

Date: March 29, 2022

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager



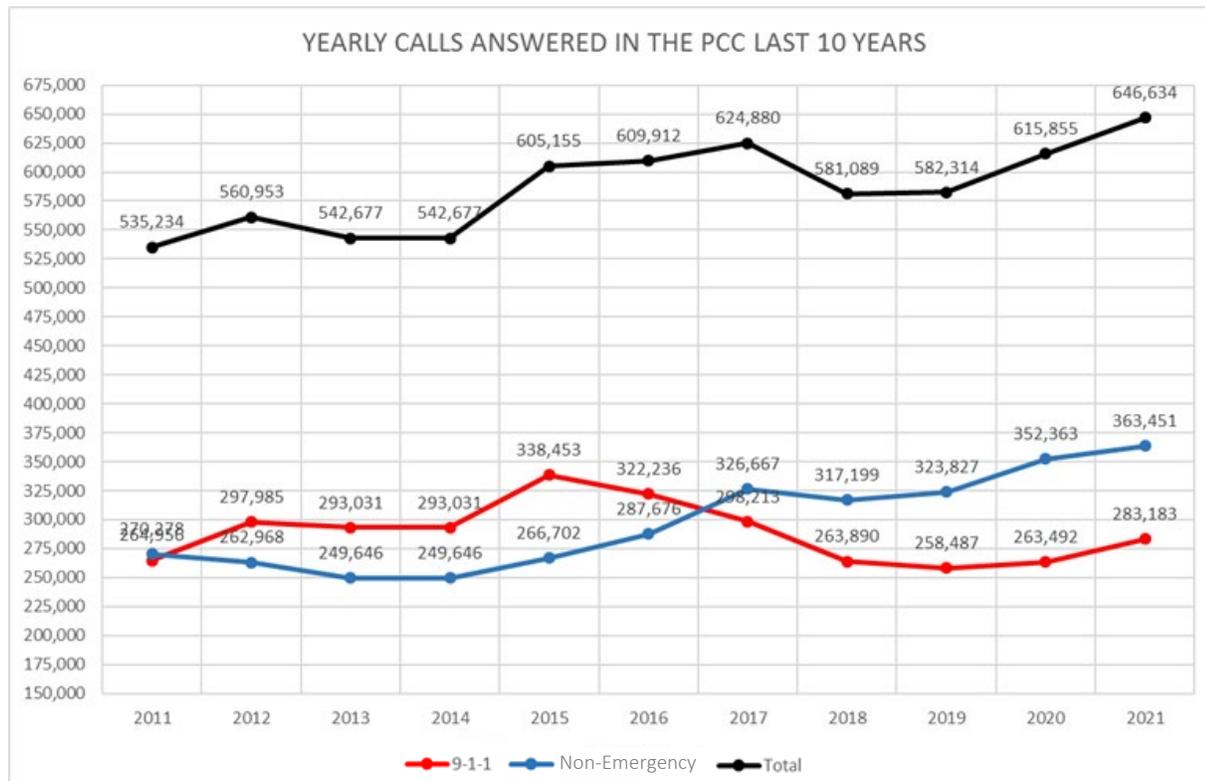

From: Reginald Harrison, Director, Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Communications

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **9-1-1 Non-Emergency Phone Tree**

The City of Long Beach (City) 9-1-1 Communications Center, which dispatches emergency services to the City's residents, is implementing a non-emergency phone tree. The non-emergency phone tree will allow callers to connect directly to commonly requested City services and provide dispatchers with additional time to assist residents requiring immediate police, fire, and emergency medical services. The phone tree will alleviate the inundation of non-emergency calls to 9-1-1 dispatchers, while providing non-emergency callers with a more streamlined experience to access services.

All emergency and non-emergency calls are answered by the City's 9-1-1 dispatchers. In recent years, dispatchers have received a consistently increasing number of non-emergency calls, far exceeding the 9-1-1 emergency calls requiring immediate police, fire, or emergency medical assistance. In Calendar Year 2021, nearly 60 percent of calls received by the 9-1-1 dispatchers were for non-emergency services (see chart below).



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Dispatchers have a Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) requirement to answer 95 percent of 9-1-1 calls within 15 seconds. We are hard-pressed to meet this standard, in part due to the large volume of non-emergency calls which take precious time away from answering and dispatching emergency calls for services. This situation is not unique to Long Beach as most of the dispatch centers we surveyed are also experiencing this dilemma where non-emergency calls exceed the number of emergency calls for service.

Once the phone tree is activated, residents who call the non-emergency line (562-435-6711) will have five menu items to select from: request booking, arrest or bail information; obtain a police report; report animal nuisance issues; obtain towing information; and report any other non-emergency issue. If none of these options apply to the caller, or if the caller does not select an option, the caller will be connected directly to a 9-1-1 dispatcher. Through the City's Language Access Program, callers will also have the option of accessing these services in English, Spanish, Tagalog, and Khmer.

A regional and statewide survey found that most large city 9-1-1 emergency centers actively utilize a non-emergency phone tree. These Public Safety Communications Centers include:

- Anaheim Police Department
- Garden Grove Police Department
- Huntington Beach Police Department
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Orange County Sheriff's Department
- Pasadena Police Department
- San Diego Police Department
- Santa Monica Police Department
- Torrance Police Department

The non-emergency phone tree will undergo rigorous internal testing prior to go-live to the public. Residents are reminded to always dial 9-1-1 if they are experiencing or witnessing a crime or emergency.

If you have any questions, please contact Reggie Harrison, Director of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications at 562.570.9460.

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