
	GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT			
	Physicals, Physical Fitness, and Wellness			
	GENERAL ORDER	202.2		Related CALEA Standards:
	Effective Date	10/10/2025		22.2.1, 22.3.1, 22.3.2
Authorized by:		Mark P. Sroka CHIEF OF POLICE	SIGNATURE	
			DATE 10/10/2025	

1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this directive is to establish policy that reflects the Department’s commitment to employee’s health and wellness through support of physical fitness, mental health, positive workplace culture, and preventative health. This policy also outlines procedures established to assist employees with ongoing wellness and physical fitness programs, defines categories pertaining to fitness for duty, and provides direction for the safe and effective utilization of personnel in various wellness and fitness categories.

2. **POLICY**

It is Department policy that all employees maintain a level of fitness that permits them to safely and effectively perform essential job functions. Wellness and education programs are offered to assist employees in maintaining good health. Department supervisors monitor work performance, attendance records, and any other signs that may indicate personnel under their supervision are experiencing potential health or health related problems. The Department may elect to have an employee scheduled for a fitness for duty examination, when potential health related concerns exist.

3. **DEFINITIONS**

3.1. Disability: Within the context of this directive, the term “disability” is applied in accordance with Worker's Compensation Law, and applicable City personnel regulations and policies.

3.2. Emotional Wellness: Within the context of this directive, the term “emotional wellness” involves the ability to identify and manage emotions, and to handle life’s challenges.

3.3. Environmental Wellness: Within the context of this directive, the term “environmental wellness” considers the relationship between people and their surroundings which can affect employee health and well-being in both directions, as people can influence the environment and the environment can influence people.

- 3.4. Family Wellness:** Within the context of this directive, the term “family wellness” involves the health and well-being of the family that includes healthy interpersonal relationships, personal and familial satisfaction and growth, the mental health, health and safety of all family members, and having the financial resources to live, thrive and experience fulfilling relationships.
- 3.5. Financial Wellness:** Within the context of this directive, the term “financial wellness” refers to the state of being financially healthy and secure by helping employees manage their finances, improve their financial literacy, reduce stress, and give peace of mind.
- 3.6. Full Duty:** Within the context of this directive, the term “full duty” applies when an employee is able and authorized to fully perform all duties and meet all responsibilities required of the position to which the employee is appointed.
- 3.7. Health Concern or Condition:** Within the context of this directive, the term “health concern” or “health condition” may apply interchangeably to conditions and concerns that are physical and/or emotional in nature. Evaluation and treatment of such conditions should be pursued through practitioners licensed in the appropriate discipline.
- 3.8. Intellectual Wellness:** Within the context of this directive, the term “intellectual wellness” involves helping employees to be more engaged, motivated, and productive and can help employees develop personal resources that work together with other areas of wellness to achieve a more balanced life.
- 3.9. Light Duty:** Within the context of this directive, the term “light duty” applies when an employee becomes incapacitated, such that duties essential to the position cannot be performed without presenting an unreasonable risk to the health or safety of the employee and/or others, however the employee remains capable of performing other tasks essential to the Department.
- 3.10. Occupational Wellness:** Within the context of this directive, the term “occupational wellness” involves focusing on promoting and maintaining physical, mental, and social well-being of employees.
- 3.11. Physical Wellness:** Within the context of this directive, the term “physical wellness” involves healthy habits and behaviors that relate to the physical aspects of the body such as nutrition, exercise, sleep, substance use, disease prevention, and stress reduction.
- 3.12. Social Wellness:** Within the context of this directive, the term “social wellness” involves creating a supportive work environment where employees feel valued, connected, and part of a team which can help employees feel more

fulfilled in their work and relationships, and can lead to increased productivity, job satisfaction, and employee retention.

3.13. Temporary No-Duty: Within the context of this directive, the term “temporary no-duty” applies when an employee becomes temporarily incapacitated, such that duties essential to the position cannot be performed without presenting an unreasonable risk to the health or safety of the employee and/or others and is unable to perform other tasks essential to the Department. For example, an employee on sick leave or disability would fit this criterion.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1. Assignment of Duty Status

4.1.1. Unless otherwise advised or reported, employees are on full duty status.

4.1.2. When an employee submits a physician’s certification to the Chief of Police, via chain of command, describing a condition that temporarily prevents the performance of essential job functions, the employee may be placed on light duty or temporary no-duty status, as appropriate.

4.1.2.1. Employees on light duty status may be assigned to perform other duties deemed compatible with their condition.

4.1.2.2. Sworn employees on light duty status may be relieved of all law enforcement responsibilities, for the purposes of relieving the legal requirement to take police action in certain circumstances. This is a non-punitive measure, taken in the interest of the safety of the employee and others.

4.1.2.3. The Chief of Police may require a sworn employee to surrender the Department issued firearm, vehicle, and other equipment, until the employee returns to full duty status. This is a non-punitive measure, taken in the interest of the safety of the employee and others.

4.1.2.4. Before returning to full duty status, an employee may be required to submit to a physical and/or psychiatric evaluation to determine the employee’s fitness for duty. Department ordered evaluations will be conducted by a physician selected by, and at the expense of, the City.

4.1.2.5. The Chief of Police may require a physician’s statement attesting that the employee’s temporary condition prevented the employee from reporting for full duty.

- 4.1.2.6. In cases involving an absence of four or more days relating to injury or illness, the employee shall submit a statement by a physician, or other licensed medical or dental practitioner, attesting that the employee's temporary condition prevented the employee from reporting for full duty.
- 4.1.3. If an employee believes she cannot perform her current duties due to pregnancy, she shall notify her supervisor who will in turn notify their Bureau Commander. The Department will take no action with respect to a pregnant employee's assignment unless and until she so requests, in writing, and provides medical certification that she cannot perform duties essential to the position without presenting an unreasonable risk of health or safety to herself and/or others. At that time, the Department and her commanding officer shall explore with her all possible means of providing a reasonable accommodation.
 - 4.1.3.1. Medical certification includes a letter from the employee's health care provider and other evidence as requested that concerns the medical advisability of a reasonable accommodation and identifies the date the reasonable accommodation became medically advisable, the probable duration of the needed accommodation, and an explanatory statement as to the medical advisability of the accommodation.
 - 4.1.3.2. If the employee remains capable of performing other tasks essential to the Department, her job duties may be changed and she may be assigned "light duty" assignments consistent with any medical limitations identified by her health care provider.
 - 4.1.3.3. Other means of reasonable accommodation may include but are not limited to changing the employee's work hours; relocating the employee's work area; granting leave; providing the employee with other equipment, uniforms, mechanical or electrical aids; or allowing the employee to drive an unmarked personal patrol vehicle (PPV), dependent upon availability of an unmarked patrol vehicle.
 - 4.1.3.4. Reasonable accommodation may also include transferring the employee to a less strenuous or less hazardous position, if such tasks are essential to the Department or City and if such a transfer would not require the Department to:

- 4.1.3.4.1 Create duties that do not exist nor essential to the Department;
 - 4.1.3.4.2 Discharge any employee;
 - 4.1.3.4.3 Transfer any employee with more seniority than the employee requesting the reasonable accommodation; or
 - 4.1.3.4.4 Promote any employee who is not qualified to perform the job.
- 4.1.4. When the pregnant employee believes it is not safe for her to work, such that she cannot perform duties essential to her position without presenting an unreasonable risk to the health or safety of the employee and/or others, and she is unable to perform other tasks essential to the Department, she shall:
- 4.1.4.1. Request a leave of absence, at which time she may be assigned to temporary no-duty status; and
 - 4.1.4.2. Provide medical certification from her health care provider and other evidence as requested which verifies her condition, expected delivery date, and fully evaluates her physical ability or inability to perform full police duties.
- 4.1.5. The employee shall be considered for light duty or temporary no-duty status based on the medical evidence and assessment of her work capacity, physical condition, risk of harm to herself and/or others in the performance of her job duties, and her overall ability to perform tasks essential to the Department.
- 4.1.6. She will not be subject to discrimination based on pregnancy or anticipated pregnancy, and any restricted duty assignment.

4.2. Wellness

- 4.2.1. The City offers a comprehensive wellness program that can improve employee health and organizational productivity. Key components of the program include:
 - 4.2.1.1. Physical Health: Encouraging regular exercise, use of an on-site physical fitness facility, healthy eating, and sufficient sleep;

- 4.2.1.2. Mental Health: Providing resources for stress management, mindfulness, and treatment;
 - 4.2.1.3. Financial Wellness: Offering financial planning tools and education;
 - 4.2.1.4. Social Wellness: Fostering a positive work culture and opportunities for social interaction;
 - 4.2.1.5. Occupational Wellness: Promoting job satisfaction, work-life balance and career development;
 - 4.2.1.6. Intellectual Wellness: Encouraging continuous learning and stimulating challenges;
 - 4.2.1.7. Environmental Wellness: Supporting eco-friending practices and promoting a healthy work environment; and
 - 4.2.1.8. Family Wellness: Supporting the health and well-being of the family, and availability of Family Care Leave.
- 4.2.2.** The GFit Wellness Program is a healthy lifestyle incentive program to help full time employees take an active role in preserving good health and improving their overall quality of life. The program offers quarterly reimbursement, as determined by City policy, for eligible expenses.
- 4.2.3. The City offers various wellness and health education opportunities throughout the year, at little or no expense to employees. Among these programs are:
- 4.2.3.1. An annual Wellness Day that features a variety of activities and information;
 - 4.2.3.2. Flu vaccine clinics;
 - 4.2.3.3. Smoking cessation;
 - 4.2.3.4. Fitness classes;
 - 4.2.3.5. Nutrition classes;
 - 4.2.3.6. Blood pressure, body composition, lung capacity, cholesterol

and glucose screenings;

4.2.3.7. Financial Wellness Seminars;

4.2.3.8. Retirement Planning Seminars; and

4.2.3.9. Additional seminars to help balance work, family and personal life.

4.3. Physical and Mental Health Assessments

4.3.1. Physical examinations of employees are conducted during the hiring phase and when the Chief of Police deems a “fitness for duty” assessment to be necessary.

4.3.1.1. The City covers all costs associated with exams and evaluations that are required of the employee and selects the physician or other licensed practitioner that will conduct the examination.

4.3.2. As a condition of certification, and as mandated by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission, a sworn officer shall submit to:

4.3.2.1. A mental health assessment every two-years; and

4.3.2.2. An annual [Physical Agility Assessment](#).

4.3.3. When notified of a scheduled examination, officers will appear for the examination as they would any other assignment.

4.3.3.1. If a scheduling conflict exists, the officer will notify his or her supervisor to ensure that the appointment is rescheduled.

4.3.3.2. Failure to appear, after being notified of the examination appointment, may subject the officer to disciplinary action.

4.4. Support Resources

4.4.1 The City’s Employee Assistance Program according to [General Order 202.4 Employee Assistance Program](#) provide the following resources for employees:

4.4.1.1. Counseling Services;

- 4.4.1.2. Crisis Counseling;
- 4.4.1.3. Stress Management Counseling;
- 4.4.1.4. Resiliency Sessions; and
- 4.4.1.5. Peer Support Services according to [General Order 202.5 Peer Support](#).

4.4.2. Crisis Hotlines

- 4.4.2.1. A phone service that provides immediate support and assistance to people in crisis or emotional distress.
- 4.4.2.2. Hotlines include trained professionals who can offer guidance, resources, and emotional support to staff crisis hotlines.

4.4.3. Chaplains

- 4.4.3.1. A representative of a faith group who provides confidential support to employees, their families, and the community.