SUBJECT: FIREFIGHTER FITNESS STANDARD (Program, Testing & Determination of Fitness Level)

1 Purpose
1.1 Establish criteria to determine the physical capabilities of firefighters who may be engaged in interior structural firefighting.
1.2 Outline the process in which to test firefighters for fitness levels.
1.3 Set the standard for determining the minimum fitness level for an interior structural firefighter.
1.4 Increase productivity, job performance, longevity; maintain confidence in abilities and to attempt to reduce disabilities/injuries within the firefighting ranks.

2 Responsibility
2.1 The Chief of the department shall assure that firefighters who are expected to perform interior structural firefighting are physically capable of performing duties, which may be assigned to them during emergencies.
2.2 Supervisors shall test assigned employees according to this policy.
2.3 Firefighters who fail a test, must schedule a retest (to take place within the prescribed period) with Training.
2.4 Each firefighter shall strive to maintain or exceed the established standard as contained in this policy.
2.5 The Health and Safety Officer shall maintain the confidential fitness records of each firefighter.
2.6 All firefighters must become familiar with this policy.
2.7 Firefighters must immediately report (when diagnosed) physical limitations (as defined in 5.2) to their supervisor.

3 Reference
3.1 Cite your applicable State Statute on Firefighter Fitness

4 Policy
4.1 Fire Department encourages all employees to maintain the highest degree of cardiovascular and muscular physical fitness and shall provide the mechanism for an annual fitness capability test for suppression personnel.
5 Procedures/Guidelines

5.1 __________________ Fire Department considers all (volunteer and career) Firefighters (FF), Company Officers (CO), and Battalion Chiefs (BC) and Administrative Chief’s as interior structural firefighters and therefore subject to the provisions of this policy.

5.1.1 Exception: The Chief may designate “non-interior” structural firefighters exempt from this policy in accordance with (Cite your State Statute).

5.1.2 When such designation occurs, the Chief shall identify the position and the functions that may be performed at the emergency scene.

5.1.3 In no case, shall a “non-interior” structural firefighter be allowed to work within an IDLH environment.

5.2 _______________ Fire Department does not permit employees with known physical limitations which are reasonably identifiable or diagnosed by a physician, such as cardiovascular limitations, Diabetes treated with Insulin, seizure disorders treated with medications (i.e. Dilantin) emphysema, or uncontrolled asthma to participate in structural firefighting emergency activities, unless the employee has been released by a physician to participate in such activities.

5.3 Members who do interior structural firefighting must be SCBA qualified and must be evaluated for respirator use following State and Federal guidelines outlining Respiratory Standards.

5.3.1 OSHA Respirator Standard (1910.134),

5.3.2 NFPA 1500, Fire Department Occupational Health and Safety,

5.3.3 NFPA 1404, Fire Department SCBA Program

5.3.4 CITE ADDITIONAL APPLICABLE STATE STANDARDS

5.4 _______________ Fire Department shall require additional medical evaluations of employees who:

5.4.1 report medical signs or symptoms that relate to their inability to perform required tasks, or

5.4.2 are informed by a medical physician or supervising officer that a firefighter needs to be evaluated, or

5.4.3 have information provided by Training (which may include observations made during a part of a members evaluation) indicates a need for a medical evaluation, or

5.4.4 are assigned new duties that result in additional required physical work effort and indicate a need for a re-evaluation of a firefighter.

5.5 During the third or fourth quarter of each year, the supervisor (BC or Company Officer) will test assigned firefighters to the standard known as __________________ Fire Department “Firefighter Physical Fitness Capacity Test”.

5.6 This is an annual testing to determine the ability of a firefighter to successfully perform the essential elements of the job as firefighter.

5.6.1 Crews are normally taken out of service during the test process.

5.6.2 If an employee is not able to complete the test due to service calls, they are to be re-tested as soon as practical.
5.6.3 The Training Division will schedule the Fitness Capacity Test. Test results shall be forwarded to the Health and Safety Officer for filing.

5.7 In the event that a member is unable to complete the test as designed, within 60 days the firefighter is to be tested again (by the Training Division) using the same standard. During this period, the firefighter remains in an active status role without restrictions.

5.8 Should a full time paid firefighter fail the second attempt, the firefighter shall be placed on light duty according to the provisions outlined in the Labor Agreement (for those firefighters working under a labor agreement). During this period, the firefighter shall not be placed in a situation where they may be required to perform strenuous activity, nor are they to be used in any interior structural firefighting capacity.

5.9 Should a volunteer firefighter fail the second attempt, the firefighter shall be placed on a non-response basis until cleared by a licensed health care provider.

5.11 Should a volunteer firefighter fail the second attempt, the firefighter shall be placed on a non-response basis until cleared by a licensed health care provider. Within 60 days of the second attempt to pass the fitness testing, all firefighters must attempt to pass the test again. (This test is to be administered by the Training Division.)

5.12 Should the full time paid firefighter fail the third attempt, the firefighter becomes ineligible for any response with the department and career firefighters shall be placed on administrative leave without pay.

5.13 Should the volunteer firefighter fail the third attempt, the firefighter becomes ineligible for any response with the department and shall be placed on administrative leave without pay.

5.13.1 During this period, the firefighter is not allowed to participate in any department activity.

5.14 An unsuccessful fourth attempt requires _______________ Fire Department to relieve the employee of duty, as there are no positions for firefighters who are not capable of performing tasks related to interior structural firefighting.

5.15 Firefighters who are unable to test due to injury/illness may be excused from the test, provided a medical note is forwarded from a licensed health care practitioner explaining the circumstances.

5.15.1 The medical note must also contain the anticipated date when the firefighter will be able to test.

5.16 Firefighters who have failed an attempt may access professional services offered by _______________ Fire Department (i.e. physicians, counselors, etc.) in an effort to seek assistance in gaining compliance to the testing process.

5.16.1 Services that cause an additional expense to _______________ Fire Department must have prior approval by the Chief or designee.
5.17 Firefighters unable to meet the ________________ Fire Departments fitness standards shall be terminated from the Department.