

**International Conference on Occupational Radiation Protection:
Strengthening Radiation Protection of Workers –Twenty Years of Progress
and the Way Forward**

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Abstract: Working in the field of ionizing radiation involves many risks due to the harmful biological effects of ionizing radiation on the health of workers who are involved. Therefore, radiation protection center (RPC) the regulatory body in Iraq which is responsible of monitoring all activities related to ionizing radiation and responsible of monitoring 6200 workers in radiation field including health surveillance through blood examinations to provides safety for them in this field before and during their work according to GSR part 3 articles 3.108 and 3.109 and Protection of Ionizing Radiation Law No. 99 of 1980, article 12/5th which states that (the source owner should Ensure all workers in radiation field performing the initial and periodic fitness medical examination, according to the instructions and at his own expense). Accordingly, one of the conditions set by RPC for granting license to work in radiation field is to conduct an initial medical examination mentioned in the primary medical examination form prepared by RPC which includes skin, ophthalmological, blood tests and semen analysis report, to ensure their suitability for work and their ability to tackle the assigned tasks. RPC also conducts periodic health surveillance for workers for the duration of their work in radiation field who have been granted licenses by forcing them to do blood tests per year as mentioned in the periodic medical form prepared by RPC. Both initial and periodic medical examinations are being Followed-up by specialized physicians in RPC to ensure workers fitness to continue working in radiation field. Iraqi law no. 99 in 1980 includes the generalization of fitness tests required for radiation workers who want to work in the areas of radiation according to article 4/a of the instructions for the employment of applicants to work in the fields of radiation, which states that: It is not possible to work in radiation fields for those who have the following diseases (cancer, all blood diseases including all kinds of anemia, corneal opacity, cataract, Xeroderma Pigmentosa). Physicians in RPC recommend to exclude those workers from working in radiation field. RPC statistics in 2021 showed that 10 workers were excluded from work in Radiation and Nuclear Medicine Hospital because they had cancer, 6 workers were excluded because they had cataract, 2 workers were excluded because they had thalassemia and one worker excluded because he had Corneal Opacity.

There are certain diseases or minor changes in blood tests do not require excluding workers from work in the field of radiation. For such cases medical treatment and monitoring their medical examination periodically is recommended. a re-examination after a certain period of time is also recommended to ensure their safety from the hazards of ionizing radiation. The RPC maintains medical records such as (pre-employment, initial and periodic medical tests, private and end-of-work) and laboratory test reports (e.g. blood samples, skin, and semen tests for males). It also includes exposure records (e.g. overexposure) and all of these data are confidential. The data of workers in Iraq are kept 30 years after the workers retirement.

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