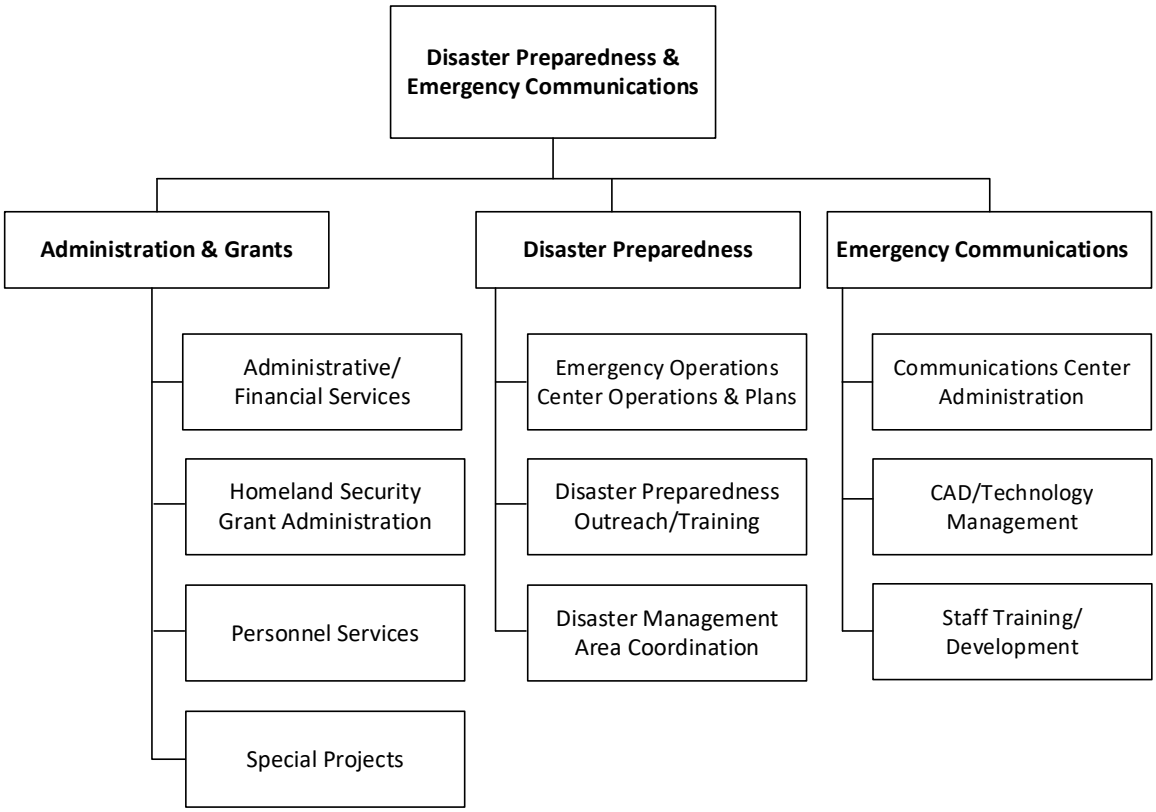
Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Communications



Reginald Harrison, Director

Meredith Dawson, Administration & Grants Officer

Gabriela Jilek, Communications Center Officer

Luis Valdez, Disaster Preparedness Officer

Department Overview

Mission:

To protect the lives and property of the community and its first responders by ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of emergency communications, and disaster preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery.

Core Services:

- Educate residents and business owners on steps they can take to mitigate the impacts of a disaster on their home or workplace, how to respond to a variety of disasters, and how to receive emergency messages from the City's mass notification system, Alert Long Beach.
- Coordinate and administer Citywide emergency preparedness plans to ensure that City employees and key Community Partner Organizations (CPOs), including local school districts, colleges, hospitals, the American Red Cross and other non-profits, know their role in the event of a major emergency or disaster.
- Provide all-hazards planning, training, and exercise coordination to ensure that City employees are prepared to manage and assist in the response to and recovery from a major emergency or disaster.
- Coordinate and administer the Citywide Homeland Security Grants Program (HSGP) to ensure the City maximizes the receipt and use of grant awards to prepare the City for a major emergency or disaster.
- Coordinate the efforts of the Los Angeles County Disaster Management Area F, which includes the cities of Long Beach, Avalon, and Signal Hill.
- Provide 9-1-1 emergency communication services for police, fire, and emergency medical service responses for residents, business owners and the City's first responders.
- Coordinate the planning and implementation of a Consolidated Emergency Communications Division to incorporate Police and Fire Emergency Communications Center operations.
- Maintain the readiness of the Emergency Communications and Operations Center (ECOC) by facilitating repairs and upgrades as needed.

FY 26 Focus:

The Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Communications Department (Department) provides four key services that are imperative to maintaining the safety and well-being of the City of Long Beach, its residents, business community and first responders: (1) disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery; (2) maintenance and activation of the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC); (3) the Emergency Communications Center and the Public Safety Dispatchers responsible for 9-1-1 call-taking and dispatching of Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services; and, (4) administration of the City's Homeland Security Grants program.

The Disaster Preparedness Division will continue to educate CPOs, City staff and residents with the goal of creating a more resilient Long Beach in the face of disasters or emergencies. The Department will engage residents through participation in community events and facilitation of the Map Your Neighborhood program, which promotes resiliency through collaboration amongst neighbors in the wake of a disaster. In FY 26, the Department will continue to keep the Long Beach community informed through CPO meetings, multiple emergency messaging systems, including Alert Long Beach, and educational resources made available via the department website, social media accounts and printed materials.

In FY 25, the Disaster Preparedness Division implemented several plans and resources that are also applicable to the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games. The City's first Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Plan was developed to ensure a safe, efficient, and orderly evacuation process in case of an emergency. The plan takes into consideration the unique social, cultural, and geographical climates of Long Beach, as well as the needs of its Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs (DAFN) community. Additionally,

the Department leveraged Hazard Mitigation Grant funds to install an Automated Earthquake Early Warning System at Long Beach Utilities facilities. This system will distribute notifications of seismic activity through City facility public address, VoIP telephones, and radio systems.

The Disaster Preparedness Division oversees the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a 3,300 square foot facility that serves as the focal point for coordination of the City's emergency planning, training, response, and recovery efforts. The EOC was activated for a majority of the past six years in response to a broad spectrum of emergencies including the COVID-19 pandemic, elections, civil unrest and protests, an influx of migrant children, winter storms and, most recently, the Los Angeles wildfires. In FY 26, the department will initiate technology upgrades in the EOC to enhance its functionality and teleconferencing capabilities.

The Emergency Communications Division, consisting of Police and Fire 9-1-1 Public Safety Dispatchers, plays a critical role in the City's continuum of public safety. 9-1-1 Dispatchers are responsible for the safety and well-being of Long Beach residents, business owners, Police Officers and Fire Fighters. To serve these communities at the highest level, the Emergency Communications Division will continue to meet or exceed 9-1-1 call-taking industry standards and continuously refine internal procedures to ensure staffing levels are at maximum efficiency to best serve the public and first responders.

In FY 26, the Emergency Communications Division will continue the "Join Long Beach 9-1-1" program through the implementation of robust recruitment and retention strategies. In FY 23, the Department worked in conjunction with a consulting firm to complete a 9-1-1 Staffing Study, which identified benchmarks and industry standards, including staffing levels, recruitment and hiring practices, and overtime requirements. Since the completion of the study, the Department has implemented 60% of the recommendations, including assuming oversight of the Police-level background investigation process for dispatcher recruits, reducing hiring time by approximately 90 days. The 9-1-1 Staffing Study will continue to inform the Department's priorities in FY 26, with initiatives such as web-based staff scheduling software, digitization of daily operating reports, and quality assurance reviews.

The Emergency Communications Division will continue to prepare 9-1-1 operations for the implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911), an industry-wide technology upgrade. NG911 will greatly improve the operations and reliability of Long Beach's 9-1-1 systems, as it will enhance emergency communications to create a faster, more resilient system that has the potential to seamlessly share voice, photos, and text messages between the public and 9-1-1. The Division will continue its focus on consolidating the 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center through a cross-training program, which certifies Dispatchers to answer both Police and Fire calls. A consolidated 9-1-1 Center provides service enhancement to the public by eliminating the need to transfer calls and reducing dispatcher overtime shifts by increasing the availability of dispatchers to manage major incidents.

In FY 26, the Division will continue to implement improvements to the 9-1-1 Back-up Center to ensure dispatcher responsibilities are met and that technology and telephone consoles closely resemble those of the primary 9-1-1 Center.

In FY 26, the Department will maintain focus on its Health and Wellness Program to enhance the wellbeing of the City's 9-1-1 Dispatchers in the Emergency Communications Center. Initiatives include crisis and family counseling resources, comfort K-9 visits, an employee recognition program, and facility improvements to maximize comfort for staff assigned to non-traditional shifts and overtime.

The Administration Division will continue to manage the Citywide Homeland Security Grants Program, which oversees the application process for funding, assuring compliance with grant requirements, and acts as a liaison between City Departments and granting agencies. Awarded funds are utilized by multiple departments, primarily the Police, Fire, and Health Departments, to procure equipment, planning, and training that will help Long Beach prepare, mitigate, and respond to natural and man-made disasters.

Department Performance Measures

Key Measure	FY 24 Actual	FY 25 Target	FY 25 Estimate	FY 26 Projection
Number of disaster preparedness training events and outreach efforts conducted for City employees, Community Partner Organizations (CPO), and the community.	20	18	21	20

In FY 25, the Department continued to participate in outreach events such as the Tsunami Walk and Preparedness Fair during California Tsunami Preparedness Week and engaged the community during disaster preparedness observances such as National Preparedness Month and Pet Preparedness Month. In FY 26, the Disaster Preparedness Division will focus on reinvigorating the City's Map Your Neighborhood program, which facilitates resource identification amongst neighbors to increase the preparedness and resiliency of our Long Beach neighborhoods.

Key Measure	FY 24 Actual	FY 25 Target	FY 25 Estimate	FY 26 Projection
Number of Public Safety Dispatcher candidates invited to interview as part of recruitment.	63	75	170	75

In partnership with Civil Service and Human Resources Departments, the recruitment of eligible 9-1-1 Public Safety Dispatcher candidates is open and continuous year-round. This allows the Department to maintain manageable staffing levels through continuous outreach to viable dispatcher candidates. In addition to open and continuous recruitment, the Department will continue implementation of the "Join Long Beach 9-1-1" recruitment campaign to attract and retain dispatcher candidates.

Key Measure	FY 24 Actual	FY 25 Target	FY 25 Estimate	FY 26 Projection
Percentage of 9-1-1 calls for service answered within industry standards.	91	90	90	90

The Emergency Communications Center is the first point of contact for the community when Police, Fire or Emergency Medical Services are needed. The speed and accuracy of the 9-1-1 call-taking and dispatch services are critical to getting the appropriate first responders to the calling parties as quickly as possible. The Communications Center manages and deploys the necessary resources to meet the industry standard of answering 90 percent of 9-1-1 phone calls within 15 seconds. The non-emergency public safety phone tree, first implemented by the Department in FY 23, continues to successfully reduce the number of non-emergency calls answered by 9-1-1 Dispatchers, ensuring that these call-answering standards are met.

FY 25 Accomplishments

- Completed the City's first comprehensive Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Plan, providing safe and efficient evacuation processes in an emergency, while considering Long Beach's unique social, cultural, and geographical climates, including its Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs community.

- Upgraded the City's Outdoor Public Warning System, which provides audible alarms via high-capacity speakers to notify the public of critical emergencies. The Warning System upgrade provides enhanced capabilities to quickly mobilize speakers and customize messaging as the need arises.

- Activated the EOC on January 7, 2025, to monitor a severe wind event that ultimately resulted in the devastating wildfires across the Los Angeles region. The EOC remained activated for 20 days. During this time, the EOC was staffed by 40 employees from 15 City departments, facilitated 14 incident briefings, and distributed 10 Situational Awareness Reports. Additionally, for the first time in the City's history, the EOC received and fulfilled Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) requests for 8 non-sworn staff to support neighboring Cities' EOCs severely inundated by the wildfires.

- In coordination with the City's Joint Information Center, the EOC launched a dedicated public-facing webpage to provide real-time public health and safety information related to the 2025 Los Angeles Wildfires. The webpage will serve as a dedicated hub for similar information during future emergencies or disasters.

- Developed a City Facility Damage Reporting Platform during the February 2025 winter storms to allow staff to quickly document damage assessments, upload photos, share information, and record repair efforts. This tool increases alignment between the EOC and field staff, notifies the City Safety team of potential workplace hazards, and more efficiently tracks damage that may be reimbursable by FEMA. The Damage Reporting Platform will be used as an EOC data gathering strategy for future significant disasters and weather events.

- Administered a Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) portfolio of $41 million, which includes management of $32.5 million in active HSGP grant funding, and $8.5 million in new grant funding requests for future Citywide projects to provide training and equipment acquisition for first responders.

- Executed a Hazard Mitigation Grant funded contract to install Automated Earthquake Early Warning System at Long Beach Utilities facilities. This system will distribute notifications of seismic activity through City facility public address, VoIP telephones, and radio system, while simultaneously performing operational actions to open roll-up bay doors to ensure access to critical equipment.

- In calendar year 2024, the Communications Center received more than 634,368 calls, handled 232,139 outbound calls to agency partners, and dispatched 216,044 emergency units.

- Implemented recommendations identified in the recently completed 9-1-1 Staffing Study, including the assumption of the background investigation process to reduce time-to-hire for 9-1-1 Dispatcher candidates by approximately 90 days.

- In calendar year 2024, the "Join Long Beach 9-1-1" recruitment team participated in 36 recruitment events, interviewed 63 candidates, of which 16 were hired. Currently, there are 15 dispatchers in various stages of training.

- Maintained a staffing level of 84% in the Communications Center, putting Long Beach 9-1-1 in the top percentile of PSAPs of our size in the country. This is a tremendous accomplishment, given the nationwide staffing shortage of 9-1-1 Public Safety Dispatchers. Additionally, the Department

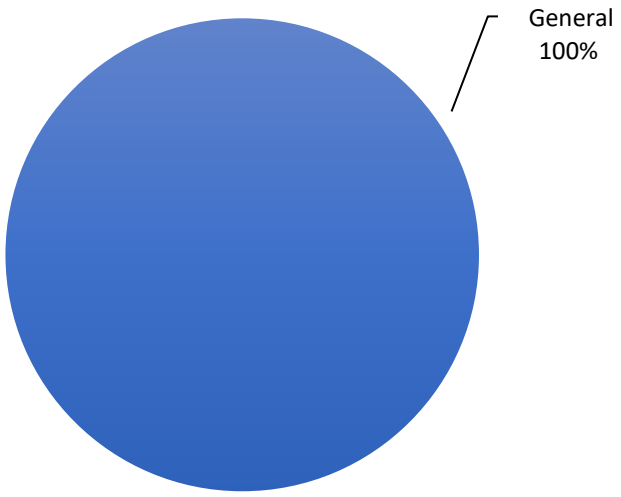
maintained 100% staffing levels in the Administration Bureau, the Disaster Preparedness Bureau, and the Department's Management Team.

- Encouraged the community and City staff to participate in the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill, Tsunami Preparedness Week, Pet Preparedness Month activities, and engaged the public through social media campaigns, including Facebook Live videos and Alert Long Beach notifications.

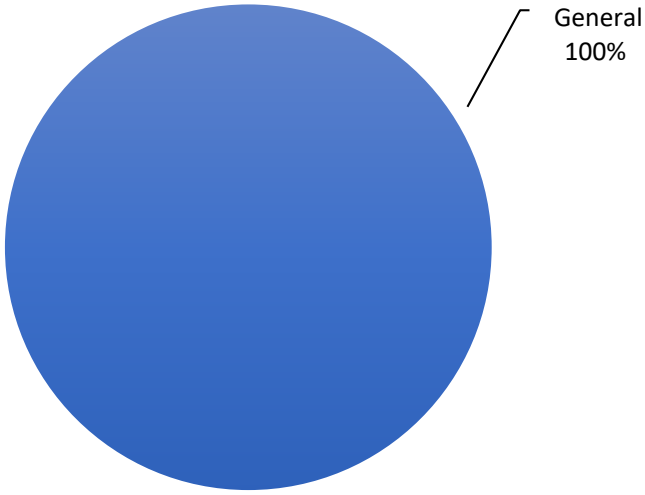
- Led several cross-departmental efforts for the City of Long Beach's HSGP. Held four quarterly joint-sessions with City staff from Police, Fire, Health & Humans Services, Parks, Recreation, and Marine, Technology Innovation, and Harbor departments to coordinate Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant applications.

- Staffed the 9-1-1 Emergency Communications back-up center on a periodic basis to maintain equipment and staff familiarization.

FY 26 Revenues by Fund Group



FY 26 Expenditures by Fund Group



Fund Impact

Fund Group	Revenues		Expenditures		Fund Impact
General	127,347		17,162,245		(17,034,898)
Total	**127,347**		**17,162,245**		**(17,034,898)**

Disaster Preparedness Division

Key Services:

1. **Citywide Disaster Preparedness**
   - Citywide Emergency Planning
   - Communications and Outreach
   - Citywide Disaster Preparedness Trainings and Exercises
   - Area F Disaster Management Area Coordinator Representation

2. **Emergency Operations Center Operations and Plans**
   - EOC Systems Maintenance
   - ECOC Facilities Repair and Maintenance
   - EOC Operations & Security
   - EOC Facility Usage
   - EOC Operational Readiness
   - EOC Plan Updates

Disaster Preparedness	Actuals FY 24	Adjusted* FY 25	Adopted** FY 26
Revenues	-	-	-
Expenditures	1,168,895	1,230,653	1,316,356
Budgeted FTEs	3.00	3.00	3.00

*Adjusted Budget as of April 30, 2025.

**Amounts exclude all-years carryover.

Note: The City is currently maintaining two different financial systems and until a new budget development software is established, the financial information displayed in the future may have further adjustments.

Administration Division

Key Services:

1. **Administration and Financial Services**
   - Administrative Services
   - Financial Services
   - Homeland Security Grant Administration
   - Personnel, Labor Relations and Recruitment
   - Purchasing and Contracts

Administration	Actuals FY 24	Adjusted* FY 25	Adopted** FY 26
Revenues	986,556	-	-
Expenditures	3,360,340	2,578,461	2,660,861
Budgeted FTEs	7.00	7.00	7.00

*Adjusted Budget as of April 30, 2025.

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Emergency Communications Division

Key Services:

1. **Emergency Communications**
   - Call Taking (9-1-1 and 7-digit)
   - Emergency Dispatch and Resource Allocation
   - Tactical Operations Support
   - Intra-agency emergency support coordination
   - Staff Training and Development
   - CAD and Technology Systems Management
   - Data Analysis and Reporting
   - Investigative Support

Emergency Communications	Actuals FY 24	Adjusted* FY 25	Adopted** FY 26
Revenues	127,797	127,347	127,347
Expenditures	11,857,679	12,807,974	13,185,027
Budgeted FTEs	81.00	81.00	81.00

*Adjusted Budget as of April 30, 2025.

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Financial Summary by Category

	Actual FY 24	Adopted* FY 25	Adjusted** FY 25	Adopted* FY 26
Revenues:				
Property Taxes	-	-	-	-
Sales and Use Taxes	-	-	-	-
Other Taxes	-	-	-	-
Utility Users Tax	-	-	-	-
Franchise Fees	-	-	-	-
Licenses, Permits and Fees	-	-	-	-
Fines and Forfeitures	-	-	-	-
Use of Money & Property	-	-	-	-
Revenue from Other Agencies	986,556	-	-	-
Charges for Services	127,797	127,347	127,347	127,347
Other Revenues	-	-	-	-
Intrafund Services	-	-	-	-
Intrafund Transfers	-	-	-	-
Interfund Services	-	-	-	-
Interfund Transfers	-	-	-	-
Other Financing Sources	-	-	-	-
Total Revenues	1,114,353	127,347	127,347	127,347
Expenditures:				
Salaries and Wages	6,830,817	8,657,111	8,657,111	8,790,506
Employee Benefits	4,245,787	5,554,779	5,554,779	5,926,829
Overtime	1,922,198	223,684	223,684	223,684
Materials, Supplies and Services	1,297,334	561,406	561,406	561,406
Interfund Support	1,979,571	1,620,109	1,620,109	1,659,820
Intrafund Support	111,207	-	-	-
Capital Purchases	-	-	-	-
Insurance Premiums and Losses	-	-	-	-
Other Non-Operational Expenditures	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	-	-	-	-
Intrafund Transfers Out	-	-	-	-
Purchase of Gas & Water	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and Non Cash Expenditures	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	16,386,913	16,617,089	16,617,089	17,162,245
Budgeted FTEs	91.00	91.00	91.00	91.00

* Amounts exclude all-years carryover.

**Adjusted Budget as of April 30, 2025.

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Personnel Summary

Classification	FY 24 Adopt FTE	FY 25 Adopt FTE	FY 26 Adopt FTE	FY 25 Adopted Budget	FY 26 Adopted Budget
Director-Disaster Prep & Emergency Comm	1.00	1.00	1.00	253,605	261,265
Administrative Analyst II	2.00	2.00	2.00	182,426	189,545
Administrative Analyst III	1.00	1.00	1.00	116,507	117,963
Administrative Officer	-	1.00	1.00	126,532	140,846
Assistant Administrative Analyst II	1.00	1.00	1.00	73,956	81,167
Communications Center Coordinator	3.00	3.00	3.00	397,049	395,423
Communications Center Officer	-	1.00	1.00	126,532	127,797
Communications Center Supervisor	4.00	4.00	4.00	470,869	512,428
Disaster Preparedness Officer	1.00	1.00	1.00	126,501	142,875
Executive Assistant	1.00	1.00	1.00	75,782	81,641
Payroll/Personnel Assistant II	1.00	1.00	1.00	62,235	63,013
Public Safety Dispatcher II	58.00	58.00	58.00	5,327,851	5,361,019
Public Safety Dispatcher III	4.00	4.00	4.00	388,176	406,682
Public Safety Dispatcher IV	11.00	11.00	11.00	1,219,718	1,208,908
Secretary	1.00	1.00	1.00	73,172	74,047
Special Projects Officer	2.00	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Salaries	91.00	91.00	91.00	9,038,911	9,182,619
Overtime	-	-	-	223,684	223,684
Fringe Benefits	-	-	-	5,338,548	5,647,345
Administrative Overhead	-	-	-	216,231	279,484
Attrition/Salary Savings	-	-	-	(289,677)	(299,990)
Expenditure Transfer	-	-	-	(92,123)	(92,123)
Total	**91.00**	**91.00**	**91.00**	**14,435,574**	**14,941,019**