



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING CITY FUNDING FOR HEALTH SCREENINGS AND WELLNESS SUPPORT FOR BOSTON'S FIRST RESPONDERS

WHEREAS, On Monday, September 28, 2026, at the Committee on Ways and Means hearing scheduled for 10:00 a.m. concerning Dockets #1671–1674, Boston Police Detectives Benevolent Society President Robert Griffin testified that his union relies on fundraising and its own funds to provide health screenings for members; and

WHEREAS, President Griffin clarified that approximately \$50,000 came from fundraising and an additional \$60,000 came from union funds, with no City contribution toward the screening costs he described. This clarification appears at approximately [55 minutes and 54 seconds in the hearing recording](#); and

WHEREAS, This testimony brought specific information about the union's funding burden to Councilor Murphy's attention after the filing deadline for the September 30, 2026, Council agenda, prompting this late-filed request for an emergency hearing to obtain answers and identify reliable funding for essential health screenings and wellness support; and

WHEREAS, President Griffin described staffing shortages, increasing investigative caseloads, and detectives being assigned to supplement patrol coverage, underscoring the need to examine how working conditions affect first responders' physical health and mental well-being; and

WHEREAS, During the FY27 budget amendment process, Councilor Flynn filed a \$500,000 amendment to fund Boston Police Department health and wellness programs, which Councilor Murphy supported. The amendment did not receive sufficient support from their colleagues and was not adopted. Both Councilors also advocated for additional firefighter health and wellness funding; and

WHEREAS, During Monday's hearing, the Chair repeatedly stated that Councilors must build consensus with their colleagues to pass amendments. Councilors Flynn and Murphy have worked to secure that support, including by bringing forward concrete funding proposals. Building consensus requires colleagues willing to support those proposals, and the rejection of Councilor Flynn's \$500,000 amendment should not be characterized as a lack of effort by the Councilors who advocated for it; and

WHEREAS, The Council's responsibility to address these needs continues after the rejection of a funding proposal, and Monday's testimony warrants renewed consideration, a clear accounting of available resources, and timely action to support the first responders who protect our residents; and

WHEREAS, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's May 2026 announcement of a \$150,000 contribution to support early cancer screenings for 500 Boston firefighters, together with the September 25, 2026, event highlighting expanded access to firefighter screenings, underscores the importance of ensuring that police officers, detectives, superior officers, and EMS personnel also have dependable access to appropriate health screenings and wellness support; and

WHEREAS, Boston's police officers, detectives, superior officers, firefighters, and Emergency Medical Services personnel face demanding working conditions and occupational health risks, and the City should

identify gaps in access to appropriate screenings, preventive care, mental health services, and wellness support across these departments; and

WHEREAS, President Griffin stated that approximately \$100,000 to \$120,000 annually would substantially support health screenings for his members, providing a starting point for examining program costs, eligibility, and sustainable funding; and

WHEREAS, Boston's first responders should have reliable access to appropriate health screenings and wellness support without their unions having to depend on golf tournaments, charitable donations, and their own funds to provide these services; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine existing health screening and wellness services for Boston's first responders and identify immediate and sustainable City funding to address unmet needs.

The hearing shall examine:

1. The health screenings, preventive care, mental health services, and wellness programs currently available to police officers, detectives, superior officers, firefighters, and EMS personnel, including eligibility and participation.
2. The City appropriations, grants, donations, union contributions, and other funding supporting each program, including funding that has expired, been reduced, or not been renewed.
3. The screening and wellness costs currently borne by unions or individual members, including services supported through fundraising.
4. Gaps in access across departments and bargaining units, and the effect of staffing shortages, overtime, and demanding work schedules on access to services.
5. The annual cost of providing appropriate screenings and wellness support, developed with departmental leadership, employee representatives, and qualified medical providers.
6. Options for immediate funding and a recurring City appropriation, including potential partnerships that supplement a dependable City commitment.
7. A timeline and responsible officials for implementing improvements, with regular reporting on expenditures, participation, and remaining service gaps.

Representatives from the Boston Police Department, Boston Fire Department, Boston Emergency Medical Services, Boston Public Health Commission, Office of Budget Management, Office of Labor Relations, relevant unions and employee organizations, and qualified screening and wellness providers shall be invited to testify.

Filed in Council: October 7, 2026