

March 12, 2025

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

202500459

From: Sheryl M.M. Long, City Manager

Subject: Report on Motion to Promote Health and Wellness of Cincinnati Firefighters

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**Reference Document #202402178**

On October 10, 2024, the Public Safety and Governance Committee referred the following for a report:

**MOTION**, dated October 10, 2024, submitted by Vice Mayor Jan-Michele Lemon Kearney and Councilmember Scotty Johnson, **WE MOVE** that the administration prepare a report by the end of this calendar year on the cost and feasibility, as well as recommendations for implementation of the following measures to enhance the health and wellness of Cincinnati firefighters with involvement from the Cincinnati Firefighters Union Local 48 throughout the process:

1. Annual Comprehensive Firefighter Occupational Health Exams, to include a Multi-Cancer Early Detection (MCED) test, to proactively screen for cancer and other occupational health risks.
2. Upgrade Workout Equipment in all 26 firehouses to ensure firefighters have access to modern, functional fitness tools that support their physical conditioning and job performance.
3. Funding for Certification for 15 Firefighters as Health and Wellness Coaches, enabling them to provide expert guidance on nutrition, physical exercise, and wellness practices, and to support their peers in maintaining optimal health.

These initiatives aim to promote long-term health, early disease diagnosis, and wellness support for our firefighting workforce.

The following report outlines the estimated cost and feasibility of implementing annual comprehensive firefighter occupational health exams, to include an MCED test. Specifically, the report details programs of other municipalities across the United States, outlines the standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and makes recommendations based on industry standards, NFPA 1582 requirements, and the Ohio Revised Code.

Additionally, this report outlines the current inventory of workout equipment across all 26 firehouses and the cost and feasibility of replacing and/or upgrading the equipment. Finally, this report lays out the cost and feasibility of certifying 15 Firefighters as Health and Wellness Programs and makes recommendations on the implementation of the proposed measures.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is recommended that:

- The City move forward with implementation of annual comprehensive occupational health exams, to include comprehensive cancer screening, which may include multi-cancer early detection testing and/or additional screening methods. The costs of this examination should be included in the Cincinnati Fire Department's (hereafter "CFD") FY2026 budget.
- That CFD conduct a comprehensive evaluation of their existing fitness equipment including equipment age, appearance, maintenance, and user experience to allow the City Administration to better determine the amount of equipment that needs replacement and assist with replacement prioritization.
- That CFD work with the City's Procurement office to release a Request for Information (RFI) to obtain additional information regarding various Health and Wellness Certification programs. This will give CFD and the Cincinnati Firefighters Union Local 48 ("Union") a more comprehensive overview of the options, cost, and benefits of each certification program for their consideration.

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### ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FIREFIGHTER OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH EXAMS, TO INCLUDE A MULTI-CANCER EARLY DETECTION TEST

In order to obtain a better understanding of the surrounding municipalities' policies on Occupational Exams for Fire Department Personnel, the following questions were posed to various cities:

- Does the department conduct annual or semi-annual medical and fitness evaluations and cancer screenings in accordance with the standards of NFPA 1582?
- Which of the below items is covered under that examination?
  - General Physical exam?
  - Blood tests?
  - Urinalysis?
  - Vision test?
  - Hearing screening?
  - Pulmonary function test (Spirometry)?
  - EKG?
  - Chest X-ray?
  - Comprehensive Cancer screening?
  - Heavy metal screening?
  - Other? (Please specify)
- Is the evaluation mandatory or voluntary?
- Is the evaluation covered under a collective bargaining agreement?
- Does the city receive a copy of the results and/or a certification that an individual is "fit for duty?"
- Is the full cost covered by the city?

Inquiries were sent out to around 20 municipalities, with a response rate of approximately 65%.<sup>1</sup> Responses are summarized in the table below.

Municipality	Annual Evaluation ?	What is covered?	Mandatory ?	Covered in a Collective Bargaining Agreement ?	Does the City receive the results?	Cost fully covered by the city?
Columbus, Ohio	Yes. The city of Columbus Physical Health and Fitness program is not in strict compliance with NFPA 1582 but does include some of its components.	General Physical exam, Blood tests, Urinalysis, Vision test, Hearing Screening, Pulmonary function test, EKG, Chest X-Ray, Heavy Metal Screening.	Yes	Yes, Article 38 of the CBA	Human Resources within the Division of Fire receives fitness testing results for incentive purposes, a generic overview (disposition) of any restrictions, and/or other follow up information on a case-by-case basis due to extenuating circumstances. Protected medical information does not typically get sent to HR and every effort is made to minimize the amount shared. Medical results, including any lab results, are provided directly to the firefighter and are rarely provided to the Division of Fire.	Yes. Please note the City of Columbus does not pay for any necessary follow-up
Dayton, Ohio	Conducts physicals for 1/3 of its members annually. We encourage	Head-to-toe physical exam, treadmill (sub max HR), Resting 12 lead EKG, Muscular Strength,	Unknown	Originated in an MOU	The city does not receive the results for any physicals or if they are" fit for duty."	Yes (HR and the Fire Department share the cost)

<sup>1</sup> No response was received from the following municipalities: Cleveland, Akron, Canton, Detroit, Charlotte, Phoenix

Municipality	Annual Evaluation ?	What is covered?	Mandatory ?	Covered in a Collective Bargaining Agreement ?	Does the City receive the results?	Cost fully covered by the city?
	all members to get a physical at their doctor (covered by insurance) or the City of Dayton of Dayton-operated employee health center (DOC) if they do not fall into the 1/3 eligible for the current year.	Vision/Hearing testing, Flexibility testing, Urinalysis, Waist/Hip ratio, Pulmonary Function test, Body Fat (BIA)				
Indianapolis, Indiana	Yes, annual medical and fitness physical exams.	General physical exam, blood tests, urinalysis, vision test, hearing screening, pulmonary function test, EKG. The wellness facility will cover the cost of low-dose chest x-ray for each firefighter that requests to be referred for the x-ray. Additionally, body fat testing, flexibility and strength testing, exercise prescriptions and training.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Louisville, Kentucky	The department, through our Occupational Health provider,	Pulmonary function test, HFIT (fecal), Written medical opinion (single or multi-exposure),	Yes	Yes	Once the exam is reviewed by the department surgeon, a “fit for duty” form is sent to	Yes

Municipality	Annual Evaluation?	What is covered?	Mandatory?	Covered in a Collective Bargaining Agreement?	Does the City receive the results?	Cost fully covered by the city?
	conducts a mandatory annual medical assessment for all members except non-hazardous duty staff.	Written medical opinion for respirator use, EKG, Audio, Vision, Medical exam report, Lab report (comprehensive metabolic panel), Lab report (CBC), Urinalysis, Lipid panel, PSA, Chest X-Ray, FF exam.			leadership for their records.	
Lexington, Kentucky	Yes, conducted annually	Follow the recommendations of NFPA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Toledo, Ohio	The department provides a biannual physical for our specialty teams.	General physical exam, blood tests, urinalysis, vision test, hearing screening, pulmonary function test, EKG, Chest X-ray, comprehensive cancer screening, heavy metal screening.	Mandatory as long as the member is part of a specialty team.	Unknown	The results are shared with the department that the member is "fit for duty", as the cost for the biannual screening is covered by the City.	Yes
Nashville, Tennessee	Yes, exams are scheduled periodically for fitness evaluations as directed under metro rules. These evaluations are typically performed annually.	General physical exam, blood tests, urinalysis, vision test, hearing screening, pulmonary function test, EKG, Heavy Metal Screening (HazMat team). Annual chest x-rays are not performed. The medical exam is expected to alert	Yes	No. It is covered under Metro's Civil Service provisions.	The Department is notified if the evaluation indicates the employee is not fit for duty.	Yes

Municipality	Annual Evaluation ?	What is covered?	Mandatory ?	Covered in a Collective Bargaining Agreement ?	Does the City receive the results?	Cost fully covered by the city?
		us to abnormalities that max lead to a DX of cancer in members.				
Memphis, Tennessee	Annual medicals and cancer screenings can be done through LifeSign/We st Clinic.	General physical exam, blood tests, urinalysis, hearing screening, pulmonary function test, EKG, Chest X-ray, comprehensive cancer screening.	Voluntary	No	No	It is covered by medical insurance.
St. Louis, Missouri	The St. Louis Fire Department has both an annual physical and a 5-year Heart and Lung physical.	5-year Heart/Lung Physical: General physical Exam w/BP, Chest X-Ray report, EKG results and copy of tracing, Blood study: Chemistry, CBC, CMP, SMA 24, PSA; Urinalysis, Basic Pulmonary Function Study, DLCO (if normalities are present), 100 Percent skin exam, Breast exam or mammogram, Occult Blood Screen or colonoscopy, Pelvic Exam with PAP, HIV Test, Hepatitis A antibody, IgG, test, Hepatitis B surface antibody	Both tests are voluntary. The annual physical is incentivized while the 5-year heart and lung is recorded by the Pension.	Unknown	The Pension office receives a full copy of the 5-year heart and lung tests conducted. The department receives documentation that the annual tests were completed, no results are submitted. The medical office may be notified of any significant finding that may render an employee unfit depending on where the testing takes place.	Both exams are fully covered by the city for members who have the City's health insurance coverage and have the testing done at one of the partnering medical facilities. If the employee chooses to have testing done with their PCP they will be responsible for the co-pay.

Municipality	Annual Evaluation?	What is covered?	Mandatory?	Covered in a Collective Bargaining Agreement?	Does the City receive the results?	Cost fully covered by the city?
		<p>test, Hepatitis C antibody test</p> <p>Annual Physical: General Physical Exam w/ BP, HIV test, Hepatitis A antibody, IgG test, Hepatitis B surface antibody test, Hepatitis C antibody test</p>				
Minneapolis, Minnesota	We do an annual "Health Fair" that covers the four basic OSHA mandated exams (Hearing, Respiratory Medical Clearance, N95 Fit Test, Mantoux). It also covers a mandatory comprehensive exam for all HAZMAT employees	<p>All Employees: General physical exam , Hearing screening, Pulmonary function test (spirometry)/resting blood pressure, Heavy Metal screening, Mantoux, Qualitative Fit Test (N95)</p> <p>HAZMAT Employees: Blood tests, Urinalysis, Vision test, EKG, Chest x-ray</p> <p>Comprehensive cancer screening – in 2025 we will offer this to all employees. This will be voluntary, and the cost is covered by the employee.</p>	Yes, with the exception of the cancer screening which is voluntary.	Yes	The City does receive the results of the Pulmonary Function Exam ("Pass," "Respirator Use with Restrictions," or "Not Approved for Respiratory Use.") - Any employee who receives "Respirator Use with Restrictions," is sent to our occupational health provider for follow-up. Any employee who receives "Not Approved for Respiratory Use," will be immediately removed from working on a rig, and put on Administrative Leave until cleared from	<p>Yes for physical exam. The comprehensive HAZMAT Exams can be reimbursed through State Hazmat funds.</p> <p>Comprehensive cancer screening will be covered by the employee.</p>

Municipality	Annual Evaluation ?	What is covered?	Mandatory ?	Covered in a Collective Bargaining Agreement ?	Does the City receive the results?	Cost fully covered by the city?
					occupational health.	
Raleigh, North Carolina	Our Employee Health Center conducts them annually.	General physical exam, blood tests, urinalysis, vision test, hearing screening, pulmonary function test, EKG, Chest x-ray, Cancer testing (PSA for >40 y.o., CA-125 for females, optional fecal immunochemical testing for >40 y.o.)	Yes	No	All results are stored securely in the Employee Health Center electronic medical record. The City itself does not have access to results. Anyone NOT “fit for duty” is reported to the Fire Department.	Yes

In addition to the above research, the city also considered the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard 1582, “Standard on Comprehensive Occupational Medical Program for Fire Departments.” The standard states: “Each medical evaluation shall include a medical history (including exposure history), physical examination, blood tests, urinalysis, vision tests, audiograms, spirometry, chest x-ray (as indicated), ECG, cancer screening (as indicated), and immunizations and infectious disease screening (as indicated).”

In order to estimate the cost of implementing an annual comprehensive exam, to include cancer testing, the City looked at several variables. First, the cost of CFD's 2019 comprehensive medical evaluation and cancer screening RFP was utilized. In 2019, CFD received a grant award in the amount of \$649,863.63. As a condition of the grant, the department was required to contribute funds equal to or greater than 10% of the award, or \$64,986.37, for a total budget of \$714,850. This budget was ultimately utilized in a competitive RFP process and for contract negotiations with the selected vendor.

In addition to considering the total cost in 2019, CFD reached out to the City of Columbus regarding the cost of their medical exam to utilize as a benchmark. While Columbus’ examination process is extensive and contains additional testing that the city is not considering at this time, CFD estimated a cost of approximately \$1,000,000 for the requested testing.

Based on the 2019 cost (adjusted for inflation) and the information received from Columbus, it is estimated that the comprehensive medical exam would cost approximately \$1,000,000. It is important to note that this cost would not be covered by the employee’s health insurance



plan, rather this cost would be an additional expenditure that must be accounted for in CFD's budget.

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## UPGRADE OF WORKOUT EQUIPMENT IN ALL 26 FIREHOUSES

Currently, all 26 fire stations have city issued equipment. The following list was provided by CFD, outlining the current inventory of fitness equipment across all firehouses:

1. **38** Octane fitness ellipticals. There is one elliptical in every single engine house and two in our double houses.
2. **26** Cybex Arc trainers (Stair stepper/elliptical hybrid).
3. **26** Life fitness dual cable strength and conditioning equipment.
4. **26** Treadmills (Various vendors).

Regarding the age of the equipment, CFD relayed that the Arc trainers and Life fitness equipment are over 15 years old and have been extended beyond their life cycle. Additionally, CFD stated that the treadmill replacement cycle varies, as they are based on different replacement dates and are provided by various vendors.

The following shows a variety of cost estimates across several vendors, and includes a price range that is based on the make, model, and functionality of the equipment:

### *Vendor 1*

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Low End of Price Range</b>	<b>High End of Price Range</b>
Elliptical	\$3,999.99	\$10,370.00
Adaptive Motion Trainer <sup>2</sup>	\$11,245.00	\$14,440.00
Functional Trainer <sup>3</sup>	\$3,198.00	\$5,030.00
Treadmill	\$2,999.00	\$12,250.00

Low Total: \$605,491.62

Median Total: \$912,135.81

High Total: \$1,218,780.00

### *Vendor 2*

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Low End of Price Range</b>	<b>High End of Price Range</b>
Elliptical	\$2,190.00	\$4,399.00
Adaptive Motion Trainer	\$4,099.00	\$5,499.00
Functional Trainer	\$2,429.00	\$6,800.00
Treadmill	\$1,599.00	\$6,999.99

Low Total: \$294,522.00

Median Total: \$481,728.87

High Total: \$668,935.74

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<sup>2</sup> This piece of equipment is comparable to a Cybex Arc Trainer

<sup>3</sup> This piece of equipment is comparable to Life Fitness Dual Cable Strength and Conditioning Equipment

### **Vendor 3**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Low End of Price Range</b>	<b>High End of Price Range</b>
Elliptical	\$3,275.00	\$5,999.00
Adaptive Motion Trainer	\$3,275.00	\$5,999.00
Functional Trainer	\$999.99	\$5,900.00
Treadmill	\$1,999.99	\$7,000.00

Low Total: \$287,599.48

Median Total: \$503,467.74

High Total: \$719,336.00

### **Vendor 4 <sup>4</sup>**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Low End of Price Range</b>	<b>High End of Price Range</b>
Elliptical	\$2,960.00	N/A
Adaptive Motion Trainer	\$2,960.00	N/A
Functional Trainer	\$3,870.00	N/A
Treadmill	\$3,250.00	N/A

General Total: \$374,560.00

### **Overall Costs Across Vendors**

Lowest Total	\$287,599.48
Average Low Total	\$390,543.28
Average Median Total	\$567,973.11
Average High Total	\$745,402.94
Highest Total	\$1,218,780.00

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## **FUNDING FOR CERTIFICATION OF 15 FIREFIGHTERS AS HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACHES**

While there are a multitude of Certified Health and Wellness Coach programs, this report outlines the anticipated cost of several certification programs that are approved by the National Board for Health and Wellness Coaching (NBHWC), which is the gold standard for health coach certification in the United States. Due to the large number of certification programs and the large variance in cost, it may be necessary for the city to engage in a competitive process before selecting a vendor.

### **Primal Health Coach Institute-Primal Health Coach Certification <sup>5</sup>**

Overview of Program: The Primal Health Coach Institute takes a comprehensive approach to health coaching, including ancestral health and nutrition science, the art and science of coaching, and business development in its online curriculum. It is approved by the Health

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<sup>4</sup> Both Vendors 3 & 4 have minimal pricing information available, so these estimates are based on information of ranges online and prices off specific pieces of equipment included in submission of a recent RFP.

<sup>5</sup> Source: <https://www.primalhealthcoach.com/primal-health-coach-certification/>

Coach Alliance and enrollees maintain lifetime access to all course materials and a subscription to the institute's business resource center.

Primal Health Coach Institute's program does not have any educational or professional prerequisites and can be completed entirely online and is self-paced. The institute estimates that if an enrollee spends five to seven hours a week (an average of one hour a day) working on the course, they can complete it successfully in six months.

Cost: \$4,495 per person; Approximately \$67,425 total.

### ***Catalyst Coaching Institute Wellness Coach Certification***<sup>6</sup>

Overview of Program: Catalyst Coaching Institute provides a fast track-style course that is self-paced, except for a two-day live virtual training session. After the completion of 12 interactive wellness webinars, three practice coaching sessions, a practical coaching skills assessment and a final exam, enrollees earn their Certified Wellness Coach (CWC) credential. Furthermore, the lessons are highly customizable, allowing enrollees to select 10 webinars that best fit their background, interests and intended client population.

This health coach certification program doesn't have any educational or professional prerequisites. However, in order to meet NBHWC requirements for becoming a board-certified health coach, individuals must also complete the Catalyst Coaching Institute Master Certified Wellness Training.

Cost: \$1,992 (Wellness Coach Certification only); Additional \$1,568 for the Master Certified Wellness Training; Approximately \$53,400 total.

### ***American Fitness Professionals and Associates (AFPA) Certified Master Health and Wellness Coach Program***<sup>7</sup>

Overview of Program: AFPA provides a comprehensive NBHWC-approved program that is 100% online and contains a mix of self-paced learning and live, cohort-based learning. The course is structured to be completed in six months or less.

This certification program does not have any educational or professional prerequisites.

Cost: \$2,848 per person; Approximately \$42,720 total.

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Annual Comprehensive Firefighter Occupational Health Exams, to include a Multi-Cancer Early Detection Test***

Based on the NFPA standards, comparisons amongst other municipalities across the U.S., and the City Administration's desire to ensure the health and safety of its fire department personnel, it is recommended that the City move forward with implementation of annual

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<sup>6</sup> Source: <https://www.catalystcoachinginstitute.com/>

<sup>7</sup> Source: <https://www.afpafitness.com/product/certified-master-health-and-wellness-coach/>

comprehensive occupational health exams, to include comprehensive cancer screening, which may include multi-cancer early detection testing and/or additional screening methods. Based on the need to utilize the RFP process and to continue engaging in discussion with the Union, it is anticipated that the initial implementation of these exams would occur in FY2026.

The following are the recommended next steps:

CFD should work with the City's Procurement office to solicit competitive proposals using a Request for Proposals (RFP). The RFP process will allow the City to weigh the relative merits of proposals submitted by competing vendors that meet the City's quality requirements and to ensure that the feedback and concerns from the Union are taken into consideration. The RFP should contain a proposed budget to ensure that the department is able to properly account for the medical exams and testing in their annual budget. To date, CFD has met with Human Resources, Risk Management, and the Union in order to elicit feedback to assist in the drafting of the RFP.

It is recommended that the draft RFP is finalized as soon as possible to allow for public advertisement and submissions.

Proposed Milestones for the RFP Process:<sup>8</sup>

1. Drafting and finalization of RFP: February 1, 2025-March 1, 2025
2. Release of RFP: March 31, 2025
3. Submissions Due in Bonfire: April 21, 2025
4. City initiates negotiations with preferred Offeror: May 12, 2025
5. Notice of Award: June 16, 2025

Based on the data collected from surrounding municipalities, it is recommended that the comprehensive exams are voluntary and that the city receive a "fit for duty" determination following the annual examinations. This ensures all parties are aware that the employee has the ability to safely perform their currently assigned duties and allows the city to offer the necessary support to employees that may have medical restrictions due to a health condition. Prior to moving forward with negotiations and execution of a contract with the selected vendor, the City and the Union should meet to discuss implementing the terms and conditions of the annual comprehensive exams.<sup>9</sup>

Further, it is recommended that the costs of these examinations be included in CFD's budget for Fiscal Year 2026. Based on the projected RFP timeline, it is anticipated that the initial comprehensive exams will begin in FY2026. As these exams will not be covered by the employee's health insurance plan, the additional cost of the exams will need to be accounted for in CFD's operating budget.

### ***Upgrade of Workout Equipment in all 26 Firehouses***

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<sup>8</sup> The RFP process and discussion with the Union should occur simultaneously.

<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that the City and the Union have previously met to discuss implementation of the CFD Respiratory Protection Program and Hearing Conservation Program, as required by OSHA. As such, the discussion with the Union should focus on the additional medical exams and testing that were requested by the Union.

It is recommended that additional follow up is conducted prior to moving forward with purchasing new workout equipment in all 26 Firehouses. As noted above, the cost of replacement varies greatly based on the vendor and the make/model of the equipment. The following are recommended next steps:

CFD should evaluate and appropriately document the current state of their fitness equipment to include the age, appearance, maintenance, and user experience of the existing equipment. Following that evaluation, CFD should work with their Finance team and the Office of Budget and Evaluation to better determine the budgetary impact of replacement and whether there are existing funds that can be utilized to upgrade equipment and/or whether additional funding is needed. If it is determined that additional funding is needed, CFD should request the necessary funding in the upcoming budget cycle.

### ***Funding for Certification of 15 Firefighters as Health and Wellness Coaches***

It is recommended that additional follow up is conducted prior to moving forward with funding certification of firefighters as health and wellness coaches. The following are the recommended next steps:

CFD should work with the City's Procurement office to put out a Request for Information (RFI) in order to obtain additional information regarding the various Certification programs. This will give CFD and the Union a more comprehensive overview of the options, cost, and benefits of each certification program for their consideration.

The City should engage in additional dialogue with the Union to ensure that the City Administration has a full understanding of the Union's request and the goals of certifying 15 firefighters as health and wellness coaches. It is recommended that CFD and the Union work together to establish a written process that includes selection criteria, the requirements of those that are certified, as well as other potential components that should be included in a fitness and/or wellness program for CMO's consideration.