

**Forest Service Manual  
National Headquarters – Washington Office  
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 6700 – Safety and Health Program  
Chapter 6720 – Occupational Health Program**

**Amendment:** 6700-2017-1

**Effective date:** March 07, 2017

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Robert Velasco II, Associate Deputy Chief

**Date approved:** March 06, 2017

**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:** 6700-2016-2 to 6700\_contents.

**Superseded Document(s):** 6720, Amendment 6700-2002-1, December 17, 2002

**Digest:** Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

**6720:** Revises the chapter in its entirety and adds applicable direction from Forest Service Handbook 6709.12, chapter 20.

**6721:** Adds and reorganizes direction throughout the section.

## Table of Contents

6720.2 – Objective .....	3
6720.3 – Policy .....	3
6720.4 – Responsibility .....	3
<b>6721 – Elements of the Forest Service Occupational Health Program.....</b>	<b>3</b>
6721.1 – Bloodborne Pathogens .....	3
6721.2 – Hearing Conservation .....	3
6721.3 – Respiratory and Environmental Protection .....	4
6721.4 – Safety and Health Related Programs .....	4
<b>6722 – Medical Tests, Physical Examinations, and Immunizations .....</b>	<b>4</b>
6722.1 – Medical Tests and Physical Examinations.....	4
6722.11 – Pilot Physicals .....	5
6722.2 – Immunizations .....	5
<b>6723 – Prescription Medications.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6724 – Authorized Employee Health Services.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6725 – Emergency Medical Services.....</b>	<b>5</b>

## **6720.2 – Objective**

The objective of the Forest Service Occupational Health program is to protect employee health by minimizing exposure to occupational health hazards.

## **6720.3 – Policy**

It is Forest Service policy to operate as follows:

1. Employee exposure to work hazards that can cause loss of life or deterioration of employee health is minimized. Employee exposure to hazardous chemicals is monitored.
2. Hazards are corrected or abated through engineering or administrative controls. When this is not practical, personal protective equipment is used.
3. All employees are informed of health hazards associated with hazardous materials with which they work in close proximity, utilize, or transport.

## **6720.4 – Responsibility**

Regional Foresters, Station Directors, the Area Director and Line Officers have the authority and responsibility to appoint trained personnel to manage Occupational Health programs to ensure proper equipment and services are provided for affected employees.

## **6721 – Elements of the Forest Service Occupational Health Program**

### **6721.1 – Bloodborne Pathogens**

Employees exposed to bodily fluids and secretions as defined in Section 1910.1030 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR 1910.1030) are covered under the Bloodborne Pathogen Protection Program. Units that have employees potentially exposed to Bloodborne Pathogens as a result of occupational exposures shall provide a written Bloodborne Pathogen Program, known as an Exposure Control Plan (ECP).

### **6721.2 – Hearing Conservation**

Where employees are exposed to noise levels above an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 decibels as determined by a noise measurement survey, units shall ensure a formal Hearing Protection Program meeting the requirements outlined in Section 1910.95 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR 1910.95) is in place. Work activities known to exceed the 85-decibel TWA include, but are not limited to, operations involving the following: chainsaws, leaf blowers, string trimmers, brush saws, heavy equipment, weapons qualifications, and aviation operations, including helitack.

### **6721.3 – Respiratory and Environmental Protection**

1. The Forest Service shall use engineering or administrative controls to reduce employee exposure to occupational health hazards created by dusts, fumes, mists, vapors, or other airborne particulates. When effective engineering and/or administrative controls are not feasible, employees shall use appropriate respirators.

a. Units with work environments where employees use respirators for protection against toxic respiratory exposures shall have a comprehensive respiratory protection program that incorporates the basic elements established in Section 1910.134 of Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (29 CFR 1910.134).

b. Units with work environments where employees are not required to wear respirators but choose to wear Dust Mask respirators (N-95 or N-100 Particulate Filtering Facepiece Respirators) out of personal preference in order to prevent nuisance exposure to dust or dirt inhalation shall maintain a voluntary respiratory protection program as prescribed in 29 CFR 1910.134, Appendix D.

2. Industrial hygiene and environmental sampling must be conducted when conditions indicate a potential presence of an atmospheric hazard. This sampling must include qualitative and quantitative evaluations of work-area hazards.

### **6721.4 – Safety and Health Related Programs**

Each Region, Station, the Area, the Institute, and unit shall consider establishing the following safety- and health-related programs:

1. Ergonomic Program: In order to conduct workstation ergonomic assessments to determine appropriate size, fit, and comfort of employee workstation components.

2. Workplace Violence Prevention Program: To provide education in preventing workplace violence.

3. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Program: To provide employees with information regarding the effects of traumatic incident stress and appropriate critical incident stress services for employees following traumatic events.

### **6722 – Medical Tests, Physical Examinations, and Immunizations**

#### **6722.1 – Medical Tests and Physical Examinations**

Each Region, Station, the Area, and the Institute shall have a program for conducting medical tests and physical examinations, including baseline physicals of Forest Service employees occupationally exposed to hazardous levels of chemical, biological, or physical agents. Medical professionals versed in occupational medicine should perform these tests. Other employees such as Law enforcement personnel, employees who operate specialized equipment requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and Smokejumpers may also have occupational physical examination requirements that must be met.

### **6722.11 – Pilot Physicals**

Employees designated as aircraft pilots shall comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations concerning pilot medical examinations. The Agency will bear the cost of these periodic examinations.

### **6722.2 – Immunizations**

The Agency authorizes expenditure of appropriated funds for immunizations used for disease prevention when employees are exposed to specific diseases, poisonous plants, or insect stings on the job.

### **6723 – Prescription Medications**

Forest Service field first-aid kits and medical field stations intended for Service-wide (inter-Regional) use are authorized to contain prescription medications, such as Epinephrine, in order to respond to medical emergencies.

1. Where State laws permit, Regional Foresters and Station Directors may approve administration of prescription medications for Forest Service employees within their Regions, Stations, the Area, or the Institute. This authority may not be delegated. Policies and procedures for controlling and administering these medications (including training of employees) must be implemented to meet local, State, and Federal requirements.
2. Unit managers shall ensure proper disposal of all medications that have reached their expiration date.

### **6724 – Authorized Employee Health Services**

A health unit or other medical facility may provide health screening examinations, immunizations, and medical tests that are unrelated to occupational exposures. Employees may be charged for these services except when contractual arrangements provide for them at government expense.

### **6725 – Emergency Medical Services**

Unit managers shall identify and provide for needed levels of emergency medical services. These services may be provided through local medical care providers or through trained Forest Service personnel.

The Agency will bear the cost of training Forest Service personnel up to basic emergency medical technician (EMT) qualification. This includes the cost of State or national registry EMT certification and recertification.

Employees functioning in positions formally designated as emergency medical technician (EMT) positions shall have current State or National registry certification and have medical direction by a State-licensed physician. Employees providing EMT services in connection with Forest Service or cooperating agency operations may perform these duties at locations outside of their certifying State, where State agreements allow.