

Dept. Emergency Communications

2026 Proposed Executive Budget

Mission – To serve our community as an essential link to vital resources with an unwavering commitment to excellence.



2026 Budget Summary

	2025 Adopted Budget	2026 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
FTEs – O&M	231.36	230.36	-1.00	-0.4%
FTEs - Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
FTEs - Total	231.36	230.36	-1.00	-0.4%
Total Positions Authorized	242	241	-1	-0.4%
Salaries & Wages	\$17,600,332	\$17,390,996	-\$209,336	-1.2%
Fringe Benefits	7,920,150	7,825,948	-94,202	-1.2%
Operating Expenditures	1,574,102	1,955,000	380,898	24.2%
Equipment	0	0	0	-
Special Funds	0	0	0	-
TOTAL	\$27,094,584	\$27,171,944	\$77,360	0.3%

2026 Budget by Service

Description of Services Provided	Operating Budget and SPAs	Capital Budget	Grant Budget	FTEs
Provide 9-1-1 Emergency Communications workflows and business processes that achieve maximum operational effectiveness and response efficiency	\$5,229,735	\$0	\$0	44.34
Provide quality call-taking and dispatching services to the citizens who call 9-1-1 to report emergency situations	\$19,719,380	\$0	\$0	167.18
Incorporate nationally accepted public safety standards, best practices, and guidelines to the Department of Emergency Communications policies and procedures	\$483,950	\$0	\$0	4.10
Provide fully trained personnel and staffing minimums that meet the city's call volume and public safety resource needs	\$483,950	\$0	\$0	4.10
Planning, personnel, purchasing, technology, and research	\$1,254,929	\$0	\$0	10.64
Total	\$27,171,944	\$0	\$0	230.36

Salaries and Positions

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Operating & Equipment Expenses

	2025 Adopted Budget	2026 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
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- **Operating account increases driven by:**
 - CAD maintenance costs

Executive Summary

Mission

To serve our community as an essential link to vital resources with an unwavering commitment to excellence.

Vision

As the lifeline of our community, the Milwaukee Department of Emergency Communications aspires to provide exceptional service, recognizing every second counts and every call matters.

Core Values

Integrity, **A**ccountability, **M**otivation, **D**ependability, **E**xcellence, **C**

2025 Highlights & Achievements

Launched the Universal Call Taker (UCT) initiative (January 2025) – Streamlining 911 operations by eliminating the need to transfer fire and medical calls.

Expanded Bilingual Response – Actively working to fill remaining bilingual ECO positions to improve service accessibility.

Improved Public Health Coordination – Implemented a new after-hours escalation service for the Milwaukee Health Department (MHD), reducing costs and simplifying after-hours workflows.

Transformed Training Approach – Rolled out a comprehensive new-hire training program designed to develop Universal Call Takers from day one.



2025 Highlights & Achievements

Continued

Standardized Learning Across Roles – Reviewed, updated, and standardized coursework to ensure consistency and quality.

Elevated Call Quality Oversight – Launched a new QA/QI program to enable near 100% review of emergency calls, strengthening service reliability and performance monitoring.

Invested in Leadership Development – Provided 80+ hours of supervisor, leadership, and interpersonal skills training to department leaders in 2025, starting with operations supervisors.

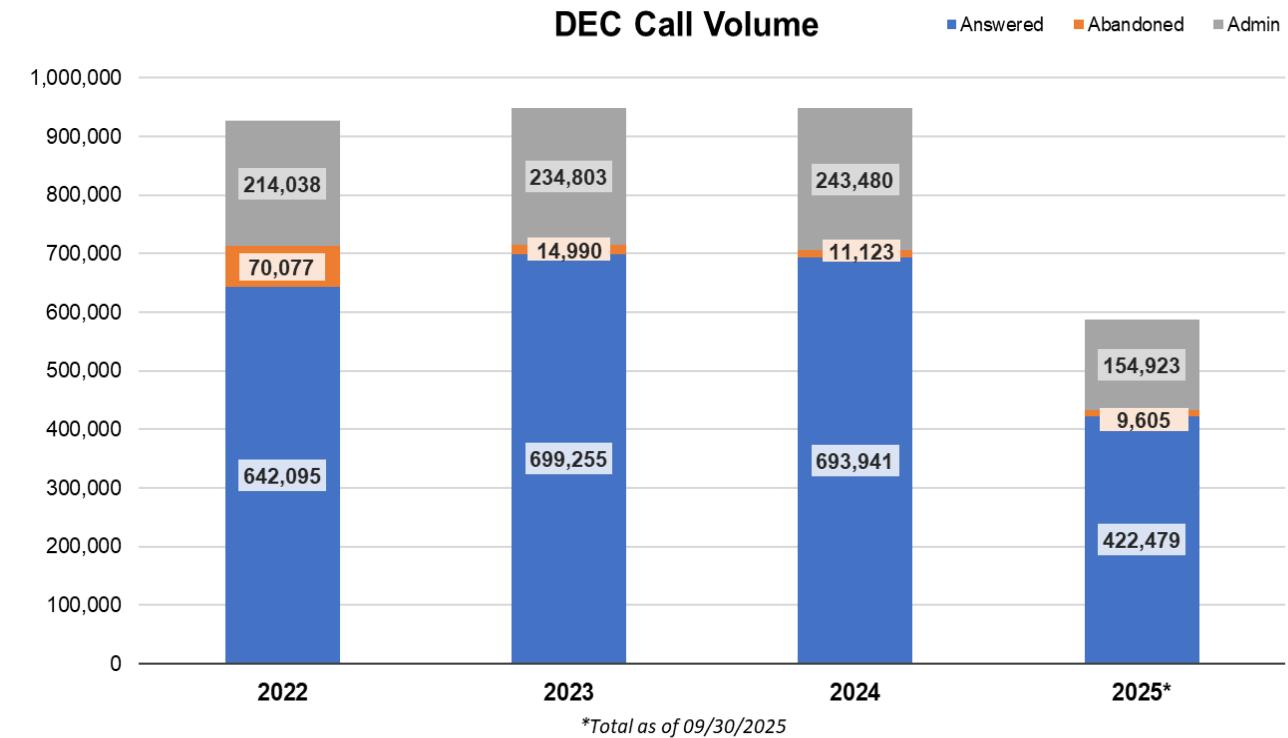
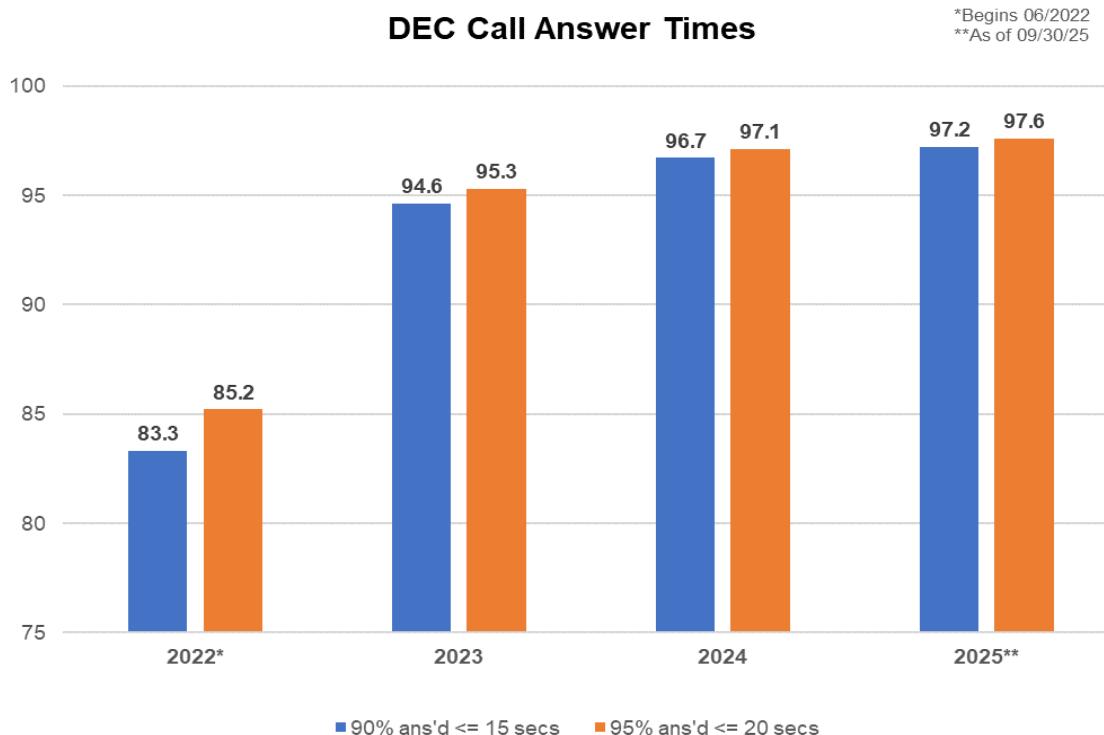
Community Engagement – Expanded our outreach and partnership with community organizations.



9-1-1 Call Volume & Answer Time

NENA and NFPA standards for 911 call answer times specify that:

- 90% of calls shall be answered within (\leq)15 seconds.
- 95% of calls should be answered within (\leq) 20 seconds.



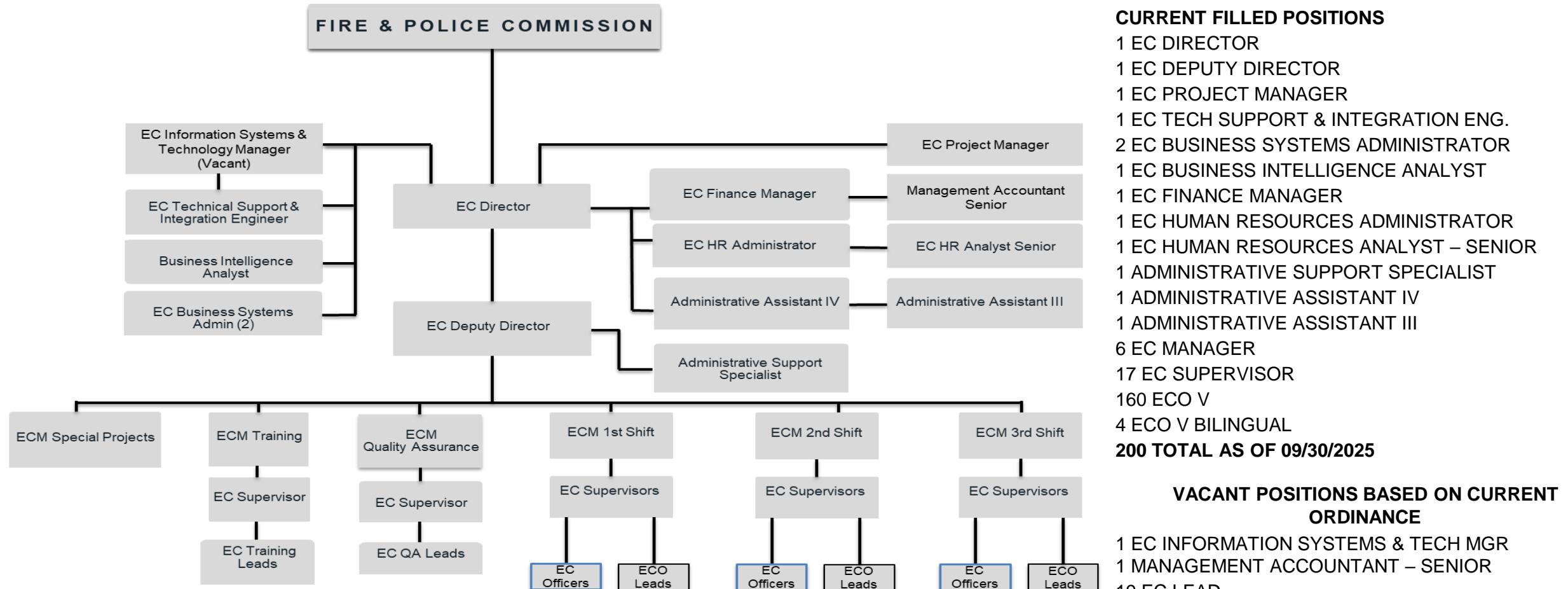
Industry Standards - Others

Beyond NENA Answer Time Standards

- Call Creation Time
- Call Dispatch Time
- Abandoned call rate calculated as a percentage of total 911 calls received.
- Accreditation-level Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) QA/QI scores
- 208 standards to achieve CALEA Communications Accreditation



DEC Organization Chart



Legend:

EC – Emergency Communications

ECM – Emergency Communications Manager

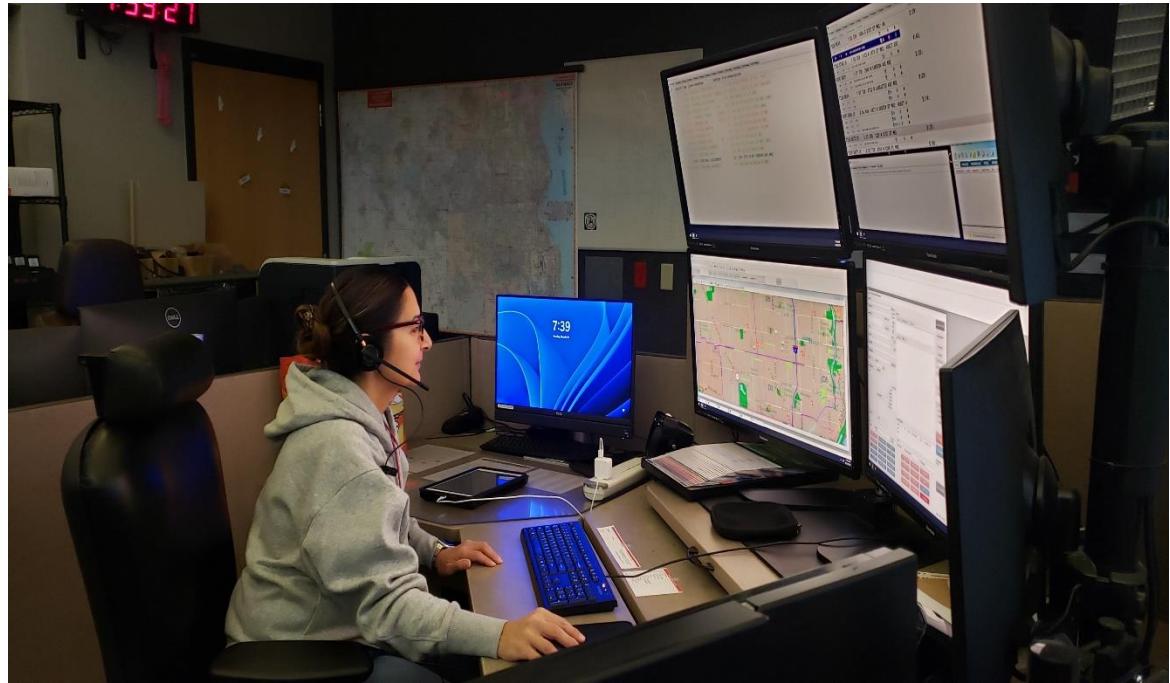
ECO – Emergency Communications Officer

DEC Staffing

	DEC ALL	OPERATIONS	ADMIN
Total Funded Positions	240	225	15
Vacancies	40	38	2
2025 Turnover YTD	25	24	1

Efficiencies in recruitment, training, and pay for 911 Professionals have improved staff retention and recruitment.

- The recruitment process has been reduced from 18 months to 6.
- Training new 911 Professionals takes 10 weeks of classroom and 6 weeks of on-the-job training.
- Working with FPC to fine-tune testing and standards to raise the bar on incoming candidates.



UCT – Universal Call Taker

The Department of Emergency Communications is **actively implementing** the Universal Call Taker model. The first phase of call takers receiving UCT training is expected to be completed by Q1 2026.

Why It Matters

- **Efficiency Gains:** Fewer call transfers, faster dispatching.
- **Resilient Workforce:** Cross-trained staff = reduced staffing gaps and overtime.
- **Public Safety Impact:** Every call is handled seamlessly, no matter the emergency.

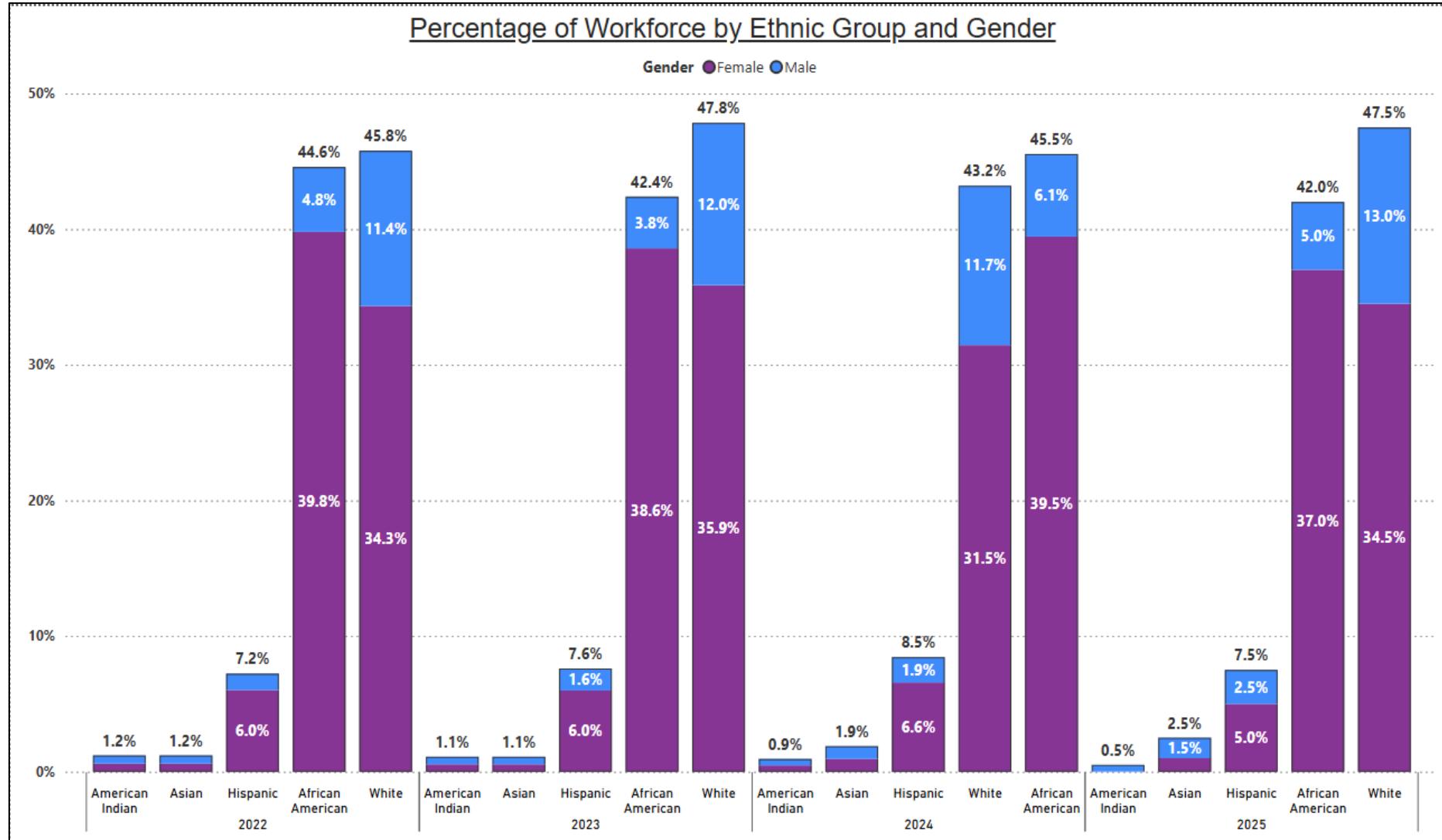
Next Steps

- Expand UCT training to the second phase in 2026 *Fire Rescue learning Law*.
- Full UCT goal: **All law call takers by 2026.**
- Continue reporting measurable improvements in **response times and service quality.**

DEC Demographics

Ethnic Group	Female	Male	Total	Total %
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	1	1	0.50%
Asian	2	3	5	2.50%
Hispanic	10	5	15	7.50%
Black/African American	74	10	84	42.0%
White	69	26	95	47.5%
Total	155	45	200	100%

* 72.0% of DEC Employees are City of Milwaukee residents



Building Strength & Readiness

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.” ~ Phil Jackson

Expanded Leadership Strength — Strengthened management and leadership through broader perspectives and inclusive representation.

Enhanced Mental Health Support — Delivered in-house Peer Support & Mental Health Training to strengthen employee well-being programs.

Expanding Bilingual Capacity — Actively working to fill remaining bilingual ECO positions to improve service accessibility.

Breaking Language Barriers — Leveraging Language Line to support 20+ languages for faster, more accurate emergency call processing.

Future-Ready Communications — Advancing efforts to implement **Text-to-911 capabilities, AI, and other technology** to better serve all residents.



Community Engagement



- National Night Out
- YMCA
- MADACC
- MPS
- Boys & Girls Club
- Milwaukee Rescue Mission
- Pathfinders
- Sojourner Family Peace Center
- Autism United
- MFD 150th Anniversary

Artificial Intelligence

Utilization in the DEC – Quality Assurance

- Focuses on improving **internal** workflows and communications.
- Enhances service, supports staff, and strengthens trust.
- Efficient and consistent call review.
- Automates repetitive tasks, freeing supervisors to coach and mentor.
- Provides training and identifies opportunities to enhance service.

Artificial Intelligence

Future Application

- Conversational AI
- Operational awareness
- Long-term, detailed analysis
- Real-time translation



Artificial Intelligence

Security and Transparency

- City ownership of data
- Secure and compliant with industry and government standards



CITY OF
**LONG
BEACH**

Operational Performance and Efficiency

Align 9-1-1 workflows and training to industry standards to maximize speed and effectiveness.

- KPI 1: Call Answer Time Rate** – NENA and NFPA Standard of 90% within 15 seconds, 95% within 20 seconds.
- KPI 2: Call Creation Time** – For high-priority calls from answer to ready for dispatch < 60 seconds.
- KPI 3: Time to Dispatch Calls** – For high-priority calls, from dispatch ready to units en route < 30 seconds.
- KPI 4: Quality Assurance** – Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) calls should see a marked improvement from 2025 levels and be within 20% of the accreditation standard.

Revised Process & Training Initiatives

Streamline DEC operations and business practices for efficiency

- KPI 1: Overtime Reduction** – 10% decrease in overtime hours through improved scheduling efficiency.
- KPI 2: Incorporate Best Practices** – Develop additional KPIs and standards based on best practices for call taking and dispatch.
- KPI 3: Certification Compliance** – 100% of employees are current on all mandatory certifications.
- KPI 4: After-Action Review Implementation** – Establish a major incident review process with documented lessons learned and integrated into updated workflows.

2026 Priorities

Training & Development – Biannual refreshers, structured leadership pathways, and consistent policy-based training to improve accuracy.

Technology & Innovation – Implement AI tools for real-time coaching, quality assurance, and trend analysis.

Policy & Compliance – Modernize policies, strengthen certification tracking, and align with accreditation standards.

Operational Excellence – Improve scheduling efficiency using data and establish structured after-action reviews for major incidents.

Fire Protocol Enhancement – Partner with the Milwaukee Fire Department to design and implement a modernized fire call-processing protocol rooted in national standards and best practices. This initiative will streamline workflows, strengthen interagency coordination, and elevate service delivery for fire agencies across Milwaukee County.

Community Engagement – Expand public education, strengthen partnerships with health/advocacy groups, and publish annual transparency reports.

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