

CITY OF BROOKINGS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
(New – Effective January 1, 2009)

PURPOSE:

In support of its mission to provide emergency services to the community, the City of Brookings has determined the need to establish criteria for recruiting and maintaining volunteer firefighters in a manner that upholds the City of Brookings operating principles and protects the interests of public safety. Being physically capable of doing the work required as a volunteer firefighter is in every way as important as having the knowledge, training and equipment required to provide quality fire suppression and rescue services. It is critical that volunteer firefighters be in as good physical condition as the equipment they carry. If volunteer firefighters are physically unable to do the work required, they may not only negatively impact the care provided, but may actually endanger the well-being of themselves, other emergency personnel involved, and the general public they are intending to protect.

POLICY:

The City of Brookings Fire Department shall establish a Physical Assessment (PA) program which will include an occupational medical examination and baseline testing for applicant post offer and current volunteer firefighters to be effective January 1, 2009. This program is being implemented to promote the health and well-being of the members of the fire department by addressing a minimum standard of fitness and fairness required to perform the duties of a volunteer firefighter and limit the liability of the City and Fire Department. This program is designed to test the physical ability to perform the duties outlined in the Volunteer Firefighter job description. The physical assessment/medical examination requirement within this policy also includes the paid positions of Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief. Only personnel who maintain active status may be allowed to participate as emergency responders.

The City of Brookings Volunteer Fire Department reserves the right to maintain a philosophy that places an individual's opportunity secondary to public and employee safety. Therefore, applicants with limitations that may prevent them from being able to safely perform job related duties may be disqualified.

The City of Brookings Volunteer Fire Department shall establish minimum qualification standards for volunteer membership. These minimum qualification standards, listed in the individual job descriptions, shall be provided to the applicant at the time of application.

STANDARD GUIDELINES:

- A. **Participation Limitation:** All Volunteer Firefighters shall not be allowed to participate in any physical activities associated with the City of Brookings Volunteer Fire Department until their application, background check, and occupational physical assessment medical examination/baseline testing has been completed, reviewed and approved by City of Brookings Human Resources Director and Fire Chief, or his/her designee.
- B. **Minimum Qualifications:** All Volunteer Firefighter applications will be reviewed by the City of Brookings Fire Chief or his/her designee and a committee of volunteers to ensure that the applicant meets minimum qualifications. As a minimum, applicants must:
 1. Be a US citizen, or be lawfully admitted to the US for permanent residency;
 2. Live within a 3 mile radius of city limits from the City of Brookings;

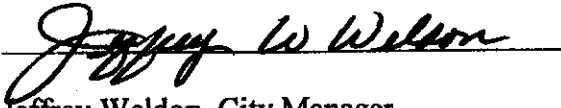
3. Be a minimum of 21 years old at the time of appointment;
 4. Possess a high school diploma or GED;
 5. Be able to successfully complete criminal background check.
 6. Be physically and mentally fit to meet the demands of the duties.
 7. Successfully complete physical assessment/medical examination assessing ability to perform physical requirements of essential duties and responsibilities as outlined in firefighter job description.
 8. Possess and maintain a valid driver license with an acceptable driving record;
- C. **Membership Process:** - All Volunteer Firefighter applicants must complete each of the in-processing steps as prescribed for the desired program. In-processing requires satisfactory completion of the following steps in sequence:
1. **Applications Submitted** - All Volunteer Firefighter applications are to be submitted to the City of Brookings Fire Department for application screening along with all required forms. Application screening – applications are screened to ensure that applicants meet all minimum eligibility requirements. Each applicant shall be given direction as to how they proceed in the process.
 2. **In-person Interview** – An in-person interview will be held with the Fire Chief or his/her designee and established interview committee utilizing a list of designated questions approved by the City of Brookings Human Resources Director. Following the interview, the Fire Chief will review with the applicant City of Brookings Fire Department requirements, program expectations, and determine applicant selection for process advancement.
 3. **Background Investigation** – All Volunteer Firefighter applicants are subject to a background investigation to include contact with references, a driving history, and criminal background check. Acceptable driving records are required of all applicants.
 4. **Physical Assessment/Medical Examination and Baseline Testing** – Prior to being cleared initially for active Volunteer Firefighter status and every third year thereafter, the Volunteer Firefighter must complete a basic occupational physical by a City of Brookings designated physician to include, but not limited to,
 - medical examination (physical)
 - back screening
 - urinalysis/lab chemistry panel
 - vital capacity spirometry lung function testing
- The occupational medical examination and other baseline testing will be paid for by the City of Brookings. If any additional testing is requested by the medical practitioner to include, but not limited to, an EKG, stress test, etc., these recommended tests must be billed to the applicant/volunteer firefighter and submitted to his/her private insurance, etc.
- a) The Human Resources Department must receive successful completion of the physical assessment medical examination and baseline testing prior to the Volunteer Firefighter participating in any City of Brookings related Fire Department physical activity. Upon successful completion, Volunteer Firefighter applicants shall be enrolled in the City of Brookings volunteer work comp insurance program.
 - b) Those applicants that fail his/her physical assessment medical examination will have the opportunity to re-apply as an applicant in six months from the date of the failed examination.
 - c) If a current volunteer firefighter fails his/her every third year physical assessment medical examination, he/she will be placed on light duty (no firefighting) until he/she passes the physical and/or a maximum of 6 months.

5. **CDC Vaccinations/Immunization Plan** – All Volunteer Firefighters meeting eligibility requirements must complete or decline the series of communicable disease control vaccinations to include, not limited to Hepatitis B, Tetanus, etc.
6. **Recruit Training/Department Assignment** – Upon successful completion of all membership in-processing requirements, members shall be assigned to their respective Captain, who shall conduct an indoctrination to address the operational issues.
7. **Probationary Period** – Probation period for a Volunteer Firefighter is a minimum of one year plus successful completion of the SD Certified Firefighter Course; IS 100; IS 200; and IS 700. Failure to meet the City of Brookings Fire Department Volunteer Firefighter probationary requirements may serve as grounds for failing the probationary period. A member may be terminated at any time during the probationary period.
8. **Safety Program Requirements** – The City of Brookings Safety Program establishes minimum compliance requirements for all employees and volunteers. Failure to reasonably comply with these requirements may be used as grounds for restricting an individual's level of participation. Personnel who remain non-compliant may be re-classified to an inactive status or terminated.
9. **Minimum Activity Requirements** – In an attempt to ensure that Volunteer Firefighters maintain complete skills and remain proficient with fire department operations, the City of Brookings shall establish minimum activity levels. Volunteer Firefighters shall be responsible for maintaining compliance with applicable training, safety, activity and membership requirements and reporting changes in their physical condition that may limit their ability to safely perform volunteer firefighter job duties.
10. **Inactive Status** – Volunteer Firefighters who are out of compliance with minimum training, safety, physical activity, or membership requirements may be placed on light/limited duty or inactive status. Volunteer Firefighters who are placed on inactive status shall not be allowed to serve as responders until they have been re-activated to active status.
11. **Light/Limited Duty:**
 - Will be considered for those volunteers who have work restrictions that make them unable to perform their normal duties.
 - Will be considered only for those volunteers who have work restrictions for over two weeks.
 - Will be considered for temporary assignments only, not to exceed six months (with exception of grandfathered situations prior to 1/1/09).
 - An application to request light/limited duty must be completed by the Volunteer Firefighter and a list of work restrictions must be provided by physician to the Chief or his/her designee in order to be considered.
12. **Waiver:** Any firefighter may waive the physical only if he/she has received a physical examination performed by a licensed physician within the previous 12 month period if required results are submitted to the City of Brookings Human Resources Department within 30 days of the established due date of the physical. The physical performed by the private physician, however, must conform to the City of Brookings Volunteer Department Physical Assessment Program and shall consist of the same testing, screenings, and procedures. Any member waiving a physical through the City of Brookings Fire Department is responsible for the cost of such physical. A waiver form shall be completed, signed and dated by the member. If it is determined that the physical did not conform totally to the City's Physical Assessment Program, the City of Brookings Human Resources Department will schedule the firefighter for an appointment for the remaining testing, screenings and procedures.

13. **Refusal to Participate:** Firefighters who refuse to participate to all or any portion of the required occupational physical will be terminated from the City of Brookings Fire Department.

City of Brookings

Date:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeffrey W. Weldon", is written over a horizontal line.

12-15-08

Jeffrey Weldon, City Manager