



Date: June 28, 2016

To: *PHW* Patrick H. West, City Manager *PHW*

From: Michael A. DuRee, Fire Chief *MDR*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Junior Lifeguard Program**

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Since 1969, Long Beach's Junior Lifeguard Program (Program) has offered boys and girls, between the ages of 9 and 17, the opportunity to receive instruction in lifeguard rescue techniques, emergency medical first aid, ocean sports activities, physical conditioning, and marine ecology. The goals of the Program are to promote careers in public service and public safety, and to enable Long Beach youth to confidently interact with the marine environment in a fun, safe setting. Given the popularity and benefits of the Program, it is the Fire Department's objective to increase Program awareness and accessibility to encourage youth from all areas of the City to participate.

The Fire Department has identified several potential barriers to Program access. The first of these is Program awareness. Historically, information about the Program has been communicated primarily through word of mouth with limited citywide advertising. Another barrier is transportation. Program participants who do not live near the beach may need to take multiple bus lines to reach the nearest bus stop, which is one mile away from the Long Beach Junior Lifeguard Station. A third barrier is the potential financial hardship of the Program, which has a cost of \$450 per participant. Finally, youth with limited aquatic backgrounds or minimal exposure to the beach may feel intimidated or unprepared to participate in the Program.

In an effort to remove these barriers, the Fire Department's Marine Safety Division implemented the following measures for the 2016 Junior Lifeguard Program:

- Partnered with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine to place Program registration information in the Spring/Summer Catalog;
- Sent Marine Safety staff to special events at middle schools and high schools throughout the City to recruit potential Program participants;
- Distributed Program information in both English and Spanish to the Chiefs of Staff of all City Council Districts;
- Conducted tryouts at Silverado Pool in West Long Beach for the first time;
- Began discussions with Long Beach Transit to implement seasonal routes from North, West, and Central Long Beach to the Bayshore and Belmont Pool area;

- Distributed more fee waivers than in past years, based on qualified family income status; and,
- Implemented the Cadet Program for the older groups, with a focus on transitioning them from the Program to seasonal Ocean Lifeguard positions.

With the implementation of the above measures, and continued discussions with our community partners, the Fire Department's Marine Safety Division is confident that the Junior Lifeguard Program will expand its impact throughout the City and continue to be a model Program.

If you have any questions regarding the Junior Lifeguard Program, please call me at (562) 570-2505 or Gonzalo Medina, Marine Safety Chief, at (562) 570-1287.

MAD:DH  
Q:/ADMINISTRATION/LETTERS AND MEMOS/JUNIOR LIFEGUARD PROGRAM

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