



HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

To: All Officers and Members
From: Justin Wells, Assistant Chief
Through: Robert I. Garcia, Assistant Fire Chief
Subject: Employee Screening at Department Facilities
Date: April 3, 2020

Mayor
Sylvester Turner

City Council

District A
Amy Peck

District B
Jerry Davis

District C
Abbie Kamin

District D
Carolyn Evans-Shabazz

District E
Dave Martin

District F
Tiffany Thomas

District G
Greg Travis

District H
Karla Cisneros

District I
Robert Gallegos

District J
Edward Pollard

District K
Martha Castex-Tatum

At-Large 1
Mike Knox

At-Large 2
David Robinson

At-Large 3
Michael Kubosh

At-Large 4
Letitia Plummer

At-Large 5
Sallie Alcorn

Controller,
Chris Brown

Due to the current community health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect Houston Fire Department employees and the public, all employees will be screened immediately prior to reporting for work. The following procedure will **be effective April 8, 2020** and remain in effect until further notice.

Screening Process

All Houston Fire Department facilities will be equipped with an infrared non-touch thermometer for rapid screening and a digital thermometer (oral) if needed for a more accurate definitive screening. The screening process will include a screening for signs or symptoms along with a temperature reading. Personnel are directed to follow the directions provided with the thermometers before use and clean the oral thermometer with an alcohol prep before each use. Personnel will not take any medications that affect temperature readings, such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, etc. for 6 hours prior to reporting for duty.

All employees will be screened for signs or symptoms of illness (difficulty breathing, cough, muscle aches/fatigue or fever) with their temperature taken primarily using the non-touch thermometer. If the temperature is 99.0° F or greater, or if the employee looks obviously ill, a temperature will be taken with an oral thermometer. If signs or symptoms or fever greater than 100.0° F are confirmed, the employee will not be allowed to work and sent home on Worker’s Comp (WC). The employee will immediately contact Infection Control and the employee’s officer or supervisor will inform their chain of command. The member will also need to complete a Form 51 and have it called in to TriStar. If the member tests negative for COVID-19 or is not directed to test by Infection Control, the employee will be released to return to work on their next work scheduled work day following release.

Fire Stations

All members will be screened at the beginning of each shift before entering temperature-controlled areas of the station. The Station Captain, or designee, is responsible for establishing a screening area outside the temperature-controlled areas of the station. Before any member is allowed to assume duty, they will be screened. The Station Captain, or designee, from the outgoing shift is responsible to screen all members of the oncoming shift before they are allowed to assume duty. If the units are out of the station at shift change, an asymptomatic member will enter the station and retrieve the thermometers to screen the oncoming personnel.

20-118

Samuel Peña, Fire Chief

1801 Smith Street, 7th Floor | Houston, Texas 77002 | (832) 394-6702

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An additional screening will occur again for all members on duty at 18:30. Personnel will not take any medications that affect temperature between shift change and the 2nd screening. Any member reporting for duty mid-shift without a prior screening will be screened before they are allowed to assume duty. All screenings will be logged and reported up the chain of command to confirm each screening of all personnel has been completed and the status of the work force at each station.

No visitors are permitted in Houston Fire Stations unless on official business in accordance with *Memorandum #20-088*. This includes family members, members of the public, and insurance/retail vendors. Any visitors on official business will be screened prior to their admittance along with an entry into the Watch Office Log. Crews are directed to administer all medical care outside the station if possible/practical.

OEC

All members will be screened at the beginning of each shift before entering the secure area of the facility as designated by the Senior Captain or Chief Dispatcher on each shift. Before any member is allowed to assume duty, they will be screened. The Senior Captain, or designee, from the outgoing shift is responsible to screen all members of the oncoming shift before they are allowed to assume duty.

An additional screening will occur again for all members on duty at 18:30. Personnel will not take any medications that affect temperature between shift change and the 2nd screening. Any member reporting for duty mid-shift without a prior screening will be screened before they are allowed to assume duty. All screenings will be logged and reported up the chain of command to confirm each screening of all personnel has been completed and the status of the work force.

Administration – 1801 Smith (6th, 7th, & 8th floors)

All employees and visitors, classified and civilian, will be screened in accordance with the screening process and logged before they are allowed to pass the access-controlled areas of the floors. Visitors should be limited to essential personnel only with official business. Each command is responsible to ensure all their members are screened each day before they are allowed to report for their work assignments.

Logistics/Dart Street

All personnel, civilian and classified, working the Arson Division at 1205 Dart will be screened in accordance with the screening process at the beginning of each work shift. All personnel entering the 2nd floor will sign in and be screened by the reception personnel before entering the business office areas.

Fire Prevention (Arson/Inspections) – All locations

All personnel, civilian and classified, assigned to Arson or Inspections will be screened in accordance with the screening process at the beginning of each work shift. All personnel entering any of the premises designated for Arson and/or Prevention will sign in and be screened by the Supervisor (or designee) before entering the business office areas.

Permitting Center

All personnel assigned to HFD Permits at 1002 Washington Avenue will be screened in accordance with the screening process at the beginning of each work shift. All personnel entering the 2nd floor will sign in and be screened by the Supervisor (or designee) before entering the business office/desk areas.



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VJTF

The Division officers are responsible to ensure all staff, classified and civilian be screened by a classified staff member prior to entering any building at the beginning of their shift. Personnel having a temperature of 100° F or greater is excused and directed to contact Infection Control for instruction. Personnel having 98.7° F to 99.9° F may remain on duty, so long as they are asymptomatic of any illness. These members will be given a reusable thermometer to monitor their temperature through the day, if remaining on duty. Any other person entering the campus must have official business and is subject to the same safety precautions. No person may be in the vicinity of any firefighter trainee.

Visitors

All visitors on official business will be subject to the screening process before they are allowed to enter any Department facility. Any visitor failing their screening or refusing to be screened will not be admitted.



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