

PORTLAND FIRE & RESCUE
Portland, Oregon

September 19, 2006

GENERAL ORDER NO. 49

PHYSICAL FITNESS PROGRAM
"Fit To Survive"

I. GENERAL

- A. This order supersedes and rescinds General Order No. 49, dated August 17, 2004.
- B. Firefighting is recognized as one of the most hazardous occupations on which statistical data is available. Research has repeatedly shown the need for high levels of fitness to perform safely in the fire service. In order to reduce injuries, a high level of physical fitness must be maintained. Firefighters' long hours, shift work, sporadic high intensity work, strong emotional involvement, and exposure to human suffering places firefighting among the most stressful occupations in the world.
- C. All sworn personnel will be strongly encouraged to participate in the physical fitness program.
- D. All sworn personnel will be required to go through the physical agility test. Members meeting the following exceptions will not be required to participate in the physical agility test;
 - 1. Members working in Temporary Light Duty position per Chief's Memo #01-08
 - 2. Members working in a Permanently Restricted Duty status (sworn personnel who have returned to duty after having been designated as permanently restricted from full active duty by a physician)

Personnel in classifications # 1 and 2 above are required to have written verification from their medical provider. This status must be verified by their Division Chief and written documentation maintained in their personnel file.

The IAFF/IAFC Wellness/Fitness Initiative is intended to be a positive individualized program that is not punitive. All component results are measured against the individual's previous assessments and not against any standard or norm. However, medical practice standards may be used when results indicate that life saving intervention is required. Wellness is a personal

commitment that all members must make to survive and to sustain a long and healthy career in the fire service.

II. OBJECTIVES

- A. An on-duty exercise program has been developed to increase the ability of each firefighter to better withstand the stresses of rigorous fire fighting, to reduce the incidence of bodily injury, and to improve the overall health of personnel. Members will be encouraged to fully utilize the in-station exercise equipment to improve their muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and aerobic capacity.
- B. A fitness evaluation by "Promoting Healthy Living: Assessing More Effects" (PHLAME) personnel measuring muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, body composition and physical agility, along with other fitness parameters will be conducted annually. These tests should reveal potential health/physical capability problems, as well as encourage physical conditioning and weight control. Testing results are confidential and will be reported directly to the individual member.
- C. All members will be informed that the goal of the PHLAME fitness evaluation is solely for personal fitness improvement. In addition, they will understand that aerobic fitness is fundamental to their health, safety and performance. The leading causes of premature departures from the Fire Service are heart and lung disease and aerobic fitness may improve an individual's resistance to these diseases.

III. ON DUTY EXERCISE PROGRAM

- A. Equipment furnished shall consist of treadmill, stationary bicycles, 5-50 pound dumbbells, incline or flat bench, stair stepper or climber, elliptical trainers, stability balls, multi-exercise or universal system, medicine balls, resistance bands and fitness mats. Members may utilize the PF&R Health and Wellness Manual or PF&R members who have been certified through the American Council of Exercise as Peer Fitness Trainers for basic fitness information.
- B. The Captain or Supervisor of each station/section shall allow approximately one hour per shift for suppression personnel, or one hour, two days a week for 40 hour sworn personnel to be committed to physical fitness. Officers/Supervisors shall schedule this time in the company planner, and when possible, time shall be made available prior to 1700 hours. Activities performed during this period will be regulated by the Company Officer or Supervisor with the approval of the District Chief or Division Manager.
- C. Company Officers shall be responsible for entering fitness activities in the Journal under the "Productivity" tab, then "Physical Fitness". Educational wellness/fitness subjects shall be entered in the "Training" section with respective drill codes.

- D. It is permissible for companies to use public and private exercise facilities within their first response area. Officers shall coordinate these activities with their Battalion Chief or Supervisor.

IV. COMPETITIVE SPORTS

- A. Competitive sports and recreational games such as handball, racquetball, basketball, soccer, softball, baseball, volleyball, football, tennis, etc. are not encouraged or authorized as part of the on-duty physical fitness program. These activities will be permitted as voluntary personal recreation or as social activities with certain regulations. Officers and supervisors shall monitor these activities to ensure that regulations are followed.
- B. Before participating in on-duty competitive/recreational sports, members must first complete a "Competitive Sports Acknowledgement" (PFB form 100.48A for Fire and Police Disability and Retirement Fund members and 100.48B for PERS members). These forms must be signed, dated and forwarded to the Staff Captain at Battalion Headquarters. A copy of the signed acknowledgement will be placed in the member's personnel file. The Staff Captain will record receipt of the signed acknowledgement in the "Personnel System". Company Officers and Supervisors should refer to the "Personnel System" to confirm that the acknowledgement is on file for members who desire to participate in competitive sports.
- C. Competitive sports activities shall be conducted at a facility designed for the activity. This can include recreational facilities at parks, community centers, or schools within the company's first response area. Battalion Chiefs should be consulted regarding use of these facilities. Companies who do not have these types of facilities available may use station facilities if the Station Captain determines that they are safe for the intended activity.
- D. Company Officers and Supervisors shall ensure that these activities comply with the following items:
1. The activity shall not interfere with PF&R operations.
 2. Ensure professional conduct and consider public perception.
 3. A minimum of ten (10) minutes shall be devoted to mandatory warm-up and muscle stretching prior to participation.
 4. Participation should be restricted when wide variations in ability levels could create a hazard.
 5. Participation should be restricted for individuals with a known previous injury subject to re-injury.
- E. Adequate staffing and coverage considerations for lost time shall be monitored by Battalion Headquarters to evaluate future modifications to this section.

V. EXERCISE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

- A. Companies participating in physical fitness activities shall remain in continuous radio contact and quick response mode.
- B. Clothing worn for physical activities shall be the current Portland Fire & Rescue issued T-shirt or sweatshirt, with rank and EMT level. Weather or activity requirements may warrant use of pants/gym shorts other than those issued by Portland Fire & Rescue. If used, these items shall be dark blue, white or black and in good condition with minimal or no logo. Footwear shall be provided by the member and must be appropriate for the activity.
- C. Prescribed uniforms and protective clothing shall be worn when responding to incidents from fitness activities. At no time shall workout pants/shorts be appropriate response attire.
- D. Use caution and courtesy when parking apparatus on private properties, such as parking lots and driveways.
- E. Security precautions for apparatus and equipment shall be taken as conditions warrant. Radios shall not be left in an unsecured vehicle.
- F. Activities must project a high fitness, non-recreational attitude, and protect Portland Fire & Rescue's public image.
- G. Use of public and private fitness facilities shall be allowed only during non-peak hours, as determined by the facility.
- H. 53-hour members using public or private fitness facilities shall use only strength and aerobic equipment. Showering shall occur when back in quarters.
- I. Any dues or fees required for utilizing off site fitness facilities will be the responsibility of the member. No member shall use the uniform, badge, or prestige of Portland Fire & Rescue to solicit a reduction in fees or dues.
- J. Company Officers, with the approval of the Battalion Chief, shall be responsible for determining which off site fitness facility may be used.
- K. Companies are to immediately return to quarters (or be governed by the direction of dispatch) when a greater alarm is sounded.

VI. MEDICAL & FITNESS EVALUATION

- A. All sworn personnel will receive the following yearly examinations.
1. From 2004-2008, the fitness assessments will be offered by PHLAME personnel. (PHLAME program participation is voluntary but highly recommended) After that time, Peer Fitness Trainers will be available to conduct the fitness assessments.
 2. Hearing Test
 3. Infectious Disease Screening and Immunizations (including TB Test)
 4. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Respiratory Medical Evaluation (when required by OSHA rules)
- B. Once the medical & fitness evaluation is complete, PHLAME personnel will provide feedback to sworn personnel regarding the individual's physical capacity pertaining to his or her job related wellness. This personalized feedback will include the individual's current level of fitness, level of improvement since past assessments, a realistic evaluation of his or her physical capacity to safely perform assigned jobs, and a suggested exercise program.

VII. PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST

- A. Demonstrating competency through the Physical Agility Test evaluates and encourages members and prospective new hires to utilize training skills and/or conditioning to perform the minimum individual job-specific baseline functions required for fire ground operations.

VIII. PHYSICAL AGILITY TEST DEFICIENCIES

- A. As per Labor / Management agreement, the following process will occur for those individuals that do not complete each test event or meet the target time for completion. As with the IAFF/IAFC Wellness Fitness Initiative the process is not punitive and is designed to assist individuals in successfully completing all requirements of the test.
1. Target Time
 - a. Members who do not complete the test within the target time will be contacted by the Occupational Health Nurse who will provide names of the Peer Fitness Trainers. The member can either select a Peer Fitness Trainer, or if they elect not to choose, one will be assigned to them by the Occupational Health Nurse. The member will attend an on-duty meeting with the Peer Fitness Trainer to

develop a written **recommended** fitness/training program for that individual to improve their ability to reach the target time.

- b. The member will be retested in 6 months (completing the entire test) to determine if improvement is being made in reaching the target time. Improvement is defined as a 30% reduction in the time over the Target time of 8:02. (Example: having a time reduced from 8:32 to 8:23 is defined as improvement) The member staying on this recommended training/fitness plan would then need to show similar improvement at the next regular test time. If the **recommended** program is not successful, members that do not pass within the target time or who do not demonstrate improvement as defined above will again meet with the Peer Fitness Trainer and also their own Supervisor to develop a **mandatory** fitness/training plan. Mandatory means that on-duty fitness time will be devoted to the plans activities. These activities could include working on techniques or physical fitness exercise as required by the plan. Officers/ supervisors are to assist members in accomplishing the plan components by providing on-duty time, providing training in techniques where appropriate (ladder lifting/raises, halyard pulls, body drag, etc.) and coordinating all activities with the member and the Peer Fitness Trainer.

2. Job Specific Events

- a. When performing the test, all personnel are required to complete, or attempt to complete each job specific event. If an event cannot be completed successfully the member is required to move to the next event until each of the nine events are completed or attempted. Members that do not complete an event or events will be contacted by the Occupational Health Nurse who will provide the names of Peer Fitness Trainers. The member can either select a Peer Fitness Trainer, or if they elect not choose, one will be assigned to them by the Occupational Health Nurse.
- b. Members will meet with their Peer Fitness Trainer and also their own Officer/Supervisor to develop a **mandatory** fitness/training plan specific to those areas needing improvement. This could include working on techniques or physical fitness exercise as required. Officers/supervisors are to assist members in accomplishing the plan components by providing on duty time, providing training in techniques (ladder lifting/raises, halyard pulls, body drag etc.) where appropriate, and coordinating all activities with the member and the Peer Fitness Trainer. The member will be retested again in 6 months (completing the entire test).

3. Fitness/Training Plans
 - a. Before a Fitness/Training Plan goes into effect the written plan will be reviewed for consistency and approved by the Occupational Health Nurse.

4. Six-Month Retesting Period
 - a. The six-month retesting will be 6 months after the Fitness/Training Plan is finalized. Members wanting to take a retest sooner may request this through their Officer/Supervisor. Permission may or may not be granted based on the availability of the Training Facilities and proctors.

VIII. ATTACHMENT

- A. Physical Agility Test, Attachment #1

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REVISION DATE:	September 19, 2006
EFFECTIVE DATE:	September 19, 2006
REVIEWED BY:	Publications Committee
REVISED BY:	Jamie Banks
REVIEW DATE:	