

CITY OF PLACENTIA FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the issue?

A: For the past 23 years, the City has contracted with Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) to provide local fire and emergency medical services to our residents. As changes in our weather patterns and climate make wildfire hazards deadlier--and our local population continues to age--the City's life-saving fire and emergency medical services must evolve as well.

Q: What is the City trying to accomplish?

A: Nearly 80% of 911 emergency fire calls made by Placentia residents are for medical emergencies. The City seeks to maintain rapid medical emergency response times and ensure a high level of these life-saving services over the long-term, for our residents. Towards this end, the City is going through a process of soliciting competitive proposals to evaluate different fire protection and paramedic models to ensure our service delivery model is modern and financially sustainable.

Q: What is the process?

A: The City has always valued its collaboration with OCFA. At the same time, Placentia has a responsibility to its residents to ensure local fire protection and paramedic services are continually improving and are high quality – as well as financially sustainable over the long term. The City is undertaking a competitive proposal process to review and consider a number of fire protection and paramedic service models and costs, and to ensure these objectives are being met in a thoughtful and detailed manner. An RFP Review Committee comprised of local leaders and nationally-renowned experts will be reviewing service proposals.

Q: Why do this now?

A: While Placentia is a suburban community, recent California wildfires have jumped from forests and undeveloped open spaces into residential areas. The scope, scale and location of firefighting has changed. Unfortunately, no community is immune from a devastating fire risk -- and the City must be prepared for any form of disaster, including meeting the needs of affected families and seniors. To preserve the City's ability to examine new and innovative ways to improve high-quality emergency response programs and service models and ensure the cost to provide those programs are reasonable and sustainable, the City chose not to renew its OCFA contract for an additional 10 years but will be inviting OCFA to submit competitive service proposals. Had the City done nothing, the agreement would have rolled over for an additional 12 years and eliminated any opportunity for the City to implement any improvements for our residents or cost controls.

Q: How will this affect me?

A: The existing fire protection and paramedic service levels currently enjoyed by our residents will be maintained and in many cases enhanced by the implementation of alternate service delivery models which also reduce costs. And any service or cost efficiencies will enable the City to invest more robustly in proactive law enforcement safety approaches, which our public has said is a priority. The City views public safety in a holistic approach that includes not only fire protection but also our local Police Department which includes proactive community policing, investigation, gang reduction and intervention efforts and other ways of preventing crime before it starts.

Q: Where can I get more information?

A: Visit www.placentia.org/fireems to stay informed about this issue.