



MOUNTAIN BROOK FIRE DEPARTMENT

POLICY NO. 106.09 VOLUME: 1

SUBJECT: Department Wellness/Fitness Program

SIGNED: _____ DATE: 8/10/2017 - revised
Chris J. Mullins, Fire Chief

SCOPE AND PURPOSE: The delivery of fire and emergency medical services is a stressful and physically demanding job. We all know this from our experience in providing these services, and it has additionally been established through studies associated with our profession as well. Based on this premise, it is incumbent upon us as individuals and as an organization to establish processes and systems to reduce to the greatest extent possible the stress and injuries associated with being a Firefighter/Paramedic. One of the key ways of addressing job stress and assuring physical capabilities to perform the tasks associated with the job is to establish a wellness/fitness program that addresses employee health and fitness. Many, in fact, the majority of fire departments have established fitness programs designed to help employees stay physically fit, reduce injuries and live a more healthy, productive and longer life. This policy establishes for the Mountain Brook Fire Department a wellness/fitness program that will encompass annual medical screening information given to the employee, provide information to improve the employee's health (nutrition, etc.), and the provision of a physical training program to build flexibility, cardiovascular strength and endurance for the employee.

POLICY: The following process has been established and will serve as the official Mountain Brook Fire Department wellness/fitness program.

Annual Medical Screening: During the first quarter of each year, a mandatory medical screening will be scheduled for all personnel while on-duty. The screening will be used to give each employee an overview of his/her medical health. The screening will include: hearing test, vision test, chest x-ray, EKG, pulmonary test, urinalysis, and laboratory executive profile blood work-ups which includes tests for cholesterol, PSA (males over 40 YO), glucose levels and other lab tests.

Physical Training (PT) Program: The YMCA located on 20th Place (next to the old Shades Valley High School) will be the site for the physical training program. Actual time on premises should be limited to 50 minutes. Since strains, sprains and cardiovascular issues are among the leading injuries/diseases in the fire service, the program places high emphasis on stretching, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness with less emphasis on weight lifting and strength training. When requested, YMCA personnel will provide the expertise on how to use equipment properly. Each member of a crew is required to participate in the fitness program and workout accordingly. Supervisors (Lt./AO) will be responsible and held accountable in this regard. Occasionally, crews may utilize other areas to participate in physical training such as the drill field or high school football stadium or outdoor tracks within the City. As with normal PT, this should be coordinated with the Shift Commander. The goal for

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each employee is to progress through different fitness levels over a period of time. Physical training should not be considered a competition between personnel.

Annual Fitness Evaluation: The Training/Safety Officer through committee process shall develop and administer an annual fitness evaluation program which has specific physical tasks or exercises that correlate to fire ground activities. The program shall provide a means to collect and provide information to each individual regarding current and historical performance with respect to the evaluation. The evaluation should be so designed as to provide a good indication of the physical abilities of the person to be able to perform work which could be expected in a normal fire scene environment. The evaluation process shall further provide for the safety and welfare of all the participants by monitoring vital signs prior to commencing.

***NOTE: See attachment for AEA Flow Chart.**

Apparatus/Personnel Rotation: The following schedule has been developed to provide for an orderly rotation of units to participate in the PT program. Each apparatus has a two hour "window" to participate in PT. Shift Commanders may from time to time adjust this schedule.

Engine Three: Eng-3 will participate in 50 minutes of on-site PT between the hours of 0800-1000.

Engine One: Eng-1 will participate in 50 minutes of on-site PT between the hours of 1000-1200.

Engine Two: Eng-2 will participate in 50 minutes of on-site PT between the hours of 1300-1500.

Ladder One: Lad-1 will participate in 50 minutes of on-site PT between the hours of 1500-1700.

Battalion 1: Bat-1 will have a flexible schedule with respect to PT. The Shift Commander may elect to have PT at the station since he/she is subject to calls more frequently than other units.

Transport Two: TP-2 may report to PT during the same time frame as Engine Company personnel, but should not report out to PT when Transport 1/Ladder Truck personnel are there. (Transport One could be activated if staffing permits during this time – Shift Commander discretion).

Since our business is responding to emergencies and emergencies do not adhere to any particular schedules, there will be occasions where a unit will not be available for PT due to being on an emergency call during their scheduled time for PT. Another time may be scheduled for PT during the shift (even at night if so desired). Rescheduling should not however put two units being at PT at the same time. The unit officer should contact the Shift Commander for directions regarding rescheduling. There will be occasions when PT will be cancelled for a unit due to response priorities, other scheduled priorities, etc.

The Shift Commander shall have a working knowledge of where every unit is at all times and should

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know the schedules for PT during the shift.

Response Availability: Units that are on-site at the YMCA involved in PT will be subject to making emergency response at a moment's notice; therefore, it is imperative that all portable radios be utilized for quick communications with dispatch and other members of the department. Being out of radio contact will be unacceptable. Portable radios have been used at the facility to test their functionality. Officers/Acting Officers shall be responsible for making sure that all personnel are in the immediate area and are available to respond at a moment's notice. If a unit involved in PT is dispatched to an emergency and the Shift Commander deems it more appropriate to send another unit based on the proximity of the emergency and the type of emergency, then the Shift Commander may cancel the unit and send other units or alter the number of units responding as he/she deems necessary.

PT Uniform (refer to Policy # 102.04): All personnel shall wear the Mountain Brook Fire Department Class D – Exercise Uniform while attending PT. Turnout trousers shall be worn over the Class D uniform on emergency responses or on other occasions where personnel will be meeting the public while going to or returning from PT.

Parking: The unit officer/acting officer shall make sure that the apparatus is parked such that if the unit is dispatched to an emergency there will be no encumbrances with respect to exiting the complex and making the appropriate response.

Personnel Accountability: All personnel shall be on their best behavior as would be expected from a member of the Mountain Brook Fire Department. We are guests in the YMCA Complex and as such we want to maintain a good working relationship with their employees and other customers that participate in PT at the complex.

Assisting at the YMCA: If during the course of a unit being at PT a civilian experiences a medical problem, then the correct process will be for the MBFD unit on scene to inform Fire Alarm about the nature of the problem and go out of service and work the call. Additionally, the unit should tell Fire Alarm to notify the City of Birmingham Fire Department to dispatch a response to the facility. The patient will be turned over to BF&RS when they arrive on scene and an incident report filed as mutual aid given.