



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

Subject: *Light Duty Work Excuses*

Number: *802-B*

Effective Date: *January 1, 2001*

Revised Date: *February 12, 2021*

Rescinds: *GO-002*
GO-802
GO-802-A

Dated: *March 23, 2000*
January 1, 2001
May 5, 2004

Approved By:

PURPOSE

Myrtle Beach Police Department recognizes the value of permitting employees returning from an illness or injury to temporarily work on a light duty basis. Light duty placement may include a reduction in full-time equivalency, limiting or altering duties in the employee's existing position, or temporarily reassigning the employee to another position that he or she is qualified and capable to perform.

DEFINITION

1. Light Duty Status – The time period in which a portion of the employee's regular duties are modified because of a temporary restriction as documented by a licensed physician.
2. Light Duty - Duty performed by an employee who is recovering from a non-duty or duty-related injury or illness. The duty is performed in a position authorized by the Chief of Police.
3. Non-Duty Injury/Illness – An injury or illness that does not occur while in the performance of duty and would not be covered under worker's compensation.
4. Business Attire – Clothing that promotes a professional appearance to the public and is appropriate for the workplace. IE: slacks, button up shirt, non-logo polo style shirts, skirts, blouse, sweaters. (Cargo pants, 5:11 style pants, jeans, t-shirts, shorts and the like are not permitted)
5. Business Formal Attire – Clothing that promotes a professional appearance when representing the City in legal proceedings or events

where a professional appearance is crucial. IE: formal suit, sports coat, tie, skirt suit, pant suit.

GENERAL ORDER

1. In cases where an employee has had an on-the-job injury/illness, the Chief of Police or other appropriate department representative shall fully consider and attempt a light duty placement of the injured employee. In cases where an employee has been involved in an off-duty injury/illness, supervisors of employees are encouraged to consider light duty placement whenever practical.
2. In deciding the practicality of light duty placement solely involving altered duties or when an employee has exhausted Family and Medical Leave, management must address each situation on a case-by-case basis. Factors such as medical considerations, long-term disability claims, physical restriction, work availability and demands should be considered. Flexibility in scheduling, and/or other interests of the department should be considered when reviewing light duty placement. Employees are reminded that light duty is a privilege.
3. This directive is not designed to create hardships for employees faced with the uncertainty of medical conditions. It is designed to protect the employee and the department by fully documenting and reviewing circumstances that can seriously affect the health and well-being of the employee and to assist in making reasonable and proper decisions on the status of that employee until the medical condition is fully resolved.
4. All personnel must understand that an approved light duty assignment is temporary in nature. No light duty assignments will be approved to only provide "busy work" (work not necessary for the daily operation of the department). Temporary light duty assignments will only be approved if legitimate work can be accomplished by the employee under the restrictions noted. If light duty assignments are not practical or available, the employee will be required to request a leave of absence as provided for in the City Policy for disability-related situations.
5. Employees and supervisors need to be fully aware that light duty assignments are paid assignments where the employee is not subject to loss of pay and benefits; therefore, the affected employee must perform at the optimum level possible within the medical restrictions outlined by their physician. Failure to do so can result in corrective action and the loss of the light duty assignment.
6. This procedure in no way affects the privileges of employees under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act, Fair Labor Standards Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

7. No specific position within this department will be established for use as a temporary light duty assignment, nor will any existing position be designated or utilized exclusively for personnel on temporary light duty. Personnel approved for light duty *may* not be assigned duties that require face-to-face contact with the public if this contact would create negative reactions for the officer or the public (Divisional Commander and Chief will make placement decisions).
8. Light duty assignments are temporary and normally should not exceed three months in duration. After three months, personnel on light duty who are not capable of resuming their original duty assignment will: present a request for extension of temporary light duty with supporting documentation which gives a detailed prognosis outlining a return to work in the near future to the Chief of Police or his/her designee; or pursue other options as provided by employment provisions of the city.
9. Personnel on light duty are prohibited from engaging in outside employment for which they have been determined physically or mentally unable to perform for the police department and that form the basis of their temporary light duty.
10. Personnel may not refuse light duty assignments that are supported by and consistent with recommendations of an attending physician.
11. Personnel on light duty are to wear business attire as appropriate for the assignment and display their police badge and identification while working in a secure facility. If not in a secure facility the police badge will be concealed for the officer's safety.
12. Personnel on light duty required to attend court or other legal proceedings are to wear business formal attire.
13. Personnel approved for light duty will not work overtime unless approved by their division commander.
14. Personnel on light duty will not operate a City vehicle unless specifically authorized by the Chief of Police.
15. Personnel on light duty may be given the option to work remotely if medically relevant and available for the department to provide. See City of Myrtle Beach policy governing "telecommuting".

PROCEDURE

1. All light duty excuses must include detailed documentation from the physician issuing the light duty order, specifically outlining the duties the employee is either:
 - A. Restricted from doing and/or
 - B. Permitted to accomplish
2. No light duty assignment will be approved without this documentation. This may require providing a copy of the employee's job description to the attending physician. The physician's excuse must include the anticipated dates of the restricted assignment. If an ending date is not known, the date of the next physician's appointment should be listed. Obvious restrictions need no further details (i.e., broken leg...cannot do standing or normal police duties; temporary deafness...cannot work phones/radio, etc....); however, restrictions such as "MUST WORK ONLY DAYSHIFTS" must have a reasonable medical explanation.
3. Division Commanders will draft a memo to the Chief of Police recommending an approval or disapproval of light duty. If approved, the commanders will establish the restrictive duty status and assignment particulars with all pertinent restrictions listed, date of assignment and supervisor responsible for monitoring this employee's duty assignment. There should also be a statement in the memo indicating that the employee has been advised they will need a release from their physician before they can return to full active duty. It should also be stated in the memo that upon the deadline date for the light duty assignment, the employee is responsible for obtaining either a clearance letter or continuation letter at which point the light duty assignment will be re-evaluated.
4. A copy of the light duty order from the physician and a copy of the Division Commander's memo outlined above will be filed in the employee's personnel file for documentation.