

FIRE CHIEF'S MESSAGE

SEPTEMBER 2018

As Fire Chief, your safety, mental health, and well-being are my top priority. The Executive Team and I are committed to providing you with the resources you need to perform your roles to the best of your ability and in the safest manner possible. The change of our interior firefighting practices, implementation of a decontamination policy, and recent Suicide Prevention Safety Stand Down are all part of our efforts to ensure each of you returns to your families safe and sound at the end of your shift.

But there is more to do. I recognize the large volume of recalls and vacancies in the Department is taking its toll and I am working with Labor, the Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Office, Department of Human Resources, and the Association of Chiefs (AOC) to implement solutions to improve staffing, promote and fill critical vacancies, and provide essential mental and behavioral health support for all employees.

Effective Tuesday, October 16, 2018, in collaboration with the AOC, battalion chiefs will receive more advanced notification, extending our staffing from three to seven days. I will continue to work with Labor so we may extend this advanced notification to all fire series ranks in the future.

Regarding vacancies, we are working with the Department of Human Resources to administer the Fire Fighter Trainee (FFT) examination in 2019, and will be meeting with key stakeholders to improve the hiring process for both fire series and lifeguard personnel. In addition, the Administrative Services Bureau (ASB) is finalizing lists for the following promotional examinations:

- **Fire Fighter Specialist** October 2018
- **Fire Captain** October 2018
- **Battalion Chief** January 2019

The ASB is also focused on filling critical Business Operations vacancies and conducting promotional examinations. I will provide updates on anticipated promotional dates and the 2019 FFT examination in future messages.



STAND WITH LA COUNTY FIREFIGHTERS & PARAMEDICS

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SUICIDE PREVENTION AND MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS STAND DOWN

The daily rigors of our profession can take their toll on our emergency personnel – from firefighters, lifeguards, dispatchers, health hazardous materials personnel, and more. Collaborating with the Board of Supervisors, Labor, mental health practitioners, and Peer Support Team members, we pledge to do all we can to provide comprehensive and effective behavioral health support and resources to everyone.

Recently, we joined Labor in presenting in the first-ever Safety Stand Down focused on suicide prevention and mental health awareness. As part of National Suicide Prevention Month, the Department’s Safety Stand Down was delivered from September 12 through 14, 2018. Thanks to the voice of Local 1014, the Department was joined by other fire departments from across the State in ensuring the message of breaking the stigma and silence of suicide was effectively heard.

I hope you found it valuable to learn about warning signs and ways to delicately and effectively approach a peer who needs help. The courage to open up and engage in dialogue could truly save someone’s life – perhaps a friend’s, co-worker’s or even your own.

VIDEO: 2018 SAFETY STAND DOWN SUICIDE AWARENESS



<http://bit.ly/safety-stand-down-suicide-awareness>
Video produced by the Training Services Section.

HELP PROFESSIONAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES



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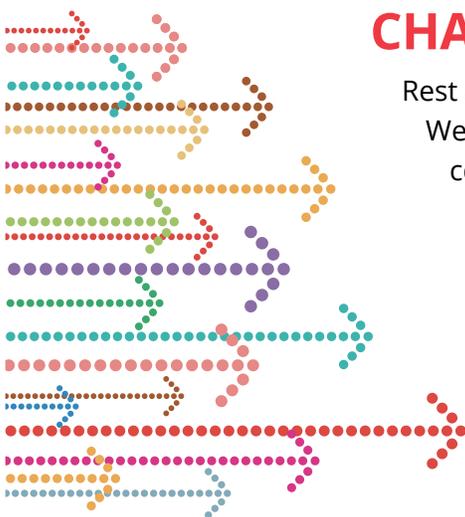
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CHANGING DIRECTION

Rest assured that we are doing all we can to change our direction and path. We hear your concerns and understand your challenges – and we are committed to finding solutions that will be beneficial to both you and the Department, while still fulfilling our duties and obligation to the communities that need us too.

I am proud our workforce is made up of a robust group of hard-working, dedicated individuals in both the emergency and business operations of this organization. Thank you for your devotion and loyalty to this Department, your fellow co-workers, and the residents we serve.



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The Fire Chief’s Message is a monthly communication from the Fire Chief of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

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