
File ID: 2026-01227

7/21/2026

Authorize Ongoing Annual Funding of \$350,000 from the Public Provider Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (PP-GEMT) Fund for Fire Department Medical and Physical Health Screening Programs

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Location: Citywide

Recommendation: Pass a **Motion** authorizing the ongoing allocation of up to \$350,000 annually from the Public Provider Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (PP-GEMT) commitment of the General Fund (Fund 1001) to support proactive medical and physical health screening, testing, and wellness services for Sacramento Fire Department personnel as part of the Department's Health and Wellness Initiative.

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Presenter: None

Attachments:

1-Description/Analysis

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: The Sacramento Fire Department faces growing operational and financial challenges associated with occupational injuries, chronic disease risks, and the long-term health impacts of emergency response work. Firefighters are routinely exposed to carcinogens, extreme physical exertion, hazardous environments, sleep disruption, and psychological stressors which contribute to elevated rates of cancer, cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal injuries, and other chronic health conditions.

In addition, California's workers' compensation presumption laws for firefighters and other public safety employees establish a presumption that certain medical conditions, including cancer, heart disease, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and other specified illnesses, are work-related and compensable [Labor Code sections 3212 through 3213.2]. As a result, the City has a legal obligation to provide workers' compensation benefits and medical treatment for these conditions when they arise, often resulting in high long-term costs.

Currently, many health conditions are identified only after symptoms become severe enough to require medical intervention, resulting in increased treatment costs, lost work time, disability leave, and operational impacts. Early detection, preventive care, and ongoing health monitoring can identify health concerns before they progress into more serious and costly conditions, improving employee outcomes while reducing the financial impact of presumptive occupational disease claims.

The Health and Wellness Initiative identified proactive medical and physical health screenings as a critical component of a comprehensive strategy to improve employee health, reduce workers' compensation costs, and maintain workforce readiness.

The proposed annual allocation of \$350,000 from the Public Provider Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (PP-GEMT) Fund will provide a sustainable funding source for comprehensive medical and physical health screening programs. These services may include cancer screening, cardiovascular assessments, laboratory testing, fitness and movement evaluations, injury risk assessments, and other evidence-based wellness services designed to identify health concerns early and support preventative care.

Policy Considerations: The proposed recommendation supports the City's commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace for employees while ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of public services. The recommendation also aligns with the City's strategic goals for cost reduction, fiscal sustainability, and workforce resiliency.

The proposed use of PP-GEMT funds supports programs that proactively address potential health concerns and is consistent with the Fire Department's Health and Wellness Initiative, which identifies preventative medical screening and early intervention as key strategies to reduce long-term operational and financial impacts associated with occupational illness and injury.

Economic Impacts: None.

Environmental Considerations: Not applicable.

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: Not applicable.

Rationale for Recommendation: The Fire Department's workforce is its most valuable resource. Maintaining a healthy, physically capable workforce is essential to the Department's ability to provide emergency response services to the Sacramento community.

Research consistently demonstrates that early identification of medical conditions significantly improves health outcomes while reducing long-term treatment costs. Firefighters face elevated risks

of occupational cancer, cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal injuries, and other chronic health conditions because of repeated exposure to hazardous environments, carcinogens, extreme physical demands, and other occupational stressors inherent in emergency response work. In addition, under California Labor Code Section 3212 and related presumptive workers' compensation statutes, certain conditions affecting firefighters are presumed to be work-related due to their inherently dangerous environment, creating a legal obligation for the City to provide workers' compensation benefits and medical treatment for covered claims. Proactive medical screening programs provide an opportunity to identify health concerns before they develop into serious illnesses or injuries that require extended treatment, disability leave, or workers' compensation claims.

The proposed annual investment of \$350,000 represents a proactive approach to protecting employee health while reducing future liabilities. Early detection and intervention have the potential to reduce injury severity, shorten recovery, or improve return-to-work outcomes, and decrease overtime costs associated with staffing shortages.

Additionally, proactive screening programs demonstrate the City's commitment to employee wellness and support workforce retention, recruitment, and morale. Investing in preventive health measures today is expected to produce measurable operational, financial, and workforce benefits in future years.

Financial Considerations: This request authorizes the ongoing allocation of up to \$350,000 annually from the Public Provider Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (PP-GEMT) Fund to support proactive medical and physical health screening programs for Fire Department personnel.

The Fire Department anticipates that proactive screening and early intervention efforts will reduce long-term costs associated with occupational illness, workers' compensation claims, overtime backfill, disability leave, and workforce attrition. While direct cost avoidance is difficult to quantify in advance, national fire service research and industry best practices demonstrate that early detection of cancer, cardiovascular disease, and musculoskeletal conditions can significantly reduce treatment costs and improve return-to-work outcomes.

Program effectiveness will be evaluated annually through measurable performance indicators, including:

- Participation rates in medical and physical health screening programs;
- Number of early medical conditions identified through screening;
- Reduction in occupational injury severity;
- Reduction in workers' compensation claim costs;
- Reduction in Injury on Duty (IOD) and modified duty utilization;
- Reduction in overtime backfill expenditures associated with employee illness and injury; and
- Improvement in workforce resiliency and employee health outcomes.

The Fire Department will provide ongoing evaluation of program outcomes to ensure PP-GEMT funds are utilized effectively and to continue supporting the Department's operational readiness and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.