

REPORT FROM

OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Date: November 12, 2020
To: The Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee
From: Richard H. Llewellyn, Jr., City Administrative Officer
Reference: Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee report back request on October 14, 2020 regarding Motion (Bonin – Koretz), C.F. 20-1210
Subject: **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT POSITIONS – EXEMPTION FROM THE HIRING FREEZE**

CAO File No. 0220-05796-0000
Council File No. 20-1210
Council District: --

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council, Note and File this report inasmuch as the Emergency Management Department's request has been submitted to the Managed Hiring Committee for consideration.

SUMMARY

On October 14, 2020, the Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee considered a Motion (Bonin – Koretz) to exempt eight positions within the Emergency Management Department (EMD) from the managed hiring freeze (C.F. 20-1210). This report is in response to the Committee's request for a report back identifying which of the eight positions are recommended for exemption.

As part of the actions taken in formulating the 2020-21 City Budget, the Council and Mayor approved a citywide hiring freeze due to the City's fiscal condition and declining revenues associated with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (C.F. 20-0600). The hiring freeze process allows for a review of factors by the Managed Hiring Committee, such as the current and projected fiscal condition of a department's salary accounts and the impacts from the implementation of furloughs and the Separation Incentive Program (SIP).

Subsequent to initial consideration by the Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee on October 14, 2020, in which the Committee held the matter for further discussion, the EMD submitted the attached memo to the City Administrative Officer, which revised the hiring freeze exemption request from eight positions to three positions. The revised request consists of three Emergency Management Coordinator II (EMC) positions. Of the three EMC positions requested, two will be vacated through the SIP on November 7, 2020, and one is currently vacant.

The Department's current fiscal condition, as reported by this Office in the First Financial Status Report dated October 23, 2020, forecasts a year-end \$80,665 EMD budgetary deficit; however, the Department states that these positions are critical to the continuity of operations within the EMD, particularly with Duty Officer functions and leadership staffing of the Emergency Operations Center.

Although the Department is currently projecting a current year budget deficit, and the intent of the SIP is to withhold the backfill of these positions in order to generate salary savings, given the critical nature of these positions on public health and safety, this Office has forwarded the Department's exemption request for the three EMC positions to the Managed Hiring Committee for further review and consideration.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Approval of the recommendation in this report will have no impact to the General Fund at this time. Should the Managed Hiring Committee approve the request for hiring freeze exemption for the three Emergency Management Department positions, a net salaries savings amount of \$12,327 would not be realized. The savings amount is based on the incremental salary difference of the two Separation Incentive Program-related positions and one vacant Emergency Management Coordinator II position that would be filled through internal promotion and assumes the lower level positions (Emergency Management Coordinator I) remain vacant for the duration of the fiscal year. Additional funds may need to be provided due to the Department's projected year-end salary shortfall.

FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT

The recommendation in this report complies with the City's Financial Policies, in that current appropriations for this purpose are limited to the sum of available cash balances and revenues estimated to be received in the current budget year.

RHL:EFR:ED:04210045

Attachment

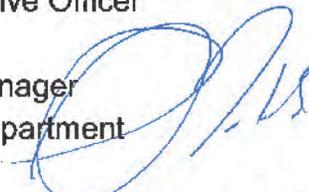
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Attachment



Date: October 19, 2020

To: Richard Llewelyn, City Administrative Officer
Office of the City Administrative Officer

From: Aram Sahakian, General Manager
Emergency Management Department 

Subject: **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (EMD) REQUESTS FOR HIRING FREEZE EXEMPTIONS**

As a follow-up to our submission of requests to unfreeze positions vacated through the Separation Incentive Program (SIP), I want to provide your office with additional information regarding the public health and safety impact of maintaining these vacancies in EMD, as well as the impact on continuity of department operations.

All of the vacant or pending vacant positions requested for unfreeze approval are related to public health and safety including our ongoing activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to support the City's response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. As a matter of operational and fiscal prioritization, we have reviewed our unfreeze requests and feel strongly that the most critical spots to exempt and fill are the three (3) Emergency Management Coordinator II (EMC) positions. EMD has four (4) EMC II positions; one (1) is presently vacant and two (2) more will be vacant effective November 7, 2020 due to SIP retirements which will leave us with just one (1) filled EMC II spot.

The EMC II positions serve as on-call 24/7 Duty Officers who supervise EMD Duty Teams. These positions ensure rapid and effective inter-agency coordination, sharing of essential information and activation of the EOC. The positions are responsible for issuing emergency mass notifications and alerts through our NotifyLA system and the federal Wireless Emergency Alert system for critical public health and safety functions such as evacuations and shelter operations. They share situational awareness with City support departments, elected officials and coordinate operations with other jurisdictions such as the Los Angeles County Operational Area and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. EMD cannot continue the Duty Officer/Duty Team program unless the positions are unfrozen and filled.

The EMC II positions staff critical leadership positions in the EOC such as Deputy Director and Section Coordinators. All of the existing or SIP related pending vacancies will have a negative impact on EMD's ability to staff and manage the EOC. The EMC II positions are the most critical as they supervise and lead the overall City EOC response team. Failure to unfreeze these positions will force EMD to not staff key positions and will negatively affect the operational readiness and capabilities of the EOC for public health and safety response and recovery.

The EMC II positions serve as Division Chiefs for EMD and supervise staff at the EMC I, Principal Project Coordinator, Senior Project Coordinator and Public Relations Specialist positions. These Division Chief positions are essential for leading the department's day to day operations, preparedness, planning, training and exercise, EOC readiness, and community preparedness and engagement functions. The positions ensure effective department operations which are the foundation for response to and recovery from public health and safety emergencies including COVID-19, brush fires, earthquakes, civil disturbance, floods and extreme weather events and a range of other risks and hazards the City faces on a continual basis.

Finally, the EMC II positions serve as critical members of my senior staff. They are responsible for developing and implementing budget and homeland security grant proposals, assist me with a range of administrative and personnel matters, and advise me regarding policy issues within their respective divisions. They provide Citywide leadership by chairing subcommittees of the City's Emergency Management Committee in such critical public health and safety areas as operations, training and exercises, planning, and community preparedness.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this recommendation with you and your staff in greater detail as you complete your first level of review of unfreeze requests. I have also discussed our recommendation with the Mayor's Office in order to explore options to maintain service levels as we move through the review process. Please advise as to your availability to meet with us virtually on this public health and safety concern.

C: Jeff Gorell, Deputy Mayor, Public Safety
Matt Szabo, Deputy Chief of Staff
Raoul Mendoza, Budget Director