

TITLE OPERATIONS MANUAL	STANDARD INSTRUCTION 14		DEPARTMENT FIRE-RESCUE
SUBJECT: PREGNANCY AND LACTATION	SECTION 07	PAGE 1 of 4	EFFECTIVE DATE January 3, 2024

I. PURPOSE

To provide information and guidelines for personnel who are pregnant or lactating.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all sworn San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) personnel.

III. AUTHORITY

The Fire Chief authorizes this policy.

IV. POLICY

A. Temporary Assignments

1. For health and safety reasons, pregnant firefighters and lifeguards are strongly encouraged to let their supervisors know when they become pregnant.
2. Pregnant active-duty firefighters and lifeguards who are physically capable of performing their job duties may, at their discretion, remain in their active-duty positions.
3. Pregnant firefighters and lifeguards may request a temporary transfer to a less strenuous or less hazardous work assignment within the Department by submitting a request to their supervisor supported by medical documentation from their health care provider. The request must specify any work restrictions and the time frame for the temporary assignment. The temporary assignment is not eligible for administrative assignment pay.
4. The Department will make every effort to accommodate pregnant firefighters and lifeguards with temporary positions that do not result in a loss of specialty pay if such positions are available. The Department is not required to create a position if one is unavailable.
5. While on temporary assignment, pregnant firefighters and lifeguards must maintain all certifications and continue any required training that is not unsafe for personnel, as determined by the personnel's health care provider, including In-Service Training (IST), emergency medical services (EMS) certification, and didactic training. If certain training is deemed unsafe for the pregnant firefighter or lifeguard, the firefighter or lifeguard will be excused from the requirement until they return to active duty but must complete all required training within one year, from birth. The Department may require personnel to provide supporting medical documentation.

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6. Pregnant firefighters and lifeguards working in a temporary less strenuous or less hazardous position may be excused from wearing the required department uniform if approved by their supervisor.
7. Personnel may request a modified duty assignment for post-partum recovery and lactation via Employee Services.

B. Fitness for Duty

- i. Firefighter: An Appointing Authority may require a pregnant active-duty firefighter to be evaluated by a health care provider to determine the personnel's ability to continue to work in an active-duty capacity if the supervisor has a reasonable belief based on objective evidence that the personnel may not be able to perform the essential job duties of their position, e.g., as outlined by NFPA 1582, and/or may not be able to safely and effectively wear required safety equipment, due to the personnel's medical condition.
- ii. Lifeguard: An Appointing Authority may require a pregnant active-duty lifeguard to be evaluated by a health care provider to determine the personnel's ability to continue to work in an active-duty capacity if the supervisor has a reasonable belief based on objective evidence that the personnel may not be able to perform the essential job duties of their position, e.g., as outlined by the Lifeguard Division performance plan for their classification, and/or may not be able to safely and effectively wear required safety equipment, due to the personnel's medical condition.

C. Leave During and After Pregnancy

1. Firefighters and lifeguards who have been advised by their healthcare provider that they are unable to work or safely perform their job duties due to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition are eligible for protected leave. More information about available protected leave is posted on the Human Resources Department's CityNet webpage: <https://citynet.sandiego.gov/hr/documents#leaves>.

D. Return-to-Full-Duty Requirements

1. All sworn fire personnel returning from leave lasting longer than 60 days are required to successfully complete a Physical Abilities Test and a Return to Duty Checklist prior to resuming their job duties.

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2. All lifeguard personnel must meet minimum position requirements upon return. If a biannual swim test was not completed in October or May due to leave, all lifeguard personnel must complete a 500-meter swim test in under 10 minutes, as outlined in Lifeguard Services Division policy 1.3 Training, on their first full duty shift.

E. Lactation Accommodation

1. Personnel who wish to express breast milk during their work shift should notify their supervisor of their request for lactation accommodation. The Department will comply with the City's current [Lactation Accommodation Policy](#). No personnel will be subject to discrimination or retaliation for breastfeeding, expressing breast milk, for any medical condition related to breastfeeding or lactation, or for requesting lactation accommodation.
2. Upon request, the Department will provide firefighters and lifeguards with a reasonable amount of down time and a safe and private place to express breast milk, for the personnel's infant child or when medically advised, during the personnel's work shift, each time the personnel has need to express milk.
 - a. Reasonable Lactation Time
 - i. If possible, lactation times for expressing breast milk should run concurrently with any down time already provided to the personnel.
 - ii. Personnel wishing to express breast milk should work with their supervisors to determine appropriate down times that will cause the least disruption to the operations of the Department.
 - iii. There may be circumstances when it is not operationally feasible for the Department to provide personnel with downtime to express breast milk (e.g., emergency dispatch incidents). The Department will work with personnel to determine appropriate reasonable accommodations.
 - b. Location
 - i. If a firefighter or lifeguard is assigned a private dorm room, they may use the space for expressing breast milk. If no private dorm room is assigned, the Department will provide a safe, private area, shielded from view and free from intrusion, that is not a bathroom, for the personnel to express breast milk.

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- ii. Personnel may bring in a personal cooler to transport expressed breast milk and may request a mini refrigerator to keep milk at the required healthy temperature in a private area or room. The mini refrigerator must be labeled “breast milk storage” and breast milk removed each day at the end of the personnel’s shift.