

## PREGNANT FIREFIGHTERS WITHIN OPERATIONS: SPECIAL PROGRAM

**Date Issued:** May 31, 2019

**Rescinds:** N/A

**Section:** Personnel

**File Code:** P-PREG

### PURPOSE

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In order to address the temporary accommodation requirements of pregnant firefighters within the Operations Division, a special program has been established, as a proactive and precautionary measure.

This program is intended to proactively address the medically-validated restrictions of pregnant firefighters arising from their pregnancy, which require accommodation.

### RESPONSIBILITY

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All Personnel are responsible for being aware of this Standard Operating Guideline.

All Officers and Supervisors are responsible for following this Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) and taking appropriate action in accordance with this SOG.

Pregnant Firefighters who become aware that they are pregnant are responsible for the following:

- Meet with their treating physician or midwife, as soon as possible, to review and discuss the duties, risks and occupational hazards of the position. **(For additional information- contact the Medical Office and/or review information on TFS intranet site)**
- Advise the TFS Medical Office of any medical restrictions arising from the pregnancy, and submit the supporting RTW form, as completed by the treating physician or midwife.
- Cooperate in the accommodation process.

### GUIDELINES

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#### 1. Overarching Principles of the Special Program

- 1.1 The duties of a firefighter within the Operations Division at TFS are sometimes dangerous and often physically arduous, with exposure to physical and chemical hazards such as stress, heat, smoke, biological agents and hazardous materials. Furthermore, it is impossible to predict when circumstances may arise that may pose a risk to firefighters.
- 1.2 Such dangers, although inherent in the position of an Operations Firefighter, may pose a potential risk to a pregnant firefighter and/or to the developing fetus.

- 1.3 All pregnant firefighters have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, and in a manner that recognizes the particular and distinct experiences that individuals encounter during pregnancy.
  - 1.4 Decisions about pregnancy and work must be based on the ability of the pregnant firefighter to safely perform the work rather than on the pregnancy itself. Any restriction(s) on the ability to perform the work, as identified by the treating physician or midwife, are to be listed on a completed Return to Work (RTW) and submitted to the Medical Office.
- 2. Eligibility Requirements for Participation in the Special Program:**
- 2.1 In order to be eligible to participate in this program, the employee must be a pregnant firefighter working within TFS Operations Division.
- 3. General Rules of the Special Program:**
- 3.1 Pregnant firefighters will not be automatically moved out of the Division, nor shall they be temporarily accommodated out of their base position as a result of becoming pregnant.
  - 3.2 However, pregnant firefighters will be temporarily accommodated out of their base position, according to the restrictions listed on the RTW form, as completed by their treating physician or midwife.
  - 3.3 The provisions of the modified work program policy shall continue to apply, where applicable.
- 4. Application of Special Program:**
- When a firefighter is advised by her treating physician or midwife that she is pregnant and that she has a medical restriction(s) related to her pregnancy, the following shall apply:
- 4.1 The pregnant firefighter shall submit to the Medical Office, a RTW form, completed by her treating physician or midwife, listing any medically substantiated restrictions that are due to the pregnancy.
  - 4.2 Following the submission of a completed RTW form, the TFS Medical Office will assess to determine the temporary accommodation required. All assessments shall be conducted on a case by case basis.
  - 4.3 Should it be determined that the pregnant firefighter cannot continue to perform in her base position, she shall be temporarily accommodated by being assigned appropriate temporary modified duties, in accordance with the modified duty program as outlined in the Collective Agreement. She shall be paid at her regular rate of pay while at work performing such temporary modified duties.
  - 4.5 In assigning the pregnant firefighter to temporary modified duties, the following shall be taken into account:

- i. The medically-validated restrictions identified on the RTW form.
- ii. The employee's functional abilities and qualifications.
- iii. The employee's normal scheduled hours of work (i.e. 24 –hour shift).

**NB: Notwithstanding the above, any pregnant firefighters who has concerns about continuing to work in their base position should immediately contact the TFS Medical Office at 416-338-9310.**

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

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Attachment 1 – *Suggested Steps to Follow: Pregnant Firefighters within Operations Firefighters*

Attachment 2 – *FAQs: Pregnant Firefighters within Operations*

## **RELATED SOGS**

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N/A