
Temporary Modified-Duty Assignments

1032.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes procedures for providing temporary modified-duty assignments. This policy is not intended to affect the rights or benefits of employees under federal or state law, District rules. For example, nothing in this policy affects the obligation of the District to engage in a good faith, interactive process to consider reasonable accommodations for any employee with a temporary or permanent disability that is protected under federal or state law.

1032.2 POLICY

Subject to operational considerations, the Blue Ridge Fire District may identify temporary modified-duty assignments for employees who have an injury or medical condition resulting in temporary work limitations or restrictions. A temporary assignment allows the employee to work, while providing the District with a productive employee during the temporary period.

1032.3 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Priority consideration for temporary modified-duty assignments will be given to employees with work-related injuries or illnesses that are temporary in nature. Employees having disabilities covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) shall be treated equally, without regard to any preference for a work-related injury.

No position in the Blue Ridge Fire District shall be created or maintained as a temporary modified-duty assignment.

Temporary modified-duty assignments are a management prerogative and not an employee right. The availability of temporary modified-duty assignments will be determined on a case-by-case basis, consistent with the operational needs of the District. Temporary modified-duty assignments are subject to continuous reassessment, with consideration given to operational needs and the employee's ability to perform in a modified-duty assignment.

Temporary modified-duty assignments shall generally not exceed a cumulative total of 1,040 hours in any one-year period.

1032.4 PROCEDURE

Employees may request a temporary modified-duty assignment for short-term injuries or illnesses.

Employees seeking a temporary modified-duty assignment should submit a written request to their Fire Chief or the authorized designee. The request should, as applicable, include a certification from the treating medical professional containing:

- (a) An assessment of the nature and probable duration of the illness or injury.
- (b) The prognosis for recovery.
- (c) The nature and scope of limitations and/or work restrictions.

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- (d) A statement regarding any required workplace accommodations, mobility aids or medical devices.
- (e) A statement that the employee can safely perform the duties of the temporary modified-duty assignment.

The Fire Chief will make a recommendation regarding temporary modified-duty assignments that may be available based on the needs of the District and the limitations of the employee. The Fire Chief or the authorized designee shall confer with the District's attorney as appropriate.

1032.5 ACCOUNTABILITY

Written notification of assignments, work schedules and any restrictions should be provided to employees assigned to temporary modified-duty assignments and their supervisors. Those assignments and schedules may be adjusted to accommodate district operations and the employee's medical appointments, as mutually agreed upon with the Fire Chief.

1032.5.1 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of employees assigned to temporary modified duty shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Communicating and coordinating any required medical and physical therapy appointments in advance with their supervisors.
- (b) Promptly notifying their supervisors of any change in restrictions or limitations after each appointment with their treating medical professionals.
- (c) Communicating a status update to their supervisors no less than once every 30 days while assigned to temporary modified duty.
- (d) Submitting a written status report to the Fire Chief that contains a status update and anticipated date of return to full duty when a temporary modified-duty assignment extends beyond 60 days.

1032.5.2 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The employee's immediate supervisor shall monitor and manage the work schedule of an employee assigned to temporary modified duty.

The responsibilities of supervisors shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Periodically apprising the Fire Chief of the status and performance of employees assigned to temporary modified duty.
- (b) Notifying the Fire Chief and ensuring that the required documentation facilitating a return to full duty is received from the employee.
- (c) Ensuring that employees returning to full duty have completed any required training and certification.

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1032.6 MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

Prior to returning to full-duty status, employees shall be required to provide certification from their treating medical professionals stating that they are medically cleared to perform the essential functions of their jobs without restrictions or limitations.

The District may require a fitness-for-duty examination prior to returning an employee to full-duty status.

1032.7 PREGNANCY

If an employee is temporarily unable to perform regular duties due to a pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition, the employee will be treated the same as any other temporarily disabled employee (42 USC § 2000e(k)).

A pregnant employee shall not be involuntarily transferred to a temporary modified-duty assignment.

1032.7.1 NOTIFICATION

Pregnant employees should notify their immediate supervisors as soon as practicable and provide a statement from their medical providers identifying any pregnancy-related job restrictions or limitations. If at any point during the pregnancy it becomes necessary for the employee to take a leave of absence, such leave shall be granted in accordance with the District's personnel rules and regulations regarding family and medical care leave.

1032.8 PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES

Probationary employees who are assigned to a temporary modified-duty assignment shall have their probation extended by a period of time equal to their assignment to temporary modified duty.

1032.9 MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

Employees assigned to temporary modified duty shall maintain all certification, training and qualifications appropriate to both their regular and temporary duties, provided that the certification, training or qualifications are not in conflict with any medical limitations or restrictions. Employees who are assigned to temporary modified duty shall inform their supervisors of any inability to maintain any certification, training or qualifications.