



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF CIVILIAN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
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WASHINGTON, VA 22204-1998

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IN REPLY REFER TO

OCPMINST 12792.4  
OCPM O2A  
14 FEB 1992

OCPM INSTRUCTION 12792.4

From: Director, Office of Civilian Personnel Management

Subj: EMPLOYEE HEALTH PROMOTION AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

Ref: (a) Federal FITKIT, Step-by-Step Guidelines for Employee Health and Fitness Programs of Nov 87 (NOTAL)  
(b) DOD Directive 1010.10 of 11 Mar 86 (NOTAL)  
(c) SECNAVINST 5100.13A  
(d) SECNAVINST 6100.5

Encl: (1) CPI 792.4

1. Purpose. To delegate authority and provide procedures for implementing Employee Health Promotion and Wellness Programs.

2. Background

a. The Office of Personnel Management published Federal Personnel Manual (FPM) Letter 792-15 (dated 14 April 1986) and FPM Letter 792-20 (dated 17 May 1989) to clarify the scope of Section 7901 of Title 5, United States Code, as it relates to Federal employee health and fitness programs, and to encourage agencies to consider establishing such programs as a means of enhancing employee productivity and well-being and organizational effectiveness. Specifically, the FPM letters clarified that Section 7901 authorizes agencies to establish, within the limits of appropriations, health services programs to promote and maintain the physical and mental fitness of their employees.

b. Enclosure (1) provides procedures for implementing employee health promotion and wellness programs. It also delegates the authority for establishing health promotion and wellness programs to local activity heads.

c. CPIs supplement and/or modify the FPM. Civilian Marine employees (employees of the Military Sealift Command) should refer to CMPI 792.

d. Reference (a), published by the Office of Personnel Management and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, provides detailed guidance and step-by-step procedures for agencies to use in establishing, maintaining, and improving existing employee health and fitness programs.

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e. References (b) through (d) establish health promotion and smoking cessation policy and program guidance for Department of the Navy personnel.

3. Action. File enclosure (1) of this instruction with FPM Chapter 792.

  
ROBERTA K. PETERS

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(See page 3)

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FILE BEHIND BASIC FPM CHAPTER 792

1. Purpose. To delegate authority and provide the Department of the Navy (DON) procedures for implementing health promotion and wellness programs.

2. Policy

a. DON policy is to encourage its employees to live healthy lives through integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive health promotion and wellness programs.

b. Educational programs may be designed to increase knowledge of and to motivate individuals to seek and maintain healthy life style behaviors and disease prevention activities. Educational efforts should focus on tobacco cessation; effective stress management; exercise; weight/nutrition management; back injury prevention; alcohol and drug abuse prevention; and hypertension screening, education, and control.

3. Applicability. This instruction is applicable to all DON appropriated fund civilian employees.

4. Responsibilities

a. Director, Office of Civilian Personnel Management (OCPM). Shall provide policy guidance and procedures for the implementation of health promotion and wellness programs.

b. Activity Heads. May establish health promotion and wellness programs, as necessary, to meet local needs.

c. Human Resource Officers. Shall provide advice and assistance to heads of activities/commands in the implementation of health promotion and wellness programs.

5. Injury Compensation

a. All Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) claims filed as a result of participation in physical fitness activity are subject to final adjudication and decision as to coverage and benefit amounts by the Office of Worker's Compensation Programs (OWCP) at the Department of Labor. (See CPI 810 and the Federal FITKIT.)

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b. An employee who is injured while engaged in an activity which is specifically identified in that employee's Physical Fitness Program (PFP) is covered for all FECA benefits. Conversely, an employee who is injured while engaged in a physical fitness activity which is not part of a PFP, or is not sponsored or supported by the employing activity, is generally not covered under FECA. An exception to this rule is when the injury occurs on the premises of the employing activity during working hours, or the employer derives some tangible benefit from employee participation in the fitness activity. An employee who has been granted official time to participate in health promotion or physical fitness activities is in a duty status, therefore, covered by FECA benefits.

#### 6. Funding

a. Federal Agencies may use appropriated funds to purchase access for its employees to a private fitness center's exercise facilities as part of an agency fitness program authorized by 5 U.S.C. 7901. Purchase of fitness club memberships for the use of employees on a continuing basis should be undertaken only where all other resources have been considered and rejected, and where employee use of the program will be carefully monitored as part of a bona fide prevention program relating to health (Comp. Gen. No. B-240371, January 18, 1991).

b. Federal Agencies have the authority to utilize appropriated funds to pay the costs incurred by employees participating in agency-authorized smoking cessation programs (Comp. Gen. No. B-231543, February 3, 1989). Also see FPM Letter 792-20 of 17 May 1989.

#### 7. Excused Absence

a. Per CPI 630.S11, heads of activities shall determine administratively situations where employees will be excused from duty without charge to leave. Authority is delegated to local activity/command heads to grant excused absence for participation in health promotion and wellness programs. Excused absences may be granted for brief periods of time to employees for participation in physical fitness programs, or other disease prevention/health improvement activities where it is determined that such activities will likely enhance individual and/or organizational effectiveness or well-being.

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b. There are two main categories of health/fitness activities for which excused absences may be granted:

(1) Special events such as health screenings, health and fitness fairs and exhibits, and Federal Fitness Day, which generally occurs in May;

(2) Scheduled health improvement/disease prevention programs and activities such as:

(a) Classes on nutrition, smoking cessation, stress management; and

\* (b) Individual exercise programs, which involve participation ranging from daily to several times per week or month for a fixed or indefinite period of time.

c. The decision whether or not to grant excused absences should be made after careful consideration of the organization's mission, program objectives, the costs associated with granting the absence, the likely impact of the decision on human resource management priorities, the health needs of employees in the organization, and other factors considered important by activity management.

d. In addition to or instead of granting excused absences, activities may facilitate and support employee participation in health/fitness activities by means of flexible and alternative work scheduling, the granting of annual leave or leave without pay, disseminating information concerning community-based programs, offering in-house fitness and health education programs (at convenient times and locations), and other appropriate means.

e. Additionally, activities may want to consider a "matching" system of both activity-granted official time, and employee time for health/fitness activities. An example of this creative arrangement may be an activity decision to grant up to a specified amount of excused time per pay period for an employee to exercise at the activity's gym. The granting of the official time would be contingent, however, on the employees' investing an equal amount of personal time such as lunch periods, leave, extensions of the work day, etc. Before implementing such a combination system, activities should carefully consider issues such as monitoring, when the exercise must occur, workers' compensation implications, activities for which a "matching system" can be approved, etc.

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f. If a decision is made to grant "excused absences" for health or fitness activities, a careful determination should be made of what is a reasonable amount of time to allow for these purposes. Supervisors should also ensure that employee productivity is maintained and the activity's operations are properly managed and conducted in an efficient and effective manner.