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT), Recruit Training, and battalion drills concerning WFI Awareness when needed.

E. The uniform used by the PFT will be Class C or other approved attire by the Deputy Chief or above as stated in Policy and Procedure (P&P) I-L-20, Uniform Standards Sworn Employees.

IV. EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

Equipment will be maintained as outlined in P&P Il-J-3, Fire Station, Equipment Maintenance and Care Duties. Personnel with questions on the use or other concerns can contact a PFT or the Fitness Coordinator.

V. GUIDELINES FOR PHYSICAL CONDITIONING

A. The goal of the on-duty physical conditioning activity will be to enhance strength, endurance, and agility in a safe, non-contact, and non-competitive manner.

B. Company officers in conjunction with their Battalion Chief will determine the most appropriate time during the shift for the units physical conditioning. A daily entry will be made in the company activity report detailing activities performed and time allotted.
C. The standard exercise uniform available through the MDFR Inventory and Supply Bureau will be worn during all fitness activities.

D. Participation in fitness activities must never compromise or delay response. All fitness activities must be performed within the assigned fire station or units first due response territory while in service unless approved by the Battalion.

E. When conducting physical conditioning away from quarters, units should park apparatus inconspicuously, keep radio volume down, be courteous, and show professionalism at all times.

F. Civilian participation with MDFR units during fitness activities is strictly prohibited.

G. Company Officers will ensure that these guidelines are adhered to.

VI. APPROVED PHYSICAL CONDITIONING ACTIVITIES

A. Any activity which is non-competitive and which does not lead to direct physical contact between participants, while at the same time improving aerobic capacity, muscular strength, and endurance is allowed. The following components will be incorporated into the activity to ensure the safety of participants and optimize the conditioning benefit:

1. Adequate pre- and post-hydration
2. Warm up
3. Aerobic conditioning
4. Strength conditioning
5. Stretching
6. Cool down

B. To ensure safety, company officers are encouraged to request guidance from the Fitness Coordinator or a PFT. Examples of approved physical conditioning activities include but are not limited to the following:

1. Weight training
2. Walking, jogging, or running on level surfaces
3. Stair climbing
4. Stationary aerobic training
5. Swimming
6. Circuit training
7. Calisthenics
8. Company Drills

C. Every participant at every level must be aware of the indications of overexertion and suspend the activity as well as immediately render appropriate medical aid in the event of a participant becoming symptomatic as listed below:

1. Onset of angina, chest pain, back pain, or joint pain
2. Signs of poor perfusion, light headedness, confusion, nausea, diaphoresis
3. Physical or verbal indication of extreme fatigue
4. Loss of consciousness, balance, or onset of vertigo.

VII. NUTRITION

A. Proper nutrition enhances the performance that is required during fire ground and emergency activities. A well balanced diet combined with an exercise program is the most reliable method in reducing one’s body fat. Individuals interested in attaining a weight management program, a diet analysis, or a custom diet program can contact the Fitness Coordinator, a PFT, or the Wellness Center for an appointment with the Department Nutritionist.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Physical fitness is critical in maintaining the wellness of our uniformed personnel. Repeatedly, research has shown the need for high levels of aerobic fitness, muscular endurance, and muscular strength to perform safely and effectively on the fire ground and during other emergency incidents. In order for this program to succeed, it is imperative that all personnel participate. Fitness must be incorporated into the overall fire service philosophy. Information regarding exercise and fitness can be accessed on http://mdfrnet/ by clicking on the Fitness Zone.

20.07 REVOCATION:
All parts of previous Orders, Rules and Regulations, Operations Memoranda, and Administrative Orders in conflict with this Policy and Procedure are revoked.

20.08 REVISION:
New Policy and Procedure