



AGENDA REPORT

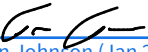
TO: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

FROM: Damon Covington
Fire Chief

SUBJECT: PSA with Evergreen Counseling

DATE: December 15, 2025

City Administrator Approval


[Jestin Johnson \(Jan 29, 2026 16:21:05 PST\)](#)

Date: 01/29/2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopts Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Professional Services Agreement With Evergreen Counseling A Marriage And Family Therapy Corporation To Provide Behavioral Science Consultation, Training, And Confidential Mental Health Services For The Oakland Fire Department From February 1, 2026 Through December 31, 2028, In An Amount Not To Exceed Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$450,000), With Two One-Year Options To Extend The Agreement For Up To An Additional Two Years In An Amount Not To Exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) Per Year, Without Returning To Council, For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$700,000).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oakland Fire Department seeks approval to contract with Evergreen Counseling, A Marriage and Family Therapy Corporation, to support and strengthen OFD's Health and Wellness Program. Firefighters routinely face traumatic incidents, cumulative operational stress, and exposure to life-threatening situations that significantly affect their psychological well-being

The proposed agreement provides OFD with a licensed behavioral science partner to deliver confidential mental health counseling, critical incident response, training, and wellness consultation to staff department-wide. Evergreen Counseling was selected through a competitive RFP/Q process issued on July 18, 2025, and demonstrated the specialized qualifications needed to support firefighters effectively.

This agreement fulfills the City's obligation to support the wellness of OFD members, aligns with the IAFF Local 55 MOU provisions regarding mental health resources, and strengthens OFD's capacity to respond to behavioral health needs with clinical expertise, confidentiality, and timely intervention.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Oakland Fire Department has long recognized the necessity of supporting the mental health of its workforce due to the unique stressors associated with emergency response. OFD's Health and Wellness Program currently includes Peer Support, a Critical Incident Stress Management Team, and access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). However, the EAP alone is insufficient to meet the specialized and often immediate mental health needs of firefighters.

On July 18, 2025, the City released a Request for Proposals/Qualifications (RFP/Q) seeking experienced behavioral health providers capable of serving public safety personnel. Evergreen Counseling submitted a responsive proposal and was evaluated as the most qualified based on its clinical expertise, fire-service experience, and capacity to provide confidential services at scale.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The adoption of this resolution advances the citywide priority of ensuring **holistic community safety**, including safeguarding the well-being and operational readiness of Oakland Fire Department personnel who protect residents, businesses, and visitors throughout the City. Supporting the mental and behavioral health of firefighters strengthens OFD's ability to deliver timely and effective emergency response, enhances resilience during high-risk incidents, and ensures continuity of operations across all service areas.

FISCAL IMPACT

Initial funds for the professional services agreement are available for FY 2025-26 in the Fire Department's Fund: General Purpose (1010), Project: OFD Behavioral Health (1005991) Organization: Emergency/Suppression-Services (20411), and Program: Fire Suppression/Field Operations (PS17) and Fund: General Purpose (1010), Project: OFD Behavioral Health (1005991) Organization: Fire Chief (20110), and Program: Fire Department Administration (PS15). Funding for future fiscal years may continue to draw from these same sources or may be provided through separate appropriations during the Mid-Cycle FY 2026-27 budget process and the Biennial FY 2027-29 budget adoption.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

No outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed policy action beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures.

COORDINATION

Development of this report was coordinated with internal staff in the Oakland Fire Department, Budget Bureau, City Attorney's Office, and City Administrator's Office.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: There is no economic impact caused by the passage of this resolution.

Environmental: There is no environmental impact caused by the passage of this resolution.

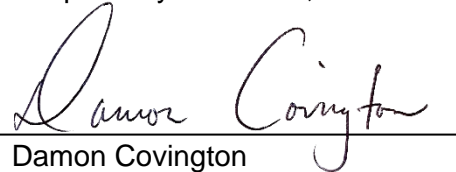
Race and Social Equity: There are no racial or social equity impacts caused by the passage of this resolution.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopts Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To Enter Into A Professional Services Agreement With Evergreen Counseling A Marriage And Family Therapy Corporation To Provide Behavioral Science Consultation, Training, And Confidential Mental Health Services For The Oakland Fire Department From February 1, 2026 Through December 31, 2028, In An Amount Not To Exceed Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$450,000), With Two One-Year Options To Extend The Agreement For Up To An Additional Two Years In An Amount Not To Exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) Per Year, Without Returning To Council, For A Total Contract Amount Not To Exceed Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$700,000).

For questions regarding this report, please contact Deputy Chief Matthew Nichelini at MNichelini@oaklandca.gov.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Damon Covington", is written over a horizontal line.

Damon Covington
Fire Chief

Prepared by Deputy Chief Matthew Nichelini