



**Baltimore City Office of
Emergency Management**
401 E Fayette St, 6th Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
(410) 396-6188

Brandon M. Scott
Mayor
City of Baltimore

Chief Charles Svehla
Emergency Manager
Office of Emergency Management

To: Honorable President Mosby, and Honorable Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400 City Hall

From: Chief James Wallace, Acting Director, Office of Emergency Management
501 N. Calvert St - Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

Date: March 25, 2021

RE: Council Bill 21-0021R - Informational Hearing – Building a Homegrown Public Safety Cadet Program

The Acting Director of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and staff will be present for the Public Safety and Government Operations Committee hearing regarding the request for information to build a homegrown public safety cadet program in the City of Baltimore. As Acting Director of OEM, I submit the following report / information regarding OEM's role in City efforts to recruit public safety cadets.

Thank you for your support, time, and consideration.

Deputy Chief James Wallace
Acting Director, City of Baltimore Office of Emergency Management

JW/jlm

Cc: Honorable Mayor, Brandon M. Scott
Chief Administrative Officer, Christopher J. Shorter
Chief of Staff, Michael Huber
Deputy Mayor, Public Safety, Sunny Schnitzer
Deputy City Administrator, Daniel Ramos
Fire Chief, Niles R. Ford
Acting Emergency Manager, Chief Charles Svehla



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As identified in the City Council First Reader, “public safety in the City of Baltimore is consistently the number one issue every year” and students graduating from high school are not prepared for a job market in which they can earn a living wage. As this resolution seeks “to allocate funding for 100 public safety cadet positions to employ local youth upon graduation”, OEM intends to offer an emergency management-based description to explain where we are and where we hope to be in the future.

To understand the specific needs of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), it is important to know the mission and vision of OEM. They are:

Our Mission

“The Baltimore City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) will maintain the highest level of preparedness to protect Baltimore’s citizens, workers, visitors, and environment from the impact of natural and man-made disasters. OEM will prepare the City for emergencies, prepare the public for emergencies, and coordinate interagency response and recovery. To achieve this mission, OEM will implement a comprehensive program of disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.”

Our Vision

- Well-prepared households and businesses
- Resilient communities
- Integrated, efficient, and rapid response and recovery.”

<https://emergency.baltimorecity.gov/about-MOEM>

Recruitment

To support our mission and vision, recruitment is an important aspect of our staffing processes. It is important to have experienced staff who can lead the agency to success; mid-career staff who can propel the agency forward; and, newer staff who can ensure future stability of the agency and bring fresh ideas to the agency. OEM generally has approached the recruitment process with two tools: internships and standard job-hiring, but, for years, has discussed the possibility of creating a program more in line with the purpose of this City Council Resolution, to recruit local kids to consider careers in emergency management. What would be a three-pronged approach is something OEM hopes to grow over the course of time. Descriptions of the three approaches are below, as well as, some demographic and statistical information which led to our desire to expand our approaches.



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Internships

Before COVID, OEM had an internship program, which supported several colleges and universities in the area, and would consider virtual internships today, if they were requested by students, but we have not received any such requests. Below is a chart summarizing the internships OEM has supported between 2012 and 2020.

Year	Number of Internships
2012	7
2013	4
2014	2
2015	0
2016	0
2017	2
2018	4
2019	2
2020	0—COVID
TOTAL	21
AVG	2.3 per year
<i>Source: internal OEM records</i>	

As a result of the internships OEM has supported, we have had several former interns apply for full time positions within the agency and the surrounding jurisdictions, many of whom have been offered and accepted those positions. We have also had our interns go on to great things, including running their own programs and being a police officer.

In the United States, there are hundreds of certificate, associates, bachelors, masters, and doctoral degree programs specializing in emergency management or homeland security, which are often used interchangeably. There are:

- 160 Certificate Programs
- 98 Associate's Degree Programs
- 323 Bachelor's Degree Programs
- 424 Master's Degree Programs
- 20 Doctoral Programs



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Of those 1,025 programs, Maryland colleges and universities offer 43 programs (4%) and 348 (34%) of the programs in the US offer distance learning (<https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/collegelist/>).

Within OEM, the staff holds 24 degrees and two post graduate certificates. Of those, six are emergency management or homeland security-specific, 14 were from Maryland schools, 13 were online programs, and eight required internships (see the chart on the next page).

We feel that we can continue to support the college internship program to grow the pool of available entry-level people for recruitment into emergency management, while also increasing the visibility of the program by expanding its scope. We would like to partner with a college or university on their internship program, while also offering our staff as instructors and mentors for the students. Ideally, our staff would help to educate the interns we bring on board, and the interns would help to grow our daily and response capabilities. We envision having interns assigned to support positions in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during activations of the City's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for an incident or event, as well as, offering them the opportunity to learn about the tenants of emergency management by shadowing and working on projects in each of our sections: administration, planning, preparedness, operations, finance, logistics, and training & exercise.

OEM College Degrees:

Degree Level	Number Holding the Degree Level in OEM
Certificates	2 Post Grad
Associates	1 In Progress
Bachelors	11, 1 In Progress
Masters	8, 1 In Progress
Doctorate	2 In Progress
Emergency Management or Homeland Security-Specific	6
Attended Maryland Schools	14
Attended Online	13
Internship Required	8

(Source: internal email poll of OEM staff, March 2021).



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Hiring Processes

OEM adheres to City processes and policies regarding hiring processes and is careful to ensure an unbiased approach to our hiring practices. We advertise our postings on the City's website, as well as Indeed.com when possible. Occasionally, we have been able to budget for posting positions on the IAEM website, which allows us to target our postings toward emergency management professionals. This process has primarily been for our mid-level management positions, or Section Chiefs, because these positions require emergency management experience.

In 2017, OEM was staffed by seven employees and was able to grow in the following six months to a staff of 12. With this increase, OEM was able to focus on more than just operations, and expanded to more planning, preparedness, grant, financial, and administrative responsibilities that had been put on hold under the previous office configuration. Currently, OEM is staffed by 14 people due to COVID needs. Of the 14 staff, OEM is proud to highlight the fact that many decision makers in the agency are female. Emergency Management has traditionally been a male dominated career field, but in the City of Baltimore and surrounding jurisdictions, women are not a minority. In the City of Baltimore OEM, one of the Deputy Directors, two of the Section Chiefs, the former Operations Section Chief and current acting Operations Section Chief, the City's Safety Czar for COVID, and three planners are all females. More than 50% of the agency is female. You see similar office configurations in the local jurisdictions, and at the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), which expands the pool of possible candidates for positions, as well as, offering opportunities for advancement.

OEM is proud of the staff we have brought on board in the past three years and think the success of several major incidents in the City are due to how we have staffed our sections: 2019 Ransomware Attack, 2020-ongoing COVID19 response, 2020 building explosions, and several flooding incidents. This approach will continue to be our focus for traditional hiring practices moving into the future.

Cadet Program

The third prong of the recruitment program is the piece that is most exciting to OEM and we hope to be a part of the program. Using the college internship program as a litmus test for the potential for success, we would like to base a high school and possibly a junior high school program on the internship program. We would like to allow high school students, and if successful, junior high school students, to participate in the cadet program within OEM. We envision this having a formal program that would need to be created in order to ensure key



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learning objectives are achieved to set students up for success and to encourage them to pursue higher education and jobs in emergency management.

We see this as an opportunity to reach out to the most vulnerable students who don't get the same types of opportunities as other students. We recognize there is an entire group of students who fall through the cracks upon graduating from high school. Many of them are good students with potential, but who lack mentors and a place to belong to encourage them to pursue careers that offer living wages, the opportunity to help others, and to be valued members of their community. We don't profess to be the subject matter experts on how this program would or could work but have many ideas about making the program something the City of Baltimore can model for other large cities in the country.

As mentioned in the first reader, many times students attend vocational schools, with the intention of graduating with skill sets that allow them to have jobs where they earn living wages and have benefits, but the statistics show this isn't the case. The same could be said for positions that are often offered free to students with the same good intentions, such as phlebotomist. These positions do not pay well, and they do not offer career paths for growth.

Most people, unless they have had a need for our services, usually do not know what emergency management is or that there are thousands of emergency managers throughout the world. Certainly, people do not know that hospitals and major employers have emergency managers who accomplish the same types of work we do for the City of Baltimore. There are free training programs through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that are utilized by OEMs all over the country. In fact, these courses are the standards. They do not require college degrees to qualify for attendance, and, in fact, can often be converted into college credit for associate degree programs in the local area. For emergency management professionals who are seeking advanced degrees, FEMA, in partnership with the Naval Post-Graduate School offers a free master's degree program.

There are many opportunities to develop a youth program, a cadet program, a high school internship program—whatever you want to call it—that could benefit our office and many offices throughout the City. We are starting to consider how to implement a program in our office and because of an upcoming outreach event on Hillen Road, we are testing the interest in emergency management and possible internships or mentoring opportunities. Because high school students need volunteer hours for graduation, we are seeking 10 students who will be volunteering to canvas residents in the Hillen Road area concerning flooding issues, a matter



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which has recently been a topic of interest and testimony in the City Council. We hope to gauge the students' interest and excitement to propel a program forward. We plan to offer similar opportunities this year for students to obtain their required volunteer hours. We will be tracking the success of this small program to determine if we will be successful enough to proceed with a more involved program.

This would be the missing link in emergency management in this area, to train, educate, mentor, and hire students who mirror the racial and ethnic demographics in the City of Baltimore. In order to have a more equitable distribution of races and ethnicities within the career field, we believe the key is to start with the high school and junior high school students to educate them on emergency management. We believe the key is to show students how a career in emergency management can give them more than a living wage, offer them career growth and opportunities, and allow them to give back to their communities.

About Emergency Management as an Occupation

In 2019, the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) reported that there were 5,339 members internationally

(https://www.iaem.org/Portals/25/IAEM%20Overview%2007_2019%20.pptx?ver=2019-07-16-130936-450) and the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2019 that there were 10,400

Emergency Management Directors in the US, with 4% growth predicted for the future

(<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/emergency-management-directors.htm>)—which was before COVID. Due to COVID, many agencies have to expand their staffing to meet the needs of the COVID response. According to the report, the highest levels of employment in emergency management are with local government (9%) and state government (6%)

(<https://www.bls.gov/oes/2018/may/oes119161.htm>). The median pay for Emergency Management Directors in the US in 2019 was \$74,590 and the typical entry-level education requirement for the industry was a bachelor's degree

(<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/emergency-management-directors.htm>). College degrees in emergency management were rare in pre 9/11 America because the focus for emergency management before that day was on nuclear power generating stations. Post 9/11, everything changed, including the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, which FEMA became a part of. Because of the funding that was made available to prevent, respond to, plan against, equip for, train and exercise for, mitigate against, and recover from terrorist attacks, jurisdictions saw their capabilities grow exponentially. Where an agency may have once employed one or two people, they found themselves able to grow their staff to 10 or more and to begin to address other types of emergent threats to the homeland. Emergency management



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as a career bridges the gap between the victims of disaster and the responders who save and protect them. It is not often recognized like other response agencies are, but for many incidents and events, emergency management is a member of the team, standing beside the more traditionally recognized responders. As a career, it offers something very valuable: possibilities.

Summary

Those of us who work in OEM are there because we believe in the mission and want to contribute to the safety and health of the communities we serve. The opportunity to show young people what we do, give them career options, and mentor them toward careers in emergency management would be OEM's honor to support our community in such a way.