

CITY OF CHICAGO – Chicago Fire Department

2025 Budget Hearing – November 12, 2024

Annette Nance Holt, Commissioner

Good afternoon, Chairman Ervin and members of the Budget Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Chicago Fire Department's fiscal outlook for 2025.

The Chicago Fire Department is a vital component of the City's public safety, dedicated to protecting and serving Chicago's residents. Every day, our firefighters and paramedics are on the front lines—responding to emergencies from structure fires and medical calls to hazardous material incidents and natural disasters. They work under intense and often dangerous conditions, and we owe it to them, and to the communities they serve, to ensure they are equipped with modern, reliable apparatus, tools, personal protective gear, and safety equipment.

We understand the difficult budgetary decisions before the City Council and fully appreciate the need for prudent fiscal management. As the demand for our services continues to grow, our resources must also grow. For example, mass casualty incidents are on the rise – so far in 2024 we have seen an almost 7% increase in incidents over 2023.

The requests we bring forward today are essential for maintaining safety and service standards for our firefighters, paramedics, and the public. Our planned investments in 2025 include replacement bunker gear to ensure our personnel's safety and upgraded patient care reporting technology which enable us to comply with state and federal mandates and to ensure that the City is reimbursed for emergency medical services.

Each request we have made is directly tied to our mission: saving lives and property. We work closely with the administration and OBM to ensure operational effectiveness while protecting the community – public safety is always our top priority. We are also committed to minimizing costs while finding operational efficiencies. For example, we have greatly reduced overtime in areas that will not impact emergency services.

We ask for your continued support to face these challenges together and to ensure that the level of service we provide remains at the high standard that Chicago deserves.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.