



# LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FIRE CHIEF

November 20, 2023

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 23-124

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM:  Kristin M. Crowley, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO AMEND SECTION 5.148 OF THE LOS ANGELES  
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

FINAL ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

## SUMMARY

As directed by the Board of Fire Commissioners (BOFC), the Los Angeles Fire Department is providing this report to determine if Section 5.148 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code could be amended. The objective of such an amendment would be to increase the revenue limit of receipts deposited into the Special Training Fund or eliminate it altogether so that any sums received in excess do not go to the General Fund.

Section 5.148 of the Los Angeles Administrative Code (LAAC) requires that net receipts to the Special Training Fund which exceed \$1,500,000 within a fiscal year be deposited to the General Fund. Ordinance 174339, which established this limit, was enacted with an operative date of December 2001.

The LAAC created the Los Angeles Fire Department (Department) Special Training Fund (Fund) to allow for the receipt, retention, and disbursement of funds related to departmental training activities. There are two designated accounts within the Fund: 1) the General Account, for funds received from classroom rentals, grants, equipment rentals and special service fees for training members of outside agencies; and 2) the State Educational Account, for the receipt of State educational funds utilized for training of the Department members.

To ensure the Fund is optimally utilized for meeting the Department's numerous training needs, it is recommended that a request be moved forward to increase the limit to \$2,600,000. This adjustment aims to align the existing limit with the rate of inflation since its establishment in December 2001. This requested adjustment is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) published by the United States Department of Labor.

## DISCUSSION

The Department periodically reviews the \$1,500,000 revenue limit to evaluate its appropriateness in light of the current economy and the growing training demands of the Department. In 2017, efforts to obtain Council approval for an amendment to eliminate the revenue limit altogether were unsuccessful. Subsequently, the Department has deliberated on the most effective approach to amending the ordinance. It has been determined that requesting an increase to the limit, rather than eliminating it entirely, would be the optimal approach.

Various steps, reviews, and approvals were involved in the previous effort to amend the LAAC. These encompassed approval by the BOFC, the Public Safety Committee, the Budget and Finance Committee, and City Council. In the midst of this process, other City entities such as the City Administrative Officer and Chief Legislative Analyst, would review this item for its fiscal impact. Lastly, an ordinance revising the LAAC needed to be drafted by the City Attorney's Office, requiring approval from both the City Council and the Mayor.

The Department utilizes the Special Training Fund to provide essential training for the Department. The majority of these expenditures are for obligatory training, which include recurrent helicopter pilot training, recruit academy expenses, the Department's Learning Management System (LMS).

Other obligatory training needs include annual Swift Water training, annual Shallow Water Egress Training (SWET), fire prevention updates, in-service training equipment, and canine accelerant detection recertification training:

<b><u>Training Item</u></b>	<b><u>FY 23-24 Cost</u></b>
Recurring helicopter pilot training	\$435,000
Department online training platform	\$197,697
Recruit Firefighter Academy certifications and related costs	\$213,105
Other obligatory training	<u>\$136,546</u>
	\$982,348

These training components significantly impact the \$1,500,000 receipt limit, and their costs continue to escalate, leaving little room for adequately funding additional training endeavors.

To illustrate, various departmental operations necessitate essential training in functional areas such as Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF), Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO), emergency medical services, helitac, work environment training, arson and counter-terrorism, hazardous materials (HazMat), maritime firefighter and fireboat, Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), cannabis, and wildland. Due to the receipt retention limit, the Department denies a multitude of these training requests.

Moreover, the preceding costs exclude a host of essential training needs for vital support functions, including technology, administration, finance, psychology, and maintenance. These encompass training for fleet maintenance mechanics, equipment engineering, department psychologists, fire station and building administration, system programmers, geographic information systems (GIS), project management, accounting, budgeting, planning, grants management, human resources and labor laws, and leadership, among others. These support functions are also indispensable for the overall functioning of the Fire Department.

The current \$1,500,000 revenue limit, established by Ordinance 174339 effective December 2001, is inadequate to fully fund the Department's current and future training needs. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, \$1,500,000 in December 2001 had the same purchasing power as \$2,590,059 in June 2023. Aside from inflation and rising costs, factors such as increased Department personnel, expanded departmental scope, and mandatory training programs necessitate an adjustment in the receipt limit.

Given approximately 3,800 sworn and civilian employees, a minimal travel budget, and no designated funding for such training, the Department heavily relies on the Special Training Fund to fulfill mandatory training and certifications.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Board:

1. Transmit the report to the City Council to request that the City Attorney amend Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 5.148 (d) to read:  
"In each fiscal year, revenue receipts deposited in the Fund shall be limited to \$2,600,000, and all sums received in excess of that amount shall be deposited in the General Fund"
2. Revise subsection (e) substituting "Chief Engineer and General Manager" with "Fire Chief".

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Approval of the recommendations in this report will reduce reliance on the General Fund by maximizing revenue from the State and other sources to effectively meet the funding needs of the Fire Department's training programs.

## **CONCLUSION**

In order to provide exceptional public safety service to the City of Los Angeles, the Department is committed to ensuring that all training needs are met. The current fund limitation in the Special Training Fund reduces the Department's ability to meet its training goals.

Board Report prepared by Maria Pascual, Senior Management Analyst, Training and Support Bureau.