



**SASOM**

South African Society  
of Occupational Medicine

FOUNDED IN 1948

## THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF OCCUPATIONAL MEDICINE

### WORKER JOB SPECIFICATIONS

32

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#### SASOM GUIDELINE 32

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# WORKER JOB SPECIFICATIONS

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have a shared definition of Occupational Health that reads as follows: Occupational health should aim at –
  - 1.1.1 the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical;
  - 1.1.2 mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations;
  - 1.1.3 the prevention amongst workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions;
  - 1.1.4 the protection of workers in their employment from risk resulting from factors adverse to health;
  - 1.1.5 the placing and maintenance of the worker in an occupational environment that is adapted to his or her physiological and psychological capabilities; and, to summarise,
  - 1.1.6 the adaptation of work to the worker and of each worker to his or her job.
- 1.2 Worker job specifications therefore aim to get the right worker for a specific job, and to protect the worker and the work.
- 1.3 Worker job specifications (previously referred to as man job specifications or employee job specifications) set out the skills and personal attributes a worker should possess for a specific job, and are vital in comparing and assessing the suitability of workers and job applicants. The worker must meet certain criteria that are inherent to each job; if all the criteria are not met, the worker might be put under risk of incurring or exacerbating an injury or medical condition.
- 1.4 Worker job specifications refer to the person rather than the job and criteria must be inherent to each job.
- 1.5 Once ORPs have been established the Occupational Medicine Practitioner (OMP) should determine specific medical standards for each job.

## 2. LEGISLATION

Relevant legislation includes the following, but is not limited to them:

- 2.1 Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997
- 2.2 Employment Equity Act, 1998
- 2.3 Labour Relations Act, 1995
- 2.4 Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993
- 2.5 Mine, Health and Safety Act, 1996

## 3. PROCESS

- 3.1 The job should be clearly identified on the company's organogram.
- 3.2 A detailed job description is needed. The job is broken down into the different tasks and the

tasks into actions. Applicable anatomy, physiology and psychology are determined for each action.

3.3 The ORP is studied.

3.4 Worker job specifications are drawn up.

3.5 Medical evaluations or examinations that are necessary to identify exclusions for a specific job, as well as minimum health and other standards, should be stated.

#### **4. SPECIFICATIONS**

Specifications to consider include the following:

##### **4.1 Physical**

4.1.1 Height, mass, build

4.1.2 Dexterity

4.1.3 Visual acuity (including colour distinction, depth perception, peripheral vision, night vision, corrected or uncorrected)

4.1.4 Spatial orientation

4.1.5 Mobility of neck, back, arms, hands, fingers, legs and feet (full or limited range)

4.1.6 Sit or stand for long periods of time

4.1.7 Force and/or strength necessary in body, legs, arms, fingers

4.1.8 Ability to grip, haunch, kneel, bend, twist, climb, load, push, pull, etc

4.1.9 Ability to run or walk far distances

4.1.10 Tactile (temperature eg heat or cold)

4.1.11 Sense of hearing

4.1.12 Sense of smell

4.1.13 Communication skills (verbal and non-verbal)

4.1.14 Fitness tests necessary (initial and periodic)

4.1.15 Exclusion of certain medical conditions (eg epilepsy, colour blindness, etc)

4.1.16 Medical conditions that have to be controlled (eg hypertension and or diabetes)

4.1.17 Drug and alcohol testing

4.1.18 Special considerations such as pregnancy

##### **4.2 Physiological**

4.2.1 Cardio-vascular demand

4.2.2 Respiratory demand

4.2.3 Musculo-skeletal demand

4.2.4 Allergies

##### **4.3 Psychological**

4.3.1 Psychometric testing recommended

4.3.2 Ability to handle stress, shift work, night duty, etc

- 4.3.3 Literacy level
- 4.3.4 Trainability
- 4.3.5 Analytical ability

#### 4.4 Training and special requirements

- 4.4.1 Professional driver's permit or driver's licence
- 4.4.2 Certificate of competence (eg chain-saw operators)
- 4.4.3 Required qualifications and professional registrations (eg professional body registration)
- 4.4.4 Legally required occupational health training (eg hearing conservation)
- 4.4.5 Occupational safety training (e.g. Personal protective equipment)

#### **NOTE**

The SASOM guidelines are active working documents that are reviewed regularly, or as changes take place in legislation, the work or the workplace.

Your inputs and comments are therefore regarded as most valuable. Please send them to [info@sasom.org.za](mailto:info@sasom.org.za).

## EMPLOYEE JOB SPECIFICATION

<b>PHYSICAL</b>									
Age exclusion – 40 years and older for:	Hard physical labour	Pregnancy - exclusion from 20 weeks gestation for:	Hard physical labour, noise, vibration, operational work, chemicals or extreme heat or cold						
Mass:	Equestrian team ≥ 95kg, fire ladders ≥ 120kg	Build:	Eg fit into manhole, duct, etc						
Necessary: Arms, hands and fingers	Both, one or all	Necessary: Legs, feet or toes	Both, one, none or all						
Dexterity necessary	Yes/No	Grip necessary:	Yes/No						
Vision:	Corrected/Uncorrected	Hearing necessary: Yes/No	Hearing aid accepted or excluded						
	Far/near/night Vision/peripheral vision	Communication necessary: Yes/No	Verbal or non-verbal						
	Colour distinction/Depth perception	Sense of smell necessary	Yes/No						
Spatial orientation necessary	Yes/No	Tactile: Temperature	Heat/cold						
Mobility: Upper body, back and arms	Full range/Limited range	Haunch	Yes/No						
Mobility: Lower body, back and legs	Full range/Limited range Non assisted/assisted by wheelchair or prostheses	Kneel	Yes/No						
		Twisting, loading or climbing	Yes/No						
		Run	Yes/No						
Sit or stand for long (≥ 1 hour at a time)	Yes/No	Walk far (≥ 5km per day)	Yes/No						
Force necessary: Arms / Legs / Body	Yes/No	Hang onto object	Yes/No						
<b>Tools &amp; equipment used</b>									
<b>MEDICAL</b>									
Exclusion owing to uncontrolled medical condition such as:					Hypertension, diabetes, epilepsy, incoordination, lung disease, depression and allergy				
<b>PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT</b>									
Hard hat	Face shield	Safety glasses	Hearing protection	Mask: Type:	SCBA	Apron	Sun hat	Coat	Rain wear
Safety shoes	Gumboots	Reflective jacket	Metro police	Gloves: Type	Fire	Other:			
<b>LEGALLY REQUIRED TRAINING</b>									
Hearing conservation		Hazardous chemical substances		Hazardous biological agents		Asbestos / Silica / Coal Dust		Vibration	
<b>MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE</b>									
<b>Initial Health Evaluation:</b> Yes/No Physical, vision, urinalysis, cannabis, spiro and audio				<b>Periodic examination:</b> Yes/ No For: Physical, vision, urinalysis, cannabis, spiro and audio				<b>Exit Medical</b> Yes/No Spiro/Audio	
<b>Biological Monitoring:</b> Yes / No		Blood for:			Urine for:			X-ray for:	
<b>Occupation-related immunisation</b> Yes/No			Hepatitis B/Tetanus						
<b>Comments:</b>									
Done by:			ONP Name			Signature:			Date:
Checked by:			OMP Name			Signature:			Date: