

§ 49.17 Physical requirements for mine rescue team.

(a) Each member of a mine rescue team shall be examined annually by a physician who shall certify that each person is physically fit to perform mine rescue and recovery work for prolonged periods under strenuous conditions. The first such physical examination shall be completed within 60 days prior to scheduled initial training. A team member requiring corrective eyeglasses will not be disqualified provided the eyeglasses can be worn securely within an approved facepiece.

(b) In determining whether a miner is physically capable of performing mine rescue duties, the physician shall take the following conditions into consideration:

- (1) Seizure disorder;
- (2) Perforated eardrum;
- (3) Hearing loss without a hearing aid greater than 40 decibels at 400, 1000, and 2000 Hz;
- (4) Repeated blood pressure (controlled or uncontrolled by medication) reading which exceeds 160 systolic, or 100 diastolic, or which is less than 105 systolic, or 60 diastolic;
- (5) Distant visual acuity (without glasses) less than 20/50 Snellen scale in one eye, and 20/70 in the other;
- (6) Heart disease;
- (7) Hernia;
- (8) Absence of a limb or hand; or
- (9) Any other condition which the examining physician determines is relevant to the question of whether the miner is fit for rescue team service.

(c) The operator shall have MSHA Form 5000–3 (available at <http://www.msha.gov>) certifying medical fitness completed and signed by the examining physician for each member of a mine rescue team. These forms shall be kept on file at the mine rescue station for a period of 1 year.

§ 49.18 Training for mine rescue teams.

(a) Prior to serving on a mine rescue team each member shall complete, at a minimum, an initial 20-hour course of instruction as prescribed by MSHA's Office of Educational Policy and Development, in the use, care, and maintenance of the type of breathing apparatus which will be used by the mine rescue team.

(b) Upon completion of the initial training, all team members shall receive at least 96 hours of refresher training annually, which shall include participation in local mine rescue contests and training at the covered mine. Training shall be given at least 8 hours every 2 months and shall consist of:

- (1) Sessions underground at least once each 6 months;
- (2) The wearing and use of the breathing apparatus by team members for a period of at least 2 hours while under oxygen every 2 months;
- (3) Where applicable, the use, care, capabilities, and limitations of auxiliary mine rescue equipment, or a different breathing apparatus;
- (4) Advanced mine rescue training and procedures, as prescribed by MSHA's Office of Educational Policy and Development;
- (5) Mine map training and ventilation procedures; and
- (6) The wearing of mine rescue apparatus while in smoke, simulated smoke, or an equivalent environment at least once during each 12-month period.

(c) A mine rescue team member will be ineligible to serve on a team if more than 8 hours of training is missed during 1 year, unless additional training is received to make up for the time missed.

(d) The training courses required by this section shall be conducted by instructors who have been employed in an underground mine and have had a minimum of 1 year experience as a mine rescue team member or a mine rescue instructor within the past 5 years, and who have received MSHA approval through:

- (1) Completion of an MSHA or State approved instructor's training course and the program of instruction in the subject matter to be taught.
- (2) Designation by the District Manager as approved instructors to teach specific courses, based on their qualifications and teaching experience outlined above. Previously approved instructors need not be re-designated to teach the approved courses as long as they have taught those courses within the 24 months prior to the effective date of this part.