GRANT COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 3

POLICY & PROCEDURE

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1. NUMBER: 5.1.09

2. SUBJECT: ***Pregnancy***

3. POLICY: To inform employees and their physicians of the risks associated with firefighting while pregnant.

4. SCOPE: This Policy and Procedure is applicable to all personnel of Grant County Fire District 3.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

   A. The Board of Commissioners and District Fire Chief are responsible to ensure the enforcement of policies and procedures in the district.

6. PROCEDURE:

   A. Routinely, firefighters may encounter hazards in the daily performance of their jobs that can also be considered a reproductive risk, such as but not limited to: exposures to excessive heat, toxic chemicals & smoke, infectious disease, diesel fumes, insufficient oxygen environments, and the lifting/carrying of heavy objects. Much has been documented suggesting the risks of by-products of fires, including carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, acrolein, formaldehyde, benzene, acetaldehyde and formic acids. Asymptomatic exposures to the mother don't guarantee zero risk to the developing fetus; therefore, the department desires to work with the employee and their personal physician to minimize unnecessary risks.

   B. Discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions constitutes unlawful sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. By law, the decision of work assignment status will be determined by the pregnant employee and her physician.

   C. Pregnancies in the fire service shall be treated no differently than any other medical condition that may inhibit a firefighter's ability to perform the job assignment. It is the policy of Grant County Fire District 3 to provide equal employment opportunities to all members, paid and volunteer; therefore, this policy establishes guidelines for the pregnant firefighter in the performance of assigned duties, while being mindful of personnel safety.

   D. Upon confirmation of pregnancy, the firefighter shall contact the District Fire Chief, or his designee, Human Resource Manager informing them of expected date of delivery, personal physician's name & contact information.

E. The firefighter shall submit a department's written form indicating, "fit for full duty" without restrictions signed by her physician. The District Fire Chief, or his designee, Human Resource Manager will ensure that the employee's physician has the appropriate job description for the member to assess the risk of any exposures.

F. The department will offer consultation with their Physician regarding the risks related to the assignment, when requested by the employee or her physician.

G. The critical nature of the emergency incident makes it crucial that each member is able to perform the full range of essential job functions for their position; however, safety will be the primary concern, and considerations may be made to further reduce the risks for the pregnant firefighter, when possible. This may include but not restricted to overhaul in complete PPE with SCBA, extended rehabilitation times for overheated environments, not working in a space with restricted ventilation or diesel fumes.

H. At any time upon request of the pregnant firefighter or their physician, the Fire District will immediately re-assign them to light duty, when available.

I. Sick leave needed for the pregnancy shall be the same as those for any other medical condition. Contact Human Resources for guidance in special circumstances.

J. Upon termination of the pregnancy or following childbirth, the firefighter shall submit a *Release to Duty* form signed by her physician releasing her to full firefighting duty with no restrictions to Human Resources. Training and Operations shall be notified to schedule any requirements that must be completed prior to returning to the employee's/volunteer's permanently assigned position.

K. Pregnant employee/volunteer firefighters have the option of requesting an assignment in Support Services or a temporary leave of absence in lieu of light duty.

Appendix 05_01_09