



## USDA Forest Service Fire Medical Qualifications Program

[SM.FS.MQP\\_eMedical@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.MQP_eMedical@usda.gov)

eFAX 866-338-6630

### **INTERIM GUIDANCE for HSQ Coordinators**

#### **For Employees with a HSQ that indicates an OF-178 Exam is required**

The Novel Coronavirus's emergence in the United States has necessitated a re-evaluation of how medical qualification/clearance of fire personnel with fitness requirements should proceed. At this time, all USFS Work Capacity Test related OF-178 exams are to be temporarily suspended until 2021.

Effective immediately, any employee with responses on the eMedical Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ) that indicates that they must be cleared to the WCT by OF-178 Exam will temporarily not be required to complete a new OF-178 exam. Any employee who would normally complete an OF-178 exam will be directed by their unit HSQ Coordinator to provide the USFS Medical Qualifications Office with additional information in order to obtain a temporary medical clearance to the WCT.

These temporary medical clearances will be valid for thirteen months from date of clearance to the WCT. After that time, those employees that were newly hired or new to the FS exam/waiver process will be required to have a medical provider complete a medical exam to be fully cleared by the USFS Medical Officer for the 2021 WCT.

**Coordinators: It is essential to communicate to your employees that being honest on their 2020 HSQ form is of the utmost importance as the requirement to complete an exam is suspended for 2020. We will use the following guidance to mitigate individual medical conditions and medically clear employees to the WCT in 2020 as quickly as possible to minimize any delays in their clearance. Anyone found to be untruthful on their HSQ form to avoid a future exam will be subject to adverse actions.**

March, 2020

eMedical website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/safety/emedical>



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### **Interim 2020 Health Screening Process for the Work Capacity Test (WCT):**

- Employees and ADs will be cleared to the WCT through the normal eMedical process.
- If an employee/AD's response on the Health Screening Questionnaire (HSQ) form does not require an exam, they may be cleared to the WCT as normal.
- Employee/ADs with previous exam waivers issued by the USFS MQP Office will be cleared as normal. See the linked eMedical website documents here:

*Waiver Guidance for [HSQ Coordinators](#) and [Employees](#).*

- If an employee/AD's responses on the HSQ form DO require an exam, follow these steps:

### **HSQ Coordinators – Employee response on HSQ requires the OF-178 Exam:**

- 1) **After reviewing the HSQ that normally would trigger an exam, STOP.**
  - a. **Do not click the "OF-178" button** – leave the packet as-is.
  - b. If the OF-178 button has already been selected, please cancel the current packet and have the employee submit a new HSQ exactly as they did before.
  - c. Tell your employee that the exam itself is temporarily suspended, and they need to wait for an email from eMedical asking them for specific information required for WCT clearance.
  - d. The employee WILL be required to complete a full medical exam in the future. The MQP office will notify Coordinators with guidance when exams are allowed to resume.
- 2) **Coordinator to notify MQP eMedical Staff that your employee's HSQ would normally trigger an exam.**
  - a. eMail the MQP Office at: [SM.FS.MQP\\_emedical@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.MQP_emedical@usda.gov)

**Coordinators: please consolidate your email notification submissions by Forest as much as possible.**

- b. Include Employee's full Name and packet number.
- c. Tell your employee to look for an email from eMedical. They will be REQUIRED to respond to this request to obtain clearance to obtain clearance to the WCT.

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- 3) MQP Staff will request specific information from your employee through the eMedical Information Request process. The employee will be notified from an eMedical email address.
- 4) Once the employee submits their information and final review by our Medical Officer is completed, a TEMPORARY clearance to the WCT will come via email.
- 5) In 2021, these employees must complete a full medical exam through the normal eMedical process. Further direction will be sent to all Coordinators when the USFS Medical Officer approves the resumption of normal medical exam procedures.

### **Employees:**

- 1) If your responses on the HSQ indicate that you need an exam, your HSQ Coordinator will notify you that you'll need to supply additional information to MQP staff for WCT clearance. You will be contacted by an eMedical email address with a request for specific medical information. This info allows our Agency Medical Officer to ensure you are medically cleared to take the WCT. **You MUST respond to this request to obtain clearance to the WCT.**
- 2) When you receive the request for information by email, follow the email directions to log into eMedical and View the request and Respond to it.
- 3) If asked for a medication/dosage list, the employee may answer this question themselves.
- 4) If the employee is asked for a note with a specific info request to be provided by their treating medical provider:
  - a. This statement should be on clinic/medical provider letterhead (or similar) with the medical provider's name, credentials (MD, DO, PA, NP) and contact info.
  - b. The statement can be faxed (preferred method) to MQP Staff at:  
eFAX: **866-338-6630**
  - c. It can also be emailed as a document to [SM.FS.MQP\\_emedical@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.MQP_emedical@usda.gov)
  - d. If this info is ATTACHED to the packet, you MUST email and tell us you've done so (address above). We are NOT notified automatically when attachments are added.

Many clinics can provide this statement without an additional appointment as long as the employee has been seen previously within a reasonable amount of time.

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### **CLEARANCE:**

- Once cleared, the employee will be notified by an email from eMedical and they will appear on the eMedical “WCT Cleared to Test” list.
- At that time, the Forest IQCS Account Manager may enter a completed WCT competency in the employee’s IQCS training record. A copy of the employee’s eMedical Clearance email or eMedical Cleared to Test list (or locally certified equivalent) should be included in their hard copy master record as proof of the WCT competency.
- The WCT competency will be good for 13 months.
- Coordinators will be notified of how to proceed with medical exams for these employees once exams are allowed to resume.

March, 2020

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