

**MEDICAL CERTIFICATE F  
FORMER REGULAR FIREFIGHTER:  
REVIEW OF ILL-HEALTH AND/OR INJURY AWARD  
Notes on completion**

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This certificate can be used in the case of a former regular or retained or volunteer firefighter where –

- an ill-health pension, or a deferred pension paid prematurely on ill-health grounds, and/or
- an injury pension

are subject to review.

(Medical Certificate E should be used for a review of an ill-health pension (or deferred pension) where there is no injury award.)

The certificate should be completed as follows.

**Page 1: Personal details**

This section should be completed by the fire and rescue authority before issue to the independent qualified medical practitioner.

**Page 1: Award to be reviewed**

This section should be completed by the fire and rescue authority before issue to the independent qualified medical practitioner.

**Page 1: Details of incapacity**

This section should be completed by the fire and rescue authority in line with the details of incapacity which gave rise to the payment of the award and any post-retirement ill-health declared by the former firefighter or indicated in medical records. The “test” is whether the person would be capable of carrying out the duties of a firefighter (including firefighting) at the date of the opinion and so all pre and post retirement infirmity should be taken into account.

It should be checked by the independent qualified medical practitioner to ensure it correctly matches his/her understanding of the current medical condition. It could be completed by the independent qualified medical practitioner if more appropriate.

**Page 1: Details of Injury/Injuries**

As with the “Details of incapacity” this should clearly state which injury or injuries are being considered.

**Page 2: Opinion**

This is for completion by the independent qualified medical practitioner. He/she should tick all appropriate boxes having regard to the definition of expressions where they are provided.

1.4.2006

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**Page 2: Opinion (continued)**

If the independent qualified medical practitioner does not examine the firefighter but forms his/her opinion based on written medical evidence only, the words "EXAMINED" to "AND" at the beginning of the opinion should be deleted.

In the list of items taken into consideration by the independent qualified medical practitioner there is a reference to a review questionnaire. A model questionnaire is provided as part of the range of medical certificates. It is not a requirement of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Order 1992 that such a questionnaire should be issued but it would help the review process. It should be issued to the former firefighter together with an Access to Medical Records Consent Form to be completed and returned before the commencement of the review.

Point 2 refers to the duties of a regular firefighter. This is the test even in the case of a retained firefighter. The person is to be treated as a regular firefighter under various rules for award purposes. The test of disablement is to be considered in the context of the ability to engage in firefighting; the question of capability to perform only non-firefighting duties does not arise here. That would apply only if there has been no break in continuity of appointment. There will have been such a break in the case of medical review.

In respect of Point 3, when considering if disablement is permanent, Rule A10 requires a fire and rescue authority to have regard to whether the disablement will continue until normal pension age. Normal pension age applies only to serving firefighters. It does not apply here. In the case of review of an injury award, the person may have passed normal pension age. In the case of review of the ill-health award, if the person is found fit for performing the duties of a regular firefighter the fire and rescue authority may allow the person to resume their previous role. Consequently the important issue when reviewing an ill-health award is whether person is fit for firefighting at the time of review. If the firefighter is not fit at the time the review is conducted but there is a question of "permanence" the independent qualified medical practitioner should take this into account when recommending a review date.

Point 4 applies only in the case of an award of higher tier ill-health pension. If the award of ill-health pension was made before 1 April 2006, or if a lower tier pension only was awarded after 31 March 2006, this Point will not be relevant.

There is no question about default here. That question should be investigated at the time that eligibility for the pension is established; it is not a question relevant at review.

**Page 3: Assessment of disablement**

This is for completion by the independent qualified medical practitioner. Only medical issues should be considered here, not skills, qualifications, etc. which would be taken into account for completion of the Degree of Disablement Assessment Form.

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**Page 4: Comments**

This gives the medical practitioner an opportunity to elaborate on any medical issues not covered previously.

Again, only medical issues should be considered, not skills, qualifications, etc.

**Page 4: Apportionment of contribution of injury to disablement**

The independent qualified medical practitioner can indicate here to what extent the injury contributes to the disability. For example, the medical practitioner may be of the opinion that some other injury which cannot be classed as qualifying (e.g. not received in the execution of duties) was the main cause of the disability whereas the injury which may be considered as “qualifying” simply exacerbated it. This is important when assessing the degree of disablement. This must be done by reference to the degree to which the earning capacity has been affected as a result of the qualifying injury; if the earning capacity has been affected by something else, this should be noted for assessment purposes. In many cases this would be the same as the percentage quoted in the original medical certification but, with the passage of time, the medical practitioner may decide that the figure should be adjusted. The medical practitioner should give reasons for apportionment.

**Page 4: Suggested date for further review**

This section allows the independent qualified medical practitioner to suggest a date for further review. It is for the fire and rescue authority, however, to decide when such a review should take place.

**After completion of the certificate**

After the medical practitioner has completed the certificate, it should be passed to the fire and rescue authority who will consider the opinion. If relevant the degree of disablement should be reassessed using “Assessment Form – Degree of Disablement”.

The fire and rescue authority should notify the former firefighter of the decision to continue, terminate, suspend or adjust the award. In the case of the ill-health pension, if it is decided that the former firefighter is capable of performing the duties of his/her former role, the authority may make an offer of employment in that role. If the offer is made, the ill-health pension is terminated whether or not the person accepts the offer of employment.

The former firefighter can request a copy of the medical opinion within 14 days of being notified of the fire and rescue authority’s decision. As this forms part of the medical opinion, a copy of the assessment of degree of disablement should also be issued to him/her. If dissatisfied with the decision he/she can then judge where the grievance lies, i.e. in the medical opinion or in the fire and rescue authority’s assessment, and use the appropriate appeal route.

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**After completion of the certificate (continued)**

If the firefighter is dissatisfied with the decision as to award under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 and believes the problem lies in the medical opinion, he/she can appeal against the opinion under Rule H2 of that Scheme

If the firefighter is dissatisfied with the decision as to award under the Firefighters' Compensation Scheme (England) 2006 and believes the problem lies in the medical opinion, he/she can appeal against the opinion under paragraph 2 of Part 6 of that Scheme.

If the firefighter is dissatisfied with the decision as to award under the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 and believes the problem does not lie in the medical opinion but rather in non-medical aspects of the fire and rescue authority's decision, he/she can appeal under Rule H3 of that Scheme.

If the firefighter is dissatisfied with the decision as to award under the Firefighters' Compensation Scheme (England) 2006 and believes the problem does not lie in the medical opinion but rather in the non-medical aspects of the fire and rescue authority's decision, he/she can appeal against the opinion under paragraph 3 of Part 6 of that Scheme.