

## OEMC Executive Director Guidice's 2023 Budget Remarks

Good afternoon, Chairman Dowell, Vice Chairman Silverstein, and members of the City Council.

My name is Rich Guidice, and I am the Executive Director for the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC). It is my honor to be here with you today to answer your questions and address any concerns you may have regarding OEMC.

As you know, OEMC manages the city's 9-1-1 Center, 3-1-1 Center, Emergency Management, and Traffic Management Authority. Many of you are familiar with our role in providing public safety planning and coordination, as well as conducting exercises and drills, for everything from large-scale events to public safety emergencies.

This year, the OEMC led coordination efforts, alongside our City partners, in response to severe weather, as well large special events and festivals like Lollapalooza and the Chicago Marathon. This is in addition to handling nearly 20,000 calls per day into our 9-1-1 and 3-1-1 call centers.

Currently, OEMC is leading the citywide response effort along with Department of Family and Support Services and the Mayor's Office to receive and shelter new arrivals from the southern border that are being bused into Chicago from Texas. Since August 31, we have welcomed thousands of asylum seekers into the city. These individuals include families, children, and infants seeking refuge. Upon arrival, individuals and families are provided immediate shelter and support to meet basic needs. As part of these coordination efforts, OEMC is hosting the Unified Area Command made up of city, county, and state partners within our Emergency Operations Center. Additionally, OEMC brings together partners across the city on a cross-departmental planning call 7 days per week.

I am extremely proud of the dedicated professionals at OEMC, who work 24-7 to ensure the safety and well-being of all Chicago residents, visitors, and new arrivals. I would like to publicly thank them on behalf of our city partners. In addition to the operational work performed by our department every day, we continued to move forward with several important priority initiatives throughout the year.

This year, OEMC partnered with City Colleges to develop an Introduction to Emergency Management & Communications course as part of the Continuing Education - Professional and Personal Development series at Malcolm X, which debuted earlier this month. The goal of this class and partnership is to expand and diversify the hiring pool for jobs at OEMC. We look forward to extending this initial class to other colleges through this partnership.

Late last year, OEMC helped launch the Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) team, alongside CDPH, CFD, and CPD, to improve the type of public safety services offered to the mental health community via 9-1-1. The CARE program pairs first responders with a mental health professional to provide an alternate response option for service calls identified as involving an individual in crisis. OEMC continues to work collaboratively with our stakeholders to determine best practices, provide quality assurance, and coordinate with regional and state-level partners to ensure OEMC's part in this program meets the highest standards.

Beginning in 2021 and continuing into 2022, OEMC has partnered with CPD on the Vehicular Hijacking Task Force, which now operates out of the Operations Center at OEMC, where the task force has direct access to LPR cameras and critical information from the 9-1-1 floor. OEMC provides the Task Force with the resources and technology that allow for real-time information sharing, strategic oversight, timely notifications, and a coordinated response to incidents.

This summer, OEMC piloted its emergency management unmanned aerial systems (UAS) program. This program provides the OEMC with a low-cost tool to conduct certain operations, such as infrastructure inspections, damage assessments, mapping, accident scene reconstruction, search and rescue, and fire or hazardous materials observation, all while reducing the exposure of City workers to hazardous conditions. We will be continuing this program in support of emergency management efforts going forward.

Late last year, OEMC launched Safe Chicago. This program provided wall-mounted bleeding control kits at every occupied, City-owned, or leased facility. To date OEMC has installed nearly 700 kits across 400 locations citywide. Additionally, by end of year, we will have trained nearly 2,000 City of Chicago employees on how to utilize bleeding control kits, Narcan, and smoke/CO detectors. In advance of this year's marathon, OEMC provided Safe Chicago training to event, security and medical volunteer staff.

Over the summer months, the OEMC, in partnership with CPD, activated the Summer Operations Center (SOC) to support to provide strategic oversight and coordinated citywide deployment of public safety personnel and assets. The SOC facilitated information sharing and helped coordinate and deploy resources citywide. Throughout the activation, the OEMC hosted daily conference calls with 16 City agencies every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to ensure citywide coordination. This is in addition to the twice daily calls OEMC holds every day throughout the year.

From a technology standpoint, OEMC has worked diligently this year on updating its 25-year-old 9-1-1 computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. Planning and implementation have been fully underway since 2020 and we will be kicking off training for all our 9-1-1 employees in the coming months.

Finally, next summer the City of Chicago will host the 2023 National Homeland Security Conference, bringing together public safety officials representing local, state, and federal jurisdictions. OEMC, the Chicago Police Department, and the Chicago Fire Department have been making plans to showcase our best practices in public safety and emergency management. We look forward to showing off our great city to officials from around the country and discussing the newest advances in keeping our residents safe.

In closing, I would like to thank the men and women who work at OEMC for their dedication and commitment to our city and its residents. They work tirelessly around the clock and oftentimes behind the scenes to keep this city safe. Again, thank you, Madam Chairman, and members of the City Council. I look forward to answering any of your questions.

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