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OPERATIONS MANUAL

STANDARD INSTRUCTION 10 INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM

SECTION 14-C REHABILITATION

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SUBJECT: INJURY AND ILLNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM REHABILITATION	SECTION 14-C	PAGE 2 of 14	EFFECTIVE DATE 13 August 2021

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the implementation and function of the rehabilitation of personnel and in the case of an injury/illness.

II. SCOPE

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

III. AUTHORITY

The fire chief authorizes the information within this policy.

IV. POLICY FOR FIRE DIVISION

Rehabilitation ('rehab') is a means to ensure the physical and mental readiness of personnel operating at the scene of an emergency or training exercise. This policy offers requirements for company officers and chief officers to ensure the well-being of the personnel under their command. Rehabilitation services will be established to provide members with the means to: rest, rehydrate, check routine medical vital signs checks, and to handle medical emergencies.

A. Rehabilitation Guidelines

1. Implementation for Firefighters

a. The Incident Commander (IC) is responsible for the implementation of rehabilitation operations. Rehabilitation will be considered early in an incident. The hotter the weather and the longer personnel are exposed to extreme conditions; the earlier rehabilitation will be set up. IC shall request rehabilitation services through the Metro Emergency Command and Data Center (ECDC) for the following incident types:

- 1) Multiple alarm incidents
- 2) Hazardous materials incidents requiring level 'A' entry and extended level 'B' entry
- 3) Any departmental activity, which requires prolonged strenuous physical exertion (i.e. major training exercises)
- 4) Any time the outdoor temperature equals or is over 80 degrees Fahrenheit
- 5) First alarm incidents
 - a) The 'rehab' functions may be managed by the first alarm assignment at the discretion of the IC.
 - b) The IC may request 'rehab' resources such as duty medical support (DMS), Logistics, mobile canteen, and an ALS / BLS transport unit if needed.

b. Supplies for the rehabilitation of personnel are available from Logistics and DMS, or as determined by the IC.

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- c. During periods of high heat, greater than or equal to 95 degrees, 'rehab' (DMS, Logistics, and mobile canteen) will automatically be dispatched and established at the incident.
- d. During all weather conditions, the IC will continuously evaluate the situation including the weather conditions, length of assignment, and the number of personnel at scene (or that is anticipated) and advise ECDC and Logistics who will make the necessary adjustments to the amount of equipment and supplies that are brought to scene.
- e. The IC or company officer can make the request for any of the following (examples only, not limited to):
 - 1) Enough chairs to ensure rotation under the shade.
 - 2) Shade covering(s) where they do not have access to vehicles with air conditioning (where personnel can be rotated through for cooling purposes).
 - a) Enough to accommodate all employees who are on break at any point in time.
 - b) The interior of a vehicle may not be used to provide shade unless the vehicle is air-conditioned, and the air conditioner is on.
 - c) In situations where it is not safe or feasible to provide access to shade (e.g. high winds), the employee will find shelter.
 - d) Shade shall be present when the temperature exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit. When the outdoor temperature in the work area exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit, the employer will have and maintain one or more areas with shade while employees are present that are either open to the air or provided with ventilation or cooling.
 - e) The amount of shade present shall be at least enough to accommodate the number of employees on recovery or rest periods, so that they can sit in a normal posture fully in the shade without having to be in physical contact with each other.
 - f) The shade shall be located as close as practicable to the areas where employees are working.
 - g) Subject to the same specifications, the amount of shade present during meal periods shall be at least enough to accommodate the number of employees on the meal period who remain onsite.
 - h) Shade shall be available when the temperature does not exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - i) When the outdoor temperature in the work area does not exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit employers shall either provide shade or provide timely access to shade upon an employee's request.

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- 3) Personnel cooling devices (wet towels, ice, fans, etc.)
- 4) Fresh, pure and cool water. The water will be suitably cool and each employee will have their own water container to carry with them. Water supply at the Logistics Center will be checked at a minimum of every hour and replenished if supply is below 50% of what the IC determines to be needed to safely complete the work assignment.
 - a) All personnel are encouraged to drink water frequently.
- 5) When the temperature equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit, or during a heat wave (a prolonged period of abnormally hot weather), a reminder is required to employees of their right to take a cool-down rest when necessary.
- 6) The IC will monitor the temperature of the emergency environment and adjust location of the shade, the break schedule of the employees, amount of water needed, etc.

1. Emergency Command and Data Center

- a. When rehabilitation resources are requested, ECDC shall notify the following by page:
 - 1) Duty Medical Support
 - 2) Mobile Canteen
 - 3) Logistics
 - 4) Health and Safety
- b. A standby ALS/BLS transport fire or lifeguard unit shall be requested to assist with 'rehab' operations.
- c. Additional standby ALS/BLS transport ambulances or personnel may be requested during large scale operations. This is in addition to the ambulance assigned to an incident as part of the initial dispatch.

B. Rehabilitation Procedures

It is important for all personnel to understand the critical importance of both gross and personal decontamination as a component of post-fire rehabilitation.

1. Personnel Responsibility

- a. It is the responsibility of all support personnel and each company officer to report with their entire crew to 'rehab' when directed by the IC, Operations, Division/Group supervisor or direct supervisor.
- b. When it is not possible for the entire crew/unit or assigned to report to 'rehab' simultaneously, the supervisor shall ensure that those crew members not reporting initially are evaluated in 'rehab' prior to reassignment or before leaving the scene.
- c. 'Rehab' should be considered a 'clean zone'. Every effort should be made to minimize toxins in this area.

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- 1) Crews should engage in both gross and personal decontamination prior to entering 'rehab'.
- 2) Hands and face should be vigorously cleaned with personal decontamination wipes prior to eating or drinking at the scene of a fire.
- 3) If wearing PPE, dress down based on environmental conditions to reduce heat stress.
- d. Upon arriving at 'rehab' personnel shall comply with the following procedure:
 - 1) The supervisor or designee shall report to the rehab officer and provide the unit number and names of crew.
 - 2) The rehab officer will indicate the time of arrival of the crew at 'rehab'.
 - 3) Fresh, pure and cool water, electrolytes solution and/or other suitable liquids will be provided for hydration.
 - 4) Implement cooling measures, as needed.
 - 5) Cooling towels will be supplied, as needed.
 - a) Towels should be placed over the head or around the neck for optimal cooling
 - b) Soiled towels should be placed in a separate used bucket
 - c) Towels shall be cleaned before the next use
- e. Prior to medical screening, personnel should not do any of the following because they may alter the vital signs:
 - 1) Drink caffeinated beverages
 - 2) Smoke or chew tobacco products
 - 3) Eat large amounts of food
- f. Personnel shall report any medical complaints/injuries to the rehab officer upon arriving at 'rehab'.
2. Once released, the rehab officer shall contact the staging officer, operations or IC updating their status.
 - a. If personnel are reassigned to prolonged, physically strenuous activities, they shall return to 'rehab' prior to leaving the scene.
 - b. If the rehab officer determines that personnel should not return to duty at that time, the supervisor and IC shall be notified.
 - c. The IC shall notify ECDC so that proper notifications can be made.
 - d. Personnel removed from duty shall obtain appropriate medical clearance before returning to duty.

C. Vital Sign Evaluation Procedures

1. Vital signs shall be taken on all personnel rotating through 'rehab', regardless of incident assignment or rank.

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- a. Personnel are to rest and re-hydrate 15 minutes before medical screening
- b. If any vital signs are determined to be outside of the established parameters, additional rest and hydration will be instituted.
- c. After a minimum of 15 additional minutes, personnel will be re-evaluated.
 - 1) If the vital signs are still outside of the guidelines, an additional 15 minutes of rehabilitation will be provided.
 - 2) After a third and final evaluation, a determination of firefighter disposition will be established.

D. Vital Sign Parameters

1. Any of the following symptoms and vital signs requires additional time and/or assessment in 'rehab':
 - 1) Light-headedness
 - 2) Headache
 - 3) Dizziness
 - 4) Confusion
 - 5) Altered level of consciousness
 - 6) Chest pain
 - 7) Abdominal pain
2. Vital Signs that require or suggest a need for further medical evaluation include:
 - a. Symptomatic bradycardia
 - b. Irregular heartbeat
 - c. Pulse > 100 / minute
Note: All pulse acquisitions shall be palpated manually
 - d. Respirations > 30 / minute
 - e. Blood Pressure:
 - 1) Systolic > 160 or < 100 or diastolic >100
 - f. Carbon Monoxide readings (SpCO blood monitors) > 15%
 - g. Temperature (oral or tympanic) > 101 F
3. These assessment parameters are only indicators which may or may not indicate that a medical problem exists.
4. Parameters are established to aid rehabilitation evaluators and to increase the level of protection for personnel.
5. Medical decisions are made on a case-by-case basis with the medical welfare of the individual as the priority.

E. Personnel with a Chief Complaint or Vital Signs Outside of Established Parameters

1. If personnel have a chief complaint, they become a "patient". The following should occur:

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- a. Medical management of the patient shall be under the direction of the rehab officer until the responsibility is transferred to appropriate personnel.
 - 1) An appropriate level transport unit will be requested by the IC if ambulance transport is most appropriate.
 - 2) The patient will be transported to the most appropriate medical facility.
 - 3) An appropriate facility may include hospital, trauma center, burn center; the city's contracted industrial health facility or the employee's "physician of record".
- b. The rehab officer or designee shall contact a base hospital to receive direction if a medical decision is required. This direction may include:
 - 1) Consultation to allow personnel to return to active duty if they have a pre-existing benign condition and they do not request medical attention
 - 2) Medical guidance if the patient has an obscure chief complaint or vital signs are not consistent with the established parameters
 - 3) County of San Diego EMT-P Base Hospital Contact Policy compliance
- c. Medical decisions are on a case-by-case basis with the Fire-Rescue personnel's welfare in mind. The IC shall also be informed of consultations with a Base Hospital.
- d. Once determined medically "unfit for duty" by the Medical Officer and IC, clearance from a city-contracted industrial health physician or the employee's physician of record must be received prior to the SDFD personnel/patient returning to duty.

F. Rehabilitation Officer

1. The rehabilitation officer (aka 'rehab officer'), normally filled by an EMS staff paramedic (duty medical support), shall respond when requested.
 - a. Upon arrival at scene, the rehab officer reports to the incident command post (ICP) and at the direction of the IC shall establish 'rehab' and assume the role of rehab officer.
 - b. If a medical branch/division is established a second duty medical support person should be requested.
2. The rehab officer responsibilities include:
 - a. Request medically trained personnel, equipment, and supplies to rehabilitate on-scene fire and rescue personnel.
 - b. Select a suitable site: safely away from the scene, free of exhaust, smoky conditions and large enough to accommodate personnel and equipment.

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- 1) Medical screening locations should be far enough away from the 'rehab' location to offer fire personnel privacy and confidentiality.
 - 2) Officers shall ensure that their personnel are orderly and abide by these privacy guidelines.
 - 3) Rehab officers can utilize a gas detector to monitor the air quality in the 'rehab' area.
- c. Establish the location for mobile canteen or other agencies assisting with 'rehab' operations.
- d. Obtain a list of all companies and support personnel at scene and advise the IC of the condition of the emergency personnel. All companies and support personnel shall be assessed at 'rehab' after labor intensive work, prior to being reassigned or released from the scene.
- e. Record of Fire-Rescue personnel assignment information and vital signs to include:
- 1) Time in and out of 'rehab'
 - 2) Company/Unit Number
 - 3) Name
 - 4) Pulse
 - 5) Respirations
 - 6) Blood Pressure
 - 7) Temperature (as required)
 - 8) SpCO readings (blood carbon monoxide)
 - 9) Signs or symptoms which determine a need for further medical evaluation
 - 10) Injuries or medical complaints and patient disposition
- f. Generate a post-incident 'rehab' report which includes:
- 1) Date and location of the Incident
 - 2) The name of the IC
 - 3) A complete list of all individuals who were assessed as part of 'rehab' operations and their vital signs
 - a) Copies of this report shall be sent to the Human Resources Division and other agencies whose personnel participated in 'rehab' operations
- g. Provide medical equipment (ALS and BLS) and adjunct supplies to conduct rehabilitation functions.
- h. Provide adequate personal decontamination supplies/wipes in 'rehab' area and instruct personnel to clean hands and face prior to eating and/or drinking to reduce exposure to carcinogens.
- i. Coordinate and supervise the assessment of fire and rescue personnel in 'rehab'.

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- j. Assume responsibility for medical management of personnel with medical complaints and/or with vital signs not within established vital sign parameters. This includes the determination of referral for further medical evaluation at the appropriate medical facility.
- k. Coordinate the treatment, hydration, and transport of personnel.

G. Incident Reporting Requirements

- 1. Any injury received during the incident that requires medical treatment needs to have the following actions taken (See Blue Envelope):
 - a. Call into the call center at 1-800-427-7580 to report the injury
 - b. Page Health and Safety via ECDC
 - c. Call Cal/OSHA if the injury meets the following criteria:
 - 1) Death
 - 2) Amputation
 - 3) Permanent disfigurement
 - 4) Loss of an eye
 - 5) Hospitalization other than for medical observation or diagnostic testing
 - d. Complete RM-1642 (Workers' Compensation Claim)
 - e. Complete the Supervisors Injury/Illness Report

V. POLICY FOR LIFEGUARD DIVISION

Rehabilitation is a means to ensure the physical and mental readiness of personnel operating in the field or in a training exercise. This policy offers guidelines to company officers and chief officers to ensure the well-being of the personnel under their command. Rehabilitation services will be established to provide members with the means to work safely, rest, rehydrate, and to handle medical emergencies.

A. Implementation for Lifeguards

- 1. Implementation

The Lifeguard Chief, Incident Commander (IC), or duty Lieutenant/designee is responsible for the implementation of rehabilitation operations. 'Rehab' will be considered early in the workday or incident. The hotter the weather and the longer personnel are exposed to extreme conditions; the earlier rehabilitation will be set up. 'Rehab' will be established during:

 - a. Any departmental activity, which requires prolonged strenuous physical exertion (i.e. major training exercises).
 - b. Any time the outdoor temperature equals or is over 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 2. Evaluation

The Lifeguard Chief and/or designee will evaluate the situation including the weather conditions, length of assignment, etc. and provide the appropriate items at the lifeguard stations deemed as remote tower locations.

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3. 'Rehab' Mandatory Water Provisions
 - a. All lifeguards are encouraged to drink water frequently.
 - b. All main lifeguard stations are permanent buildings with unlimited fresh, pure and cool running water and air conditioning. See remote lifeguard locations list at the conclusion of this policy for information on assessing shade; fresh, pure and cool water; fresh, pure and cool water replenishment; breaks; and weather monitoring.
 - c. In all cases at remote locations:
 - 1) The water will be fresh, pure and suitably cool and each employee will have their own water container to carry with them. Replenishment water will be provided at least one quart per hour.
 - 2) Employees will have large coolers and access to ice that should be either in their vehicle or under the shade at their location.
 - 3) There are vehicles at all locations that can also be used in cases of high winds and to provide cooling and shade to employees.
 - 4) All employees will be equipped with handheld radios by which to contact a supervisor or emergency medical service when necessary.
 - 5) Patrol vehicles will drive by each remote location at least every half hour. During this time, they will check for signs and symptoms of heat illness. If any are exhibited, the employee will be monitored, not left alone, and offered onsite first aid or provided emergency medical services in accordance with the department emergency procedures. Supervisor will contact emergency medical services and provide clear instructions to the site of the emergency.
 - 6) The chief, captains, and lieutenants will carry bottled water in their vehicles. Bottles will be taken from the main tower where they are kept cool. Vehicles have air conditioners to also be used in keeping the water bottles cool.
4. Procedures for Monitoring the Weather
 - a. During the daylight hours, lifeguards will check the weather in their vehicles. Lifeguard vehicles are equipped with external thermometers which are accessible to the vehicle operators in all areas of the lifeguard service.
 - b. Because the Lifeguard Communications Center is also a National Weather Service reporting site and takes wind, humidity, and temperature readings on Mission Bay every three (3) hours throughout daylight hours, this information is transmitted via department radio.
5. Procedures for Handling High Heat Conditions.

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- a. When the temperature equals or exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit, or during a heat wave (prolonged period of abnormally hot weather), a pre-shift meeting will be conducted as a reminder to employees of their right to take a cool-down rest (as described below) when necessary and to drink plenty of water.
 - 1) Employees shall be allowed and encouraged to take a preventative cool-down rest in the shade when they feel the need to do so to protect themselves from overheating.
 - 2) Such access to shade shall be permitted at all times.
 - 3) An individual employee who takes a preventative cool-down rest (A) shall be monitored and asked if he or she is experiencing symptoms of heat illness; (B) shall be encouraged to remain in the shade; and (C) shall not be ordered back to work until any signs or symptoms of heat illness have abated, but in no event less than 5 minutes in addition to the time needed to access the shade.
 - 4) If an employee exhibits signs or reports symptoms of heat illness while taking a preventative cool-down rest or during a preventative cool-down rest period, the employer shall provide appropriate first aid or emergency response.
 - b. The Chief will monitor the temperature of the environment and adjust/increase for the remote locations the:
 - 1) Break schedule of the employees
 - 2) Amount of fresh, pure, and cool water and ice provided
 - 3) Frequency of the contact with the remote locations by the supervisor either with the radio or by a personal visit
6. Procedures for Emergency Responses.
- a. Note: All Lifeguards have a basic qualification of first aid and all permanent personnel are certified to the level of Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).
 - b. When an employee reports to their supervisor any signs or symptoms of possible heat illness, a minimum of one of the lifeguard trained EMTs will respond to the location and check for the following:
 - 1) Light-headedness
 - 2) Headache
 - 3) Dizziness
 - 4) Confusion
 - 5) Altered level of consciousness
 - 6) Staggering
 - 7) Vomiting
 - 8) Irrational Behavior
 - 9) Convulsions
 - 10) Red and hot face

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- c. The EMT Lifeguard
- 1) Upon arrival at scene, the EMT Lifeguard shall assume the role of rehab officer.
 - 2) The rehab officer responsibilities include:
 - a) Request medically trained personnel, equipment, and supplies to rehabilitate the lifeguard.
 - b) Select a suitable site: safely away from the scene to accommodate personnel and equipment.
 - c) Medical screening locations should be far enough away from the ‘rehab’ location to offer personnel privacy and confidentiality.
 - d) Record of personnel assignment information and vital signs to include:
 - i. Time in and out of ‘rehab’
 - ii. Name
 - iii. Pulse
 - iv. Respirations
 - v. Blood Pressure
- d. Personnel with a Chief Complaint or Vital Signs Outside of Established Parameters
- 1) If personnel have a chief complaint, they become a “patient”. The following should occur:
 - a) Medical management of the patient shall be under the direction of the rehab officer until the responsibility is transferred to appropriate personnel.
 - b) An appropriate level transport unit will be requested by the rehab officer if ambulance transport is most appropriate.
 - c) The patient will be transported to the most appropriate medical facility.
 - d) An appropriate facility may include hospital, trauma center, burn center; the city’s contracted industrial health facility or the employee’s “physician of record”.
 - e) The rehab officer or designee shall contact a base hospital to receive direction if a medical decision is required. This direction may include:
 - i. Consultation to allow personnel to return to active duty if they have a pre-existing benign condition and they do not request medical attention.
 - ii. Medical guidance if the patient has an obscure chief complaint or vital signs are not consistent with the established parameters

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- iii. County of San Diego EMT-P Base Hospital Contact Policy compliance
 - f) Medical decisions are on a case-by-case basis with the Fire-Rescue personnel's welfare in mind. The rehab officer shall also be informed of consultations with a Base Hospital.
 - g) Once determined medically "unfit for duty" by the rehab officer, clearance from a city-contracted industrial health physician or the employee's physician of record must be received prior to the SDFD personnel/patient returning to duty.
 - e. Generate a post-incident 'rehab' report which includes:
 - 1) Date and location of the Incident
 - 2) Actions taken by the rehab officer
 - 3) Results of actions taken by the rehab officer
 - 4) Copies of this report shall be sent to the Human Resources Division and other agencies whose personnel participated in 'rehab' operations
7. Incident Reporting Requirements
- a. Any injury received during the incident that requires medical treatment needs to have the following actions taken (See Blue Envelope):
 - 1) Call into the Workers' Compensation call center at 1-800-427-7580 to report the injury
 - 2) Page Health and Safety via ECDC
 - 3) Call Cal/OSHA if the injury meets the following criteria:
 - a) Death
 - b) Amputation
 - c) Permanent disfigurement
 - d) Loss of an eye
 - e) Hospitalization other than for medical observation or diagnostic testing
 - 4) Complete RM-1642 (Workers' Compensation Claim)
 - 5) Complete the Supervisors Injury/Illness Report
8. Remote Locations for San Diego Lifeguard Stations and Requirements for Heat Illness Prevention (Shade, Water, Water Replenishment and Weather Monitoring).

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REMOTE STATION	SHADE	INITIAL WATER, ICE AND ELECTROLYTES	WATER (REPLENISHMENT)	WEATHER	BREAKS
SANTA CRUZ	POP UP TENT AND UMBRELLAS	SUPPLIED AT THE MAIN TOWER	AVAILABLE FROM THE MAIN TOWER VIA THE VEHICLE ASSIGNED TO THE STATION	VEHICLE THERMOMETER AND CLIMATE CONTROL REPORTS VIA RADIO	All personnel are provided a one-hour lunch break and frequent rest breaks as needed.
WINDANSEA	UMBRELLAS	AVAILABLE AT NORTHERN GARAGE	AVAILABLE FROM CASA VIA RADIO REQUEST	VEHICLE THERMOMETER AND CLIMATE CONTROL REPORTS VIA RADIO	All personnel are provided a one-hour lunch break and frequent rest breaks as needed.
MARINE ST.	UMBRELLAS INSIDE STATION CONTAINER	AVAILABLE AT NORTHERN GARAGE	AVAILABLE FROM CASA VIA RADIO REQUEST	VEHICLE THERMOMETER AND CLIMATE CONTROL REPORTS VIA RADIO	All personnel are provided a one-hour lunch break and frequent rest breaks as needed.
BLACKS	POP UP TENT AND UMBRELLAS	AVAILABLE AT LJ SHORES TOWER	AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY FROM LJS VIA SUPERVISOR. SUPPLY SHOULD BE CARRIED BY THE VEHICLE.	VEHICLE THERMOMETER AND CLIMATE CONTROL REPORTS VIA RADIO	All personnel are provided a one-hour lunch break and frequent rest breaks as needed.