

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE July 26, 2024

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Organizational Realignment: Integrated Public Safety Solutions and Emergency Management Offices Memo & FAQs**

In the 100-Day Transition Playbook, I shared with you shared my approach for the organization to proactively address critical issues, cross-departmental collaboration, and team building. Phase I included grouping departments by attributes that reflect our City, and our service delivery.

In preparation for Phase II, opportunities were identified to bring together core functions to maximize our commitment to delivering Service First, with the urgency of Now! These department consolidations are paramount to our goal of evolving into a more customer-centric, solution driven organization.

The transformation continues with consolidating the Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions and Emergency Management Offices into one office with a new name. The renamed **Office of Emergency Management and Crisis Response (ECR)** will lead the City's emergency preparedness and management efforts, operate behavioral health crisis response teams, and operationalize a cross-departmental City Action Strike Team (CAST).

Overview of the Reorganization

The goal of the ECR is to enhance the safety, health, and well-being of Dallas residents and visitors. It will deliver emergency response, compassionate support, advance public safety initiatives, facilitate access to essential services that will reduce future service demands, and address and mitigate chronic quality of life issues through the CAST. The result will be a more resilient organization that is more deliberate with its preparedness and responsiveness. The ECR will also have the benefit of leveraging data to identify areas to proactively coordinate cross-departmental collaboration to intervene with the CAST. In addition, staff will be cross trained to ensure a more flexible and efficient response, maximizing resources and improving overall effectiveness.

The following is a summary of the ECR's core functions:

Emergency Management:

- **Preparedness:** Continue to develop and implement comprehensive emergency preparedness plans to ensure the city is ready for various crises. Conduct regular training exercises and simulations to maintain high readiness levels.

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- Disaster Recovery: Coordinate post-disaster recovery efforts to restore normalcy as quickly and efficiently as possible. Provide resources and support to affected communities to rebuild and recover.
- CERT Program: Train community members through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program to enhance local preparedness and resilience. Empowering residents to assist in disaster response efforts effectively.
- Emergency Operations Center Management: Develop and deploy a multi-discipline strike team that coordinates real-time disaster response efforts, ensuring seamless communication and collaboration during emergencies.
- Homeland Security Grant Management: Efficiently oversee grant administration, compliance, and fund allocation, ensuring optimal use of the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant program to enhance homeland security initiatives.

Behavioral Health Operations:

- RIGHT Care: Operate the RIGHT Care program to provide real-time intervention and support for mental health crises, reducing the burden on emergency services and improving outcomes for individuals in crisis.
- Crisis Intervention Team: Operate Crisis Intervention Teams staffed at each DPD Patrol Division with specialists trained to ensure safety, provide compassionate care, and connect individuals in crisis with the appropriate resources and support services.

Medic 01: Operate specialized unit that partners a Dallas Fire-Rescue paramedic and Crisis Intervention Coordinator to provide immediate support to welfare check and low acuity emergency calls for service, ensuring timely and appropriate responses to emergencies.

City Action Strike Team

The newly formed ECR will house the newly established City Action Strike Team (CAST) to address and mitigate chronic quality of life issues within the City that are cross-departmental in nature. These issues, which include any combination of homeless encampments, illegal dumping, litter, drug, and narcotics use, and other public safety concerns. The team will utilize a data-driven approach to identify problem areas and deploy targeted, proactive interventions that involve cross-department communication and collaboration. This CAST will provide rapid response to recurring overlapping issues, implement improvements, and cultivate longer-term solutions through coordinated, simultaneous actions, regular evaluations, and stakeholder engagement.

The CAST's efforts are cross-departmental and will be deployed by the ECR to ensure a prompt response and coordinated approach when addressing and managing overlapping issues in areas with chronic quality of life concerns.

- Initial cleanup and site evaluation, including debris removal, environmental clean-up, posting signage, and site hardening (where it is City owned property), and sharing sight hardening recommendations with private property owners.
- Ongoing maintenance and compliance checks, with regular patrols and community engagement activities to prevent the recurrence of nuisance behavior.
- Identify and implement longer-term solutions, that also incorporates additional sustained community involvement and investments.

Organizational Structure

The ECR will be led by Director Kevin Oden and Deputy Director Travis Houston. This structure includes cross-trained, specialized teams and units focusing on various critical areas, ensuring a comprehensive and integrated approach to community safety and emergency management.

This departmental reorganization results in roughly up to \$2 million in savings. These savings are the result of programmatic and staffing changes and realignment. This will be reflected in the FY24-25 budget. Future savings are anticipated as we continue to identify opportunities to eliminate costs without compromising services.

Path Forward

- Although the organizational and operational changes will begin on August 14, all other changes will be effectuated with the new budget scheduled to be approved on September 18.
- During August, the Director and Deputy Director will collaborate with the City Manager's Office and Human Resources to develop a final organizational chart. ECR will also work with Communications and Customer Experience / 311 to update City communication channels and conduct outreach to amplify the new branding, contact information and other important information.

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For your ease of convenience, the attached Frequently Asked Questions summarizes the above information.

We are confident that this organizational realignment will significantly enhance our ability to serve the residents of Dallas. For additional information or questions, please contact Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety (I), at dominique.artis@dallas.gov.

Service First, Now!



Kimberly Bizer Tolbert
City Manager (I)

c: Tammy Palomino, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Billieae Johnson, City Secretary
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Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety (I)
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Alina Ciocan, Assistant City Manager
Donzell Gipson, Assistant City Manager (I)
Robin Bentley, Assistant City Manager (I)
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer
Elizabeth Saab, Chief of Strategy, Engagement, and Alignment (I)
Directors and Assistant Directors

**Organizational Realignment: Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions and Office of Emergency Management
Overview and Frequently Asked Questions
July 26, 2024**



Overview

In the 100-Day Transition Playbook, Interim City Manager shared the approach the organization would take to proactively address critical issues, cross-departmental collaboration, and team building. Phase I included grouping departments by attributes that reflect our City, and our service delivery.

In preparation for Phase II, opportunities were identified to bring together core functions to maximize our commitment to delivering Service First, with the urgency of Now! These department consolidations are paramount to our goal of evolving into a more customer-centric, solution driven organization.

The transformation continues with consolidating the Office of Integrated Public Safety Solutions and Emergency Management Offices into one office with a new name. The renamed **Office of Emergency Management and Crisis Response (ECR)** will lead the City's emergency preparedness and management efforts, operate behavioral health crisis response teams, and operationalize integrated cross-departmental community City Action Strike Team.

Why did the City of Dallas combine these two into one?

The goal of the new Office of Emergency Management and Crisis Response (ECR) is to enhance the safety, health, and well-being of Dallas residents and guests. It will deliver emergency response, compassionate support, advance public safety initiatives, facilitate access to essential services that will reduce future service demands, and address and mitigate chronic quality of life issues through the City Action Strike Team.

How will the leadership be structured?

The new Office of Emergency Management & Crisis Response will be led by Director Kevin Oden and Deputy Director Travis Houston. This structure includes cross-trained, specialized teams and units focusing on various critical areas, ensuring a comprehensive and integrated approach to public safety and emergency management.

Why is this reorganization happening?

This reorganization is happening to integrate and strengthen emergency management and crisis response capabilities across all city departments. It aims to eliminate redundancies and improve inter-departmental coordination and resource allocation for a more efficient response to complex quality of life issues, behavioral health crises, and emergencies & disasters. Importantly, services will continue with new capabilities added, including the City Action Strike Team.

What is the financial impact of this merger?

This departmental reorganization results in roughly up to \$2 million in savings. These savings are the result of programmatic and staffing changes and realignment. This will be reflected in the FY24-25 budget. Future savings are anticipated as we continue to identify opportunities to eliminate costs without compromising services.

What is the purpose of the City Action Strike Team (CAST)?

The City Action Strike Team (CAST) addresses and mitigates chronic quality of life issues within the City of Dallas, such as homelessness, litter, drug, and narcotics use, and other public safety concerns. The team will utilize a data-driven approach to identify problem areas with multiple issues, and deploy targeted, proactive interventions that involve cross-department communication and collaboration. The CAST will provide rapid response to recurring overlapping issues, implement improvements, and cultivate longer-term solutions through coordinated, simultaneous actions, regular evaluations, and stakeholder engagement.

How are the operations of the Strike Team organized?

The CAST's efforts are cross-departmental and will be deployed by the ECR to ensure a prompt response and coordinated approach when addressing and managing overlapping issues in areas with chronic quality of life concerns.

- Initial cleanup and site evaluation, including debris removal, environmental clean-up, posting signage, and site hardening (where it is City owned property), and sharing sight hardening recommendations with private property owners.
- Ongoing maintenance and compliance checks, with regular patrols and community engagement activities to prevent the recurrence of nuisance behavior.
- Identify and implement longer-term solutions, that also incorporates additional sustained community involvement and investments.

What happens next?

Although the organizational and operational changes will begin on August 14, all other changes will be effectuated with the new budget scheduled to be approved on September 18.

During August, the Director and Deputy Director will collaborate with the City Manager's Office and Human Resources to develop a final organizational chart. ECR will also work with Communications and Customer Experience / 311 to update City communication channels and conduct outreach to amplify the new branding, contact information and other important information.

How will you let the public know?

Once the final organizational chart is created, the Office of Emergency Management & Crisis Response will collaborate with the City's Communications and Customer Experience / 311 team to update social media, all relevant websites, etc. with new branding, contact information, and relevant content. City leadership will also engage with stakeholders to ensure they are informed of the changes.