

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 07-38

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Order 06-01
SOP: 300.30.00

DATE: January 31, 2007

LIGHT DUTY

I. PURPOSE.

To provide departmental guidelines regarding employee eligibility for light duty and the assignment process thereto.

II. DEFINITIONS.

Light Duty – A transfer to different duties or a modification in current duties, where the physical and/or mental demands of the job are more moderate and less taxing on the individual so assigned.

III. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT.

Granting of any light duty is at the sole discretion of the City. This determination will be made by the City Manager in consultation with the Police Chief.

IV. WORK-RELATED INJURIES/ILLNESSES.

After recuperation from a serious injury or illness that is covered under Workman's Compensation, employees shall be expected to return to work immediately upon being released from a physician. In the event a lengthy absence is required due to a work-related condition, every reasonable effort will be made to keep the injured or ill employee's job open during the approved leave of absence. However, the identical position is not guaranteed. If the previous position the employee held is unavailable, the department command staff will work with the physician to return the employee to another position of which the physician approves. Reasonable accommodations will be made for the partially disabled employee.

In those instances where an employee is no longer totally incapacitated with an on-the-job injury or illness, yet a period of further recuperation is necessary, the employee may be released to light duty by their attending physician. Following consultation with the appropriate command and city staff, if approval is granted, department management will locate a "light duty" position in the agency or within another city department. Generally this will encompass some type of administrative position. Every effort will be made to place the employee in a job commensurate with their skills and level of expertise. Pay for a "light duty" assignment will remain the same as the employee's regular job assignment for a period of up to six months.

Unless prevented by the nature of the injury or illness, commissioned officers placed on "light duty" will continue to wear the department uniform.

Employees may not work secondary employment while on "light duty."

An employee on "light duty" will return to his/her physician on a schedule determined by the physician or Workman's Compensation for evaluation for return to regular duty.

Should an employee object to the return to work program recommended by the physician/management team, the employee may appeal to the Chief of Police for consideration of a different assignment. An employee who refuses to cooperate with the prescribed return to work or "light duty" program at that point may be subject to disciplinary action.

V. NON-WORK RELATED INJURIES/ILLNESSES.

Employees who have sustained a serious injury or illness that is non-work related shall not be required to return to regular duty until certified to do so by their physician. However, prior to full recuperation and/or recovery from their injury or illness, the employee may, with the written consent of their attending physician, request to work on a "light duty" status. This request will be submitted through the chain of command to the employee's bureau commander. Following consultation with the Chief of Police and appropriate city staff, should department approval be granted, the employee will be assigned a "light duty" position. Again, every effort will be made to place an employee in an assignment appropriate to their skills and experience.

The number of hours an employee on "light duty" may work on a daily basis will be contingent upon their physician's instructions and the ongoing state of their recovery.

Pay for a "light duty" assignment will remain the same as when the employee was performing his/her regular job tasks, for a period of up to six months.

Unless prevented by the nature of the injury or illness, commissioned officers placed on "light duty" will continue to wear the department uniform.

Employees may not work secondary employment while on “light duty.”

An employee on “light duty” will return to the physician on a schedule determined by the doctor for periodic evaluation for return to regular duty.

Under this General Order, pregnancy will be treated as any other medical condition. As such, this section may or may not apply to a specific situation depending upon individual circumstances.

VI. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE.

In the event a medical condition requires an absence in excess of three days or more, the employee will be required to submit a request to the city for Family and Medical Leave in accordance with current city policy and federal law. The employee will subsequently present the department with a physician’s certificate at the end of the leave period attesting to the fact that he/she may return to regular duty. (Refer the city’s Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual for further provisions and guidance.)

BY ORDER OF:

THOMAS J. BYRNE
Chief of Police

TJB:dld

CALEA Reference: 22.2.1