**12-179 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**BUREAU OF LABOR STANDARDS**

**BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

**Chapter 5: OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY DIVING**

**Summary**: The purpose of this chapter is to establish standards and procedures to protect public safety divers from the hazards of diving.

# **Definitions**

1. **Public Safety Diver**: Any individual who engages in compressed gas diving activities under the direction of a public employer subject to rules adopted under Title 26 MRSA §565 and §2107.
2. **Public Safety Dive**: Compressed gas diving performed in the interest of search and rescue or related public safety purposes, which does not meet the definitions for commercial, scientific, or other diving activities as described in 29 CFR 1910 Subpart T or 29 CFR 1926 Subpart Y as adopted under agency work rules 12-179 Chapter 2, general industry, and Chapter 3, construction standards.
3. **Public Safety Dive Team**: Personnel trained in public safety dive operations, including public safety divers and support personnel.

# **Dive Manual**

* 1. Each agency conducting public safety diving shall develop and maintain a written dive operations manual that contains policies and procedures to protect divers. Each dive manual shall be reviewed annually.
  2. Each dive manual shall contain, at a minimum, the following sections:

1. Scope
2. Dive Operations Chain of Command
3. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Dive Operations
4. Equipment maintenance/inspection
5. Medical Evaluation and Clearance
6. Training
7. Emergency Action Plan
8. Recordkeeping

### Scope

Each agency shall establish a written mission and limit of its public safety dive operations.

### IV. Dive Operations Chain of Command

Each agency shall establish a written chain of command with a clear chain of responsibility and duties within a dive program including but not limited to: divers, supervisors and administration.

### V. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Dive Operations

Each agency shall establish written standard operating procedures for dive operations. Procedures shall be established based on dive type, dive parameters and recognized dive safety practices. A process of hazard assessment, which will include personal protective equipment, shall be included as part of standard operating procedures.

### VI. Equipment Maintenance/Inspection

Each agency shall ensure and document that all dive-related equipment is inspected and maintained in accordance with manufacturer recommendations. Each agency shall keep a written inventory of dive-related equipment. All dive-related equipment shall be inspected for wear or damage prior to each use.

### VII. Medical Evaluation and Clearance

Every public safety diver must receive a written medical clearance for diving by a physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP) at least every eighteen (18) months. Following any major injury or illness requiring medical attention beyond first aid, additional written medical clearance by PLHCP shall be obtained before resuming diver duties.

### VIII. Training

1. Each public safety diver shall possess, at a minimum, a nationally recognized diver certification.
2. Each agency shall ensure dive team members are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), First Aid, Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) and the proper administration of oxygen, if licensed to do so.
3. Dive team members shall be trained or certified proficient for the requirements of various dive operations for which they are assigned
4. Training shall be commensurate with duties and type of dive operations, including, but not limited to:
5. Use of tools and equipment
6. Techniques of diving
7. Emergency procedures
8. Hyperbaric conditions
9. Recordkeeping and log books
10. Watercraft operation

### IX. Emergency Action Plan

Each Agency shall develop a written emergency action plan. The emergency action plan shall include, but is not limited to, emergency procedures for equipment failure, adverse conditions, and medical illness or injury. This plan shall be integrated into the Dive Manual and any training provided to dive teams.

### X. Recordkeeping

1. Each agency shall maintain written records of all operational and training dive activities. Records kept shall include:
2. Medical clearance for each diver.
3. Training records.
4. Equipment inspection/maintenance records.
5. Dive records. Dive records shall include, but not limited, to the following:
   1. Type of Dive
   2. Date
   3. Name of Dive Supervisor
   4. Name and Role of Dive Members
   5. Location
   6. Surface and Subsurface Environmental Conditions
   7. Dive Profile
   8. Unusual Incidents
      1. Each agency shall retain all written records for active members. Records connected to non-active member shall be retained a minimum of five (5) years beyond the individuals last dive-related activity.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

26 M.R.S. §565

EFFECTIVE DATE:

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