



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE
MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
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LANSING, MI 48906

NGMI-COS-AR

20 January 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR Michigan Army National Guard Technicians and Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Employees

SUBJECT: Michigan Army National Guard Voluntary Physical Fitness Program

1. **Purpose.** To establish and implement a voluntary physical fitness program for Army National Guard Federal Technicians (dual and non-dual status), and Active Guard Reserve (AGR) employees.

a. The program concept is to permit employees three hours per week of duty time to facilitate an individual exercise program. Limitations are placed on the types of activities authorized to minimize the risk of traumatic injury.

b. The establishment and continuation of this program may not be construed as establishing a "past practice" or condition of employment.

2. **Applicability.** Participation in this program is open to those employees listed in paragraph one, as long as mission requirements are met, employee and employer liabilities are understood and the program is not abused. Part-time and temporary technicians may be permitted to participate on a case-by-case basis; each situation should be evaluated independently.

3. **Operational Considerations.** Supervisors will ensure that mission essential activities remain operational during normal duty hours. Mission accomplishment will take precedence over program participation. Supervisors are authorized to temporarily suspend participation in the program if required by the mission or exceptionally heavy workloads.

a. The Adjutant General may modify this program at anytime.

b. Education and safety is a must for program participation. A physical fitness program has both positive and negative considerations, especially for those with sedentary work environments or life styles. Proper physical conditioning can promote good health and add years to one's life. Physical exertions undertaken too quickly, too vigorously, or without proper instruction can be damaging and actually increase the risk of health complications.

c. Before starting an exercise program, it is critical that the individual be well-informed on proper nutrition, the fundamentals of physical conditioning, injury prevention, safety, and proper clothing. The importance of warm-up and cool-down periods, breathing techniques, exercise intensity, and the various aspects of muscle soreness must also be understood to maximize the benefits and minimize the health risk. Employees' personal physicians can pro-

vide literature and stress tests, as well as advice on a fitness program to meet personal goals and physical abilities. Any costs must be borne by the employee.

d. Information on physical conditioning programs and procedures may also be found in military publications. These materials are available for review in unit libraries, facility or installation administration office, or on-line.

4. Time Allotment. Participants are permitted a maximum of three hours per week of duty time to participate in an individual fitness program; no more than one hour per duty-day. Scheduling must be worked out individually between supervisors and participating employees.

a. The time allotted includes time for travel and personal hygiene. If additional time is required for travel and/or hygiene, supervisors may make work hour adjustments, extending the duty day to compensate for the added time. The three hours authorized for physical training will not be deducted from rest or lunch periods.

b. Supervisors, on a case-by-case basis, may authorize exceptions to origination or termination points. Supervisors who exercise this option must have employees go directly to and from authorized destinations without deviating. This requirement is necessary to ensure accountability.

5. Exercise Limitations. Limitations are placed on the types of exercises permitted to reduce the risk of injury and to ensure compliance with the intent of the program. The following limitations apply:

a. Supervisors must approve in writing exercise locations and times.

b. Contact sports are not permitted. The risk of incidental injury from competitive contact outweighs any health benefit which might be derived.

c. As a general rule, team sports are not permitted. The group competitive spirit encourages participants to push performance beyond their level of conditioning, endurance, and state of health. On a case-by-case basis, tennis, racquet ball, handball, and similar individual competitions may be permitted. Examples of typical programs are:

(1) A jogging or running program that originates and/or terminates at the work-site. Care should be taken in the selection of routes for jogging or running, taking into account terrain, traffic, and other environmental or safety considerations.

(2) Strength training program using equipment such as weights or Nautilus type machines. Equipment must be of commercial grade construction (not home fabricated) and the employee must be instructed in the proper use of equipment by a qualified instructor.

(3) A bicycling program which originates and/or terminates at the work-site.

(4) Aerobic classes supervised by a qualified instructor.

d. The goal of any sport or exercise program is to increase the heart rate, improve muscle tone, build endurance, aid in weight control, promote health consciousness, and develop positive attitudes toward physical fitness. Any exercise within the parameters of the above goals and limitations may be permitted.

e. Swimming programs are acceptable, as long as a qualified lifeguard is present and a progressive program is used. Swimming should not be limited to casual paddling except at the beginning of a total fitness program. The program should show progression in distance and/or laps, and be physically demanding as demonstrated by elapsed time for the distance.

f. Supervisors will use reasonable judgment in determining the appropriateness and scheduling of any sport or exercise program.

6. Administrative Requirements. The following administrative rules will be adhered to:

a. Technicians are strongly encouraged to seek professional medical guidance and clearance prior to engaging in any new physical fitness regimen. Documentation of medical clearance to participate should be maintained in the employees private medical records. Any costs must be borne by the employee.

b. Documentation of a technician's medical clearance to participate in this Physical Fitness Incentive Program by the supervisor or the Michigan National Guard is not required.

c. The intent of this program is to maximize flexibility for supervisors and employees and avoid technically cumbersome procedures and record keeping.

d. Equipment beyond that normally available at Michigan National Guard facilities will not be provided at the employer's expense. Individual clothing and equipment are the participant's responsibility.

7. Responsibilities/Liabilities. The following outlines responsibilities and liabilities which affect individuals participating in the program:

a. The program is voluntary and unsupervised. Covered employees are under no obligation to participate.

b. Injuries or death occurring as a result of participating may not be covered by the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA).

c. Medical coverage for injuries incurred will depend on rulings made by the appropriate Office of Worker's Compensation. (This provision does not apply to Active Guard Reserve (AGR) employees.)

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d. Physical exertion without proper physical conditioning can be physically damaging, and could have impact upon any injury claim determinations made as a result of program connected injuries.

e. Participants are responsible for maintaining documentation of medical clearance in their private medical records.

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:


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Army Chief of Staff