

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 03-22

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Orders 99-51/99-51A
SOP 300.38.00

DATE: October 17, 2003

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS/FITNESS

I. PURPOSE.

To develop general guidelines, consistent with liability issues, that address the department's desire for all potential and current employees of the Police Department to possess the physical and mental ability to perform required job tasks.

II. DEFINITIONS.

Physical Examinations - A general medical examination conducted by a licensed medical practitioner.

Physical Fitness - To possess and/or maintain the physical abilities necessary to perform required job tasks.

III. PHYSICAL TESTING OF POLICE APPLICANTS.

Applicants for sworn positions must successfully pass a series of medical tests prior to being hired by the City. These examinations are conducted during those occasions when one or more police officer vacancies exist and a formal hiring process has been instituted by the department. Payment for such tests shall be the responsibility of the Police Department.

A. Physical Requirements

Police officer candidates are required to possess a minimum eyesight of 20/20 vision corrected, have weight in proportion to height, and successfully complete a physical examination, and psychological examination.

B. Physical Agility Tests

Physical agility tests are no longer a required element in the testing process for police officer.

C. Medical Examination/Drug Screening

Following a conditional offer of employment, candidates for police officer shall be required to successfully undergo a physical examination and drug screening by a licensed medical practitioner selected by the City. The purpose of such an examination will be to reveal medical problems which may negatively impact work-related performance, shorten a career, pose a potential threat to the physical safety of the candidate or others, or contribute to work-related disabilities. The medical examination will be based on valid, non-discriminatory, scientific measures.

D. Psychological Examination

Again, following a conditional offer of employment, candidates for the position of police officer shall be required to successfully complete a psychological examination administered by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist. The purpose of such an examination will be to determine a candidate's general mental suitability for police work. The psychological examination will be based on valid, non-discriminatory, scientific measures.

IV. PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF NON-SWORN APPLICANTS/EMPLOYEES.

A physical examination will be administered to non-sworn job applicants following an offer of employment. The purpose of such examination shall be to ensure that the applicant can perform the duties covered in the job description, and not to identify employees with disabilities who are otherwise capable to perform the duties expected of them. Should such tests reveal that the candidate employee is unfit to perform the tasks and duties expected of them (with or without reasonable accommodation), the City and department will generally withdraw their offer of employment.

In the event a non-sworn, civilian employee's job performance suffers due to the on-set of a mental or physical problem, the department may order the employee to undergo medical testing and/or psychological examination. Again, the purpose of such tests shall be to confirm the employee's continued fitness to perform the full range of tasks inherent to their assignments. If the tests disclose the employee is no longer fit to perform their assigned duties, the department may initiate one or more remedial actions in connection with the situation. These include, but are not limited to: additional medical/psychological testing, the enrollment of the employee in the Employee Assistance Program, and/or the initiation of disciplinary action.

The department shall bear the full cost of any and all medical examinations or treatment programs conducted at the direction of the agency.

In those cases where an employee suffers from an injury or illness in excess of three consecutive working days, or participates in a department-mandated treatment program, a doctor's release form shall be required prior to the employee being allowed to return to work. Such release may indicate whether the employee may return to full active status or be restricted to light-duty status for a specified period of time.

It should also be noted that the preceding does not in any way preclude or otherwise amend the requirement for all employees involved in an auto accident to submit to a drug/alcohol screening.

V. PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF SWORN OFFICERS.

The department shall ensure that sworn officers who are, or may be, physically or mentally incompetent to perform their assigned tasks will not be used on active status. Should such questions arise (to include suspicions of alcohol or drug abuse), the department may order the officer in question to undergo medical testing and/or psychological evaluation. However, the purpose of such tests shall only be to confirm an employee's continued fitness to perform the tasks of their assignments, and not to identify employees with disabilities who are otherwise capable to perform their assigned duties. Should such tests reveal that the employee is no longer fit to perform their assigned duties, with or without reasonable accommodation, the department may initiate one of the actions listed in Section VI of this order.

The department shall bear the full cost of any and all medical examinations or treatment programs conducted at the direction of the agency.

In those cases where a sworn officer suffers from an injury or illness in excess of three consecutive working days, or participates in a department-mandated treatment program, a doctor's release form shall be required prior to the employee being permitted to return to work. Such release may indicate whether the employee may return to full active status or be restricted to light-duty status for a specified period of time.

It should also be noted that the preceding does not in any way preclude or otherwise amend the requirement for all employees involved in an auto accident to submit to a drug/alcohol screening.

VI. PHYSICAL FITNESS.

Although no physical fitness requirements or mandatory exercise program are required for sworn department employees, the Chief of Police and departmental command staff are aware of the benefits regular physical exercise affords employees, and how same may positively impact an officer's response to the demands of duty. However, despite the adoption and utilization of a voluntary fitness program, should an officer's physical or mental state deteriorate to the point where same may pose a threat to the officer or others, the department reserves full authority to intercede in such situations. Any action the department might initiate shall be appropriate to the situation; which may include, but not be limited to removing an officer from field duty, requiring the officer in question to undertake counseling, to participate in a rehabilitation program, to undergo medical testing, or to commence disciplinary proceedings, up to and including termination.

A. Exercise Periods

To encourage department employees to exercise on a regular basis and maintain a healthy fitness regimen, the department has established an exercise room in the lower level of the headquarters building. This facility is open for all employees to use in accordance with the following guidelines:

Officers assigned to work twelve hour shifts will be permitted to utilize the exercise room for one hour during their shift of duty. This may occur at any time of day or night with three notable exceptions:

1. Officers may not schedule an exercise session to run consecutively with a meal period.
2. Officers may not schedule their exercise period during the last hour of their tour of duty.
3. Officers may not leave the police building during their exercise session.

Officers shall be required to obtain supervisory permission prior to engaging in an exercise period. Once permission has been granted, the officer shall notify communications and the dispatcher handling the call will record the officer's change of status via the CAD system.

Supervisors assigned to twelve-hour shifts will schedule subordinate exercise periods at their own discretion and will take into account available manpower, work load, and such other variables as may be necessary. The preceding restrictions also apply to their own use of the facility and equipment.

Employees assigned to work eight-hour shifts are precluded from on-duty exercise periods, but may freely use the facility and equipment during their off-duty time (e.g. on weekends, holidays, before or after a work shift).

B. Employee Assistance Program

To supplement existing medical and health insurance programs, the City has contracted with an Employee Assistance Provider, with whom employees (both sworn and non-sworn) may avail themselves of counseling and other services in regard to personal and family problems. The nature of such contacts and any related discussions, or treatment, shall remain strictly confidential.

C. City of Clayton Wellness Program

To educate employees in regard to the benefits of maintaining a healthy life style the City has contracted with a wellness program, where literature concerning health and safety are periodically mailed to each employee's residence.

BY ORDER OF:

THOMAS J. BYRNE
Chief of Police

TJB:dld

CALEA Reference: 22.3.1/22.3.2