

MEDICAL INFORMATION SHEET

CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS for PFFs

What is the Situation?

Candidates who have been diagnosed with a chronic medical condition will be asked to provide additional information from their treating practitioner as part of the Fit for Emergency (FFE) medical assessment. It is strongly suggested that the candidate bring any relevant medical information along to the medical assessment and is no older than 6 months. This information will be used, along with the FFE medical assessment, to ensure that the employee is safe to perform the inherent requirements of the firefighting role. **An emergency role category of either an A or B will then be issued.**

Why are Things Changing?

Emergency workers perform functions that are physically and psychologically very demanding. Furthermore, emergency roles are a safety-critical job, meaning that the ill health of the emergency worker poses a significant risk to the health and safety of themselves and others. Because of this additional risk, strict medical guidelines are in place to enable the medical practitioner to assess you against. Safety-critical medical guidelines (particularly for Category A and B roles) are stricter than non-safety critical medical guidelines to protect the health and safety of yourself and others when responding to emergencies.

How is Severity Determined?

For those candidates with chronic medical conditions further information will be sought from the candidate's treating practitioner to determine the following factors:

- Diagnosis, including relevant investigation findings and reports
- Management plan
- Stability of the condition
- Prognosis
- Any restrictions or limitations required
- Suitability for the following activities:
 - Strenuous activity
 - Exposure to respiratory irritants such as inhaled dust, smoke and fumes
 - Extreme environmental conditions (heat and/or risk of dehydration)

If a candidate brings this information along to their FFE medical assessment it may allow the assessing doctor to make an informed decision regarding their classification on the same day, rather than requesting reports from their doctor/specialist at the time of assessment, subsequently delaying your final Fit for Emergency Classification.

Note: it may still be necessary for the assessing doctor to request further information from your treating doctor despite you bringing a report with you to the assessment. If this is required, the department will not reimburse any associated medical expenses.

Based on the above assessment, the Department's medical provider will then determine the most suitable emergency role classification and category.

What are Chronic Medical Conditions?

The term chronic is often applied to a medical condition when it lasts for a long period of time, generally more than 3 months. If you have been diagnosed with a medical condition and it has persisted (or likely to persist) for more than 3 months, further information from your treating practitioner will be sought.

Examples of chronic medical conditions include:

- Asthma
- Arthritis
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Hepatitis (B or C)
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- Kidney disease
- Depression or Anxiety

Key Message

- Chronic medical conditions are assessed on a case by case basis.
- Information, medical reports and candidate history will be considered.
- The candidate's treating practitioner is integral in providing valuable information to undertake the risk assessment.
- The Department's medical provider uses this information and any other relevant information to determine the appropriate fire role category (A or B) the candidate can perform.
- It is imperative that employees disclose all diagnosed medical conditions during their Fit for Emergency medical assessment and following the assessment if they have successfully completed the recruitment requirements. A management plan can then be developed if necessary, if there is not one already in place.

A Personal Medical Management Plan (PMMP) is recommended to be completed by the candidate's treating doctor to better inform how the candidate's line manager can support them in the event of a medical emergency.