

**Minerals Management Service  
Minerals Management Service Manual**

**Effective Date:** October 27, 2005

**Series:** Administrative

**Part 485:** Safety and Environmental Health Management Program

**Chapter 7:** Medical Standards Program

**Originating Office:** Chief of Staff, Administration and Budget

**1. Purpose.** This document establishes the policy and procedures for the Medical Standards Program (MSP) within the Minerals Management Service (MMS).

**2. Objectives.**

A. This Manual Chapter establishes that MMS has the authority to implement a medical qualification program by written policy to safeguard the health of employees whose work may subject them or others to significant health or safety risks.

B. The MMS is adopting an occupational safety and health program as a means to ensure consistency and reduce workmen compensation costs.

C. The MMS has an obligation to avoid, where possible, placing its employees in positions in which they may aggravate, accelerate, exacerbate, or permanently worsen existing and pre-existing medical conditions as a result of carrying out the functional requirements of their positions.

**3. Scope.**

A. Enrollment in the MSP will be based on a position's exposure to arduous physical exertion or hazardous conditions during visits to platforms, rigs, or other hazardous work areas. Satisfying the requirements of the MSP will be a condition of employment.

B. All MMS employees whose job requirements subject them to significant health or safety risks due to occupational/environmental exposure or demands during visits to offshore sites will be required to participate in the MSP.

C. Supervisors will review each employee's position description annually to determine initial exposure and validate continued exposure for inclusion in the MSP.

Release No. 297

Date: October 27, 2005

#### **4. Authority.**

A. Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities.

B. Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 339, Medical Qualifications Determinations, states that:

(1) Agencies may establish periodic examination or immunization programs by written policies or directives to safeguard the health of employees whose work may subject them or others to significant health or safety risks due to occupational or environmental exposure or demands.

(2) Agencies are authorized to establish physical requirements for individual positions without OPM approval when such requirements are considered essential for successful job performance. The requirements must be clearly supported by the actual duties of the position and documented in the position description.

(3) Agencies are required to waive a medical standard when there is evidence that an applicant or employee can perform the duties of the position without endangering the health and safety of the individual or others.

#### **5. References.**

A. U.S. Department of Interior, Office of Managing Risk and Public Safety, Occupational Medicine Program Handbook, July 2000.

B. Minerals Management Service Manual (MMSM) 485.7-H, Medical Standards Handbook, July 2005.

#### **6. Policy.**

A. It is the policy of the MMS to have a mandatory medical qualification and evaluation program designed to safeguard the health and safety of selected employees working in the offshore environment.

B. The MMS is committed to ensuring that a candidate for, or an incumbent of, an MMS position is not discriminated against because of a medical condition or disability that would otherwise not affect his or her ability to perform the duties of that position.

Release No. 297

Date: October 27, 2005

## **7. Responsibilities**

A. The Associate Director for Administration and Budget is responsible for:

- (1) Developing policy and monitoring the MSP throughout the MMS.
- (2) Overseeing records maintenance and monitoring/auditing the program.

B. The Associate Director for OMM is responsible for:

- (1) The oversight, funding, and implementation of the MSP.
- (2) Providing the Program Coordinator to oversee day-to-day implementation of the MSP.
- (3) Ensuring that the MSP is administered uniformly and fairly within the OMM.

C. The Regional Directors (RD)/Regional Manager (RM) are responsible for the following (RDs may delegate these responsibilities no lower than the Deputy RD; RM may not delegate these responsibilities any lower):

- (1) Ensuring that the MSP is implemented uniformly and fairly within their Regions.
- (2) Ensuring subordinate supervisors are aware of the MSP and are continuously emphasizing safety in the performance of duties.
- (3) Concurring with decisions of subordinate supervisors.
- (4) Making decisions concerning MSP incumbents and new hires where medical findings are reported and individuals have requested waivers and accommodations. Services of the Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) and Medical Review Officer (MRO) are available to assist in making decisions.
- (5) Ensuring annual certification of position descriptions and identification of MSP participants.

## **8. Procedures.**

A. The MMS Medical Standards were approved by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on May 8, 2000. Any modification of the standards will have to be formally approved by OPM.

B. The MSP requires the following:

- (1) Clearly reflecting the requirements of the job in individual position descriptions, taking into account frequency and duration of offshore visits, work volume, environment, physical exposures, and significant health and/or safety risks due to occupational/environmental exposure or demands.
- (2) Incorporating appropriate flexibility for evaluating an individual's ability to do the job safely and efficiently.
- (3) Facilitating reasonable waiver or accommodation processes for individuals who are unable to meet the specified medical requirements but are otherwise qualified to perform the job.

C. The MSP must include the following:

- (1) Guidance relative to the essential functions and work conditions of the Offshore Inspector position. Coupled with the implementation of a documented waiver and accommodation process, the guidance provides appropriate flexibility for evaluating an individual's ability to do the job safely and efficiently.
- (2) Reasonable accommodation, as appropriate, for the individuals who are unable to meet the specified medical standards.
- (3) Requirements by which the MSP will be implemented, maintained, and monitored.

D. Additional responsibilities and procedures to implement the MSP are contained in MMSM 485.7-H, the accompanying Handbook.