

GENERAL ORDER XXII

SUBJECT: HEALTH AND FITNESS STANDARDS

EFFECTIVE DATE: 06-01-04

REVIEW DATE: 01-13-12

NOTE: This rule or regulation is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to inform all personnel of the physical fitness policy of the West Plains Police Department. The policy for officers shall be completely voluntary participation and voluntary compliance.

The employees' health and well-being is of prime importance to the employee, his/her family and colleagues, police administrators, city government and citizens of the community.

The rationale for encouraging participation in a physical fitness program consists of four basic factors.

1. Regular vigorous physical fitness activity helps reduce emotional and nervous tension.
2. A physically-fit employee is less susceptible to common injuries; and if injured, will recover more rapidly.
3. Associated health hazards, such as degenerative heart disease, are less likely to occur in physically-fit individuals.
4. Improved health should allow individuals to perform their assigned duties and responsibilities with greater ease and thus prevent excessive use of sick days.

The West Plains Police Department has recognized the need for a departmental fitness program. In keeping with this philosophy, it is the intent of this program to improve, maintain, and support good physical health equal to or greater than the average American.

II. POLICY

It shall be on a voluntary basis that officers participate in the health and fitness tests. All officers who wish to participate shall be scheduled for testing semi-annually. Civilian personnel, such as telecommunicators, animal control, parking enforcement and clerical employees may also volunteer to participate in the health and fitness test.

III. PROGRAM FORMAT

Prior to starting the program, each officer will participate in a health screening process conducted by the Department's certified physical fitness instructor or by another qualified person, as directed by the Chief of Police. Officers will be required to fill out a health history and life-style questionnaire, this will be used to determine individual levels of fitness. After the health screening is completed, exercise prescriptions will be designed by the Department fitness advisor upon request of the officer.

Section 1: Medical Screening

- A. In order to promote good health and fitness, the program must be concerned with the safety of the participants at all times. Tests such as heart rate, blood pressure, and step test may be given prior to any maximum exercise test to determine the participant's level of physical fitness and health risk in performing the tests. These tests will be given at the request of the fitness advisor or as directed by the Chief of Police.
- B. All personnel are responsible for determining their fitness level before participating in the program. Anyone with any medical problem, injury, illness or other conditions that might create a risk to the individual performing the tests must notify the fitness advisor before performing the tests.
- C. For those individuals 42 years of age or older, a stress EKG is recommended, and in some cases could be required prior to involvement in the physical fitness assessment program. In some cases, an officer may be referred to a physician for clearance to participate.
- D. The entire screening process is aimed at identifying possible health hazards and making appropriate prescriptive plans. This screening process will aid in determining that level of exercise an officer needs for maintaining or improving his/her physical fitness.

- E. All officers will be required to pass a physical examination conducted by a physician, upon the request of the Chief of Police.

Section 2: Scheduling of Test Dates and Times

- A. The fitness advisor is responsible for notifying all personnel of the times, dates and locations of the physical fitness tests.
- B. It is the responsibility of the participant to schedule their physical fitness test on one of the dates specified by the fitness advisor.

Section 3: Physical Fitness Test Standards

- A. The standards to be used in this testing program are those established by the United States Air Force and the American College of Sports Medicine.
- B. Standards for the health-fitness requirements are adjusted and dependent upon the individual's age and sex. It is currently recognized by the Medical and Exercise Physiology Sciences that as an individual ages, cardiovascular/respiratory endurance and joint flexibility decreases while body fat increases; therefore, it is only reasonable to adjust the test requirements accordingly.
- C. Ongoing research within the field of criminology continues to substantiate the fact that the vast majority of all crime is committed by the 16-26 year old males. Therefore, because the age, sex, health and fitness level of the profile criminal never changes, it is reasonable to expect the police officer to maintain similar performance levels regardless of the age and sex differential of the law enforcement officers.
- D. Point range for various fitness level categories:
 - * Level I.....70 to 79
 - * Level II.....80 and above
- E. Passing performance of physical fitness test is Level 1 or above.

Section 4: Administering the Physical Fitness Test

- A. It shall be the responsibility of the fitness advisor to administer the physical fitness test.

- B. Prior to administering the fitness tests, the participants must receive an explanation of the procedures from the fitness advisor. This explanation must include a description of the possible risks, discomforts and potential benefits to be expected. Following the explanation, participants must be asked if there are any questions that have not been answered. The participants and the fitness advisor must sign the Informed Consent document.

Section 5: Mandatory Test

- A. The Fitness Test Battery contains four events:

- * 1 1/2 Mile Run/3 Mile Walk
- * Bent-Knee Sit-Ups
- * Cardio Vascular Assessment (Waist To Hip Circumference Ratio)
- * Push-ups

- B. Required Tests

1. 1 1/2 Mile Aerobic Run/3 Mile Walk

- a. A 1 1/2 mile aerobic run/3 mile walk test will be conducted on a course where officer safety is a major consideration. Lap counting is to be minimized as much as possible in selecting a course. The course should be as flat as possible and suited to the testing of several individuals at one time.
- b. Each officer will be required to complete the 1 1/2 mile aerobic run/3 mile walk except with an approved medical exemption.
- c. Standards for the 1 1/2 mile aerobic run/3 mile walk will be based on the criteria established by the United States Air Force and The National Aerobics Institute.
(See Attached)

2. Push-ups

- a. Push-up tests will consist of an officer doing as many push-ups as possible. Push-ups will be done in a manner that keeps the back straight with no bow and with only the hands and toes touching the ground. The plane of the back must go below the top of both elbows in the down position for a push-up to be counted. Resting will be allowed, but only in the up

- position. The back may be bowed up or down during the rest period only.
3. Sit-ups (crunches)
 - a. Officers will be tested on how many sit-ups they can do in one (1) minute. Sit-ups will be done with the legs bent and arms crossed in front of the chest. A complete sit-up will be counted when the individual rises from the prone position, touches an elbow to the legs without the feet leaving the ground, and returns to prone position. Sit-ups will be administered with a coach or aide holding the feet to the floor. Resting will be allowed for sit-ups, but only in the up position. Timing of the one (1) minute period will not stop while the officer rests.
 - b. All officers will take the sit-up test unless excused by a medical exemption.
 4. Cardio Vascular Risk Assessment (Waist To Hip Circumference Ratio)
 - a. Two measurements are taken from the body. One level around the waist just above or just below the belly button. The other measurement is taken level around the hips at the largest portion.
 - b. The two measurements are then applied to the Waist To Hip circumference ratio chart. A Cardio vascular risk factor can then be determined and a point of value for the test.

Section 6: Incentives

- A. All employees who score within the Level 1 category on the semi-annual Physical Fitness Test will earn four (4) additional hours off, to be taken within the next six months after the testing. All employees who score Level 2 on the semi-annual Physical Fitness Test will earn eight (8) additional hours off. To be taken within the next six months after the testing.
 1. These days are to be scheduled so as not to conflict with other aspects of scheduling.
 2. The Chief or Assistant Chief will have final approval of when the extra hours will be taken.

AUTHORITY

- A. This policy is issued by the authority of the Chief of Police. Any policy additions, deviations or revisions shall be made only at the direction of the Chief of Police.

By Authority of:

Charles Brotherton, Jr., Chief of Police