
**Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Guidelines**

General Policies

Subject: Pregnant Fire Department
Members
Revised: 11-23-2022
Effective: 02-03-2023
Approved: 12-21-2022
Section: 231.00

231.01 Purpose

- A. This policy is intended to provide guidance to the department concerning work-related assignments involving pregnant firefighters. The goal of these guidelines is to provide options for a pregnant firefighter to remain working in a full-time capacity performing full-duty assignments or alternative duty assignments, for as long as reasonably practical.
- B. These guidelines seek to establish a reasonable balance between a women's right to work and to protect the interest the firefighter has in her job while guarding against the risks inherent in the performance of her duties.

231.02 Procedure

- A. When a firefighter requires a light duty assignment due to her pregnancy, she shall inform the Chief of the Department and the Human Resources Department of her need for light duty due to her pregnancy with a letter from the attending physician.
- B. The firefighter and her physician shall make the decision of when the firefighter is to take a position of light duty, upon written recommendation of her physician. Both the physician and the employee are expected to consider the risks and benefits of remaining in a full-duty status performing a wide range of assignments.
- C. The Department assumes no special responsibility for any medical risks associated with the pregnancy, whether or not they relate to duty assignment.
- D. Gear and Equipment:
A firefighter who has become pregnant can continue to perform her job duties as long as the appropriate firefighting gear and equipment maintains a proper fit. If gear no longer fits properly, the Department may relieve the firefighter of certain duties specific to wearing gear and

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- equipment, such as structural firefighting or any other hazardous duties, requiring the use of turnout gear.
- E. At any time, upon request by the member, the Department will immediately assign them to light duty.
- F. Maternity Leave:
- G. When a firefighter's attending physician has determined that she should not work any longer and is required to take a leave of absence, the attending physician shall determine the leave duration, when it will become effective and how long she will remain on leave based on her current condition. This leave can start anytime during the pregnancy and generally continue up to eight weeks after pregnancy or longer based on her physician's recommendations. Leave time taken shall be agreed upon by the firefighter and the fire department, i.e. vacation, sick, or leave without pay under current department policies under FMLA provisions.
- H. Returning to Work:
Upon returning to work, the firefighter shall provide a written release from the attending physician stating that she is able to return to work. The capacity for full or partial duty should be noted in the return-to-work documentation and also, if in the case of partial or light duty return to work, the duration.
- I. Breast-Feeding:
Firefighters, who are breast-feeding, upon returning to active duty positions, may be assigned to light duty upon their return to work if requested. The department shall make accommodations for lactating mothers to pump or breast-feed.