

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

**A. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Date

2018-12-17

2. Department

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Management Services / Emergency Response Billing

4. CEA Position Title

Assistant Deputy Director, Emergency Response Finance & Data Analytics

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (2-3 sentences)

CAL FIRE is dedicated to the protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. In addition, the Department provides a multitude of emergency services in 36 of the State's 58 counties via contracts with local governments. The annual Budget Act provides CAL FIRE an expenditure account for Emergency Funds. This exists to fund unbudgeted emergency suppression, detection, and related emergency re-vegetation cost. The CEA of Emergency Response Finance and Data Analytics will oversee and direct all items related to emergency response finance, Departmental financial systems, and data analytics to meet financial statutory program requirements as well as the system goals of the Department, the Natural Resources Agency and the Governor's Office. Policy direction and decisions made at this level will affect Department operations and related financial data management statewide, local government relationships, regulatory requirements compliance and federal partnerships.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

CEA, Level B (Deputy Director of Management Services)

7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain): As the CEA, the incumbent will provide the Deputy Director and the Executive management of the Department ongoing oversight of financial systems, emergency fund expenditure and billing activities, and data analytics.

8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

## B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

### 9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

The Assistant Deputy Director of Emergency Response Finance and Data Analytics has full decision making authority and responsibility for the oversight of the Department's financial systems, financial data analytics, as well as policy for and expenditures charged to CAL FIRE's Emergency Fund appropriation, which is used to pay the emergency fire suppression and detection and related emergency re-vegetation costs. Through the annual budget act, CAL FIRE has the unique authority to spend at a rate that exceeds the actual Emergency Fund appropriation, as necessary, for these activities. The duties performed by the Assistant Deputy Director include, but are not limited to:

Maintains the Department's Emergency Fund policy manual that details fiscal management of the Emergency Fund, along with corresponding procedures for the Emergency Response Billing Unit that reviews, approves and processes the expenditures into the State's financial systems and develops cost packages to obtain applicable federal reimbursement through CalOES. Directs the activities and evaluates the effectiveness of CAL FIRE's Emergency Response Billing Unit.

Monitors all billable emergency response fire incidents, ensuring all fire incident accounts payable are invoiced timely and within established guidelines consistent with the Prompt Payment Act, contractual terms and conditions and/or federal regulations. Through subordinate staff, reviews all invoices sent by cooperating agencies, including but not limited to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the California Conservation Corp, local government and over 300 different vendors annually to ensure correct and applicable costs are being charged to the Emergency Fund.

Works directly with the CAL FIRE Budget Office to provide quarterly full fiscal year Emergency Fund expenditures to meet annual budget bill requirements for quarterly submission of year-to-date actual Emergency Fund expenditures and projected full fiscal year Emergency Fund expenditures. Works directly with the CAL FIRE Budget Office to provide anticipated and outstanding federal reimbursements for the Emergency Fund, which has the potential to significantly increase the General Fund Reserve as each individual fire's federal reimbursements can typically exceed \$196.5 million each. Works directly with the Chief of Budgets to answer questions from the state Control Agencies and the Deputy Director of Legislation to answer questions from the Legislature on these matters.

Interacts directly with local government officials and vendors related to their invoiced Emergency Fund expenditures and payments. Interacts directly with CalOES and federal government officials related to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance (Stafford) Act for eligible fire suppression costs and Stafford Act authorized cooperative agreements that stipulate fire suppression cost apportionment when fires cross multiple jurisdictions. Works directly with multiple federal agency officials whose agency has hired CAL FIRE through federally authorized cooperative agreements to assist with fire suppression on federal land. These interactions have the potential to result in multi-million dollar fiscal impacts, along with significant policy and/or procedural impacts to CAL FIRE.

Interacts daily with the State Controller's Office (SCO) related to payment of Emergency Fund expenditures, and provides necessary supporting documentation, as requested by SCO staff and management related to pending expenditures. Provides, as necessary, documentation to validate the pending expenditures are valid and legally allowable. Interacts with CAL FIRE Human Resources and Labor Relations staff, along with CalHR staff and works directly with the Deputy Director of Communications, and/or staff, to provide incident specific, year-to-date and/ or projected Emergency Fund expenditures to the media, as requested. Represents CAL FIRE and/or the California Natural Resource Agency at key public meetings, conferences, conventions and workshops related to the Emergency Fund. Act as a Department liaison for financial issues related to the Emergency Fund.

Interfaces directly with State control agencies, the Legislature, local and federal government officials, and special interest groups regarding CAL FIRE's financial systems, which have the potential to result in significant policy, procedural, or other program changes.

Directs the activities and evaluates the effectiveness of CAL FIRE financial systems. Serves as the key spokesperson for the Department on its financial systems at key public meetings, conferences, conventions, and workshops. Acts as the Department liaison for financial issues and events related to the impact of financial systems on CAL FIRE operations.

Plans, organizes, directs, and provides managerial review of the training development and delivery by staff and contracted resources, as needed, to well over 3,500 users within the Department on a regular basis. Training policy covers multi-platform delivery decision-making, as well as creation, design, and implementation of an entire financial culture and working environment for Departmental financial staff. Develops new programs in data research and analysis, convergence of multi-disciplinary fields in data product design, and ongoing development of a Department data analytics program.

**B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)**

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The program's mission is critical to the Department's mission as a whole. CAL FIRE is dedicated to the protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. The Department provides aggressive initial attack and emergency fire suppression operations to preserve these public values and to achieve other state goals (e.g., meeting the State's 2030 greenhouse gas reduction targets and preserve public health). The program monitors the Department's use of the emergency fund to ensure that CAL FIRE may continue to serve and safeguard the people, property, and resources of California. In addition, this position provides the oversight and administrative policy decisions to ensure that the Department meets its fiduciary obligation to successfully manage its budget and accounts.

The inability of this position to provide the required leadership, policy direction, and program management could have significant impacts to the Department's fiscal condition and directly limit its ability to meet its mission. If CAL FIRE fails to negotiate appropriate reimbursements with federal and local government or pays too much to those same entities for fires on State lands, the Department may not have the necessary funding for resources (both equipment and personnel) to fight fires or respond to other emergency incidents. Similarly, if the Department mismanages its use of the emergency fund, it runs the risk of losing a vital source of funding that allows it to respond to the largest incidents throughout the State.

**B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)**

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

For five consecutive years, California has experienced the worst drought in modern history, overlaid with the three consecutive hottest years on record, followed by the wettest year on record. This weather of extremes is the long-term prognosis for California. This “new normal,” driven by climate change, directly impacts California’s watersheds. All indications are that these conditions will very likely result in larger, more frequent, and more damaging fires. The ongoing impacts of climate change have resulted in half of California’s 20 largest wildfires on record occurring in just the last 10 years, with the 2017 Thomas Fire becoming the State’s largest fire in recorded history. The ability to continue to have the unique appropriation within the Emergency Fund means it is critical that proper oversight and administration be provided to its policies, procedures and activities.

The annual Budget Act provides CAL FIRE an annual starting appropriation for the Emergency Fund, which in 2018-19 was \$442.8 million. This amount was augmented by the Department of Finance after CAL FIRE's requested emergency approval by the Legislature was granted after a series of communications and meetings with all representatives, to \$676.8 million, once Emergency Fund expenditures were estimated to reach \$431.9 million on August 31, 2018. The fact that Emergency Fund expenditures were projected to exceed the starting appropriation within two months of the start of the fiscal year resulted in significant ongoing discussions with the Department of Finance, Governor's Office, and the Legislature because this had never happened before. This entire issue also generated national and international media attention.

Currently, CAL FIRE must rely on the existing CEA A (the Assistant Deputy Director for Management Services) to provide the necessary leadership and policy direction. However, the workload associated with managing the Department’s Accounting and Business Services functions has increased to the point that the existing position is unable to adequately provide the leadership and direction necessary to effectively manage emergency response billing and the Department’s use of the Emergency Fund. As an emergency response agency with facilities and front line first responders located throughout the State, CAL FIRE’s procurement, contracting, and accounting programs are extremely complex and require a significant amount of program direction. CAL FIRE has one of the largest procurement programs in the State and is one of the largest users of CAL Card. Furthermore, the Department’s procurement, contracting, and accounting functions are far more complex than many other departments. CAL FIRE must support large emergency incidents, feed and house thousands of fire fighters, purchase and maintain a large fleet of emergency response vehicles, purchase and maintain a complex cache of firefighting and personal protective equipment, and manage and maintain more than 2,000 structures across its 530 facilities statewide where employees live 24-7. The Department also oversees more than 150 cooperative agreements with local government across California totaling more than \$250 million. As fire seasons have lengthened, the procurement, contracting, and accounting workload, and the policy that defines that workload has increased in both volume and complexity. As a result, the current Assistant Deputy Director is full engaged in managing these programs and is unable to adequately focus on the emergency response billing and emergency fund management. The Department feels strongly that allocating this position below the CEA A level will significantly limit its ability to fulfill the expectations of the Director and the Department as a whole and will result in continued dilution of the time of the existing CEA A.

### **C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE**

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

As the Assistant Deputy Director of Emergency Response Finance and Data Analytics, the incumbent will regularly provide significant advice and recommendations to the Director and the Executive Team on policy Issues relative to the statewide Emergency Fund, Departmental financial systems, and data analytics. Policies and procedures developed by this position assist in ensuring that CAL FIRE programs and staff comply with State and Department laws, rules, policies, and procedures. The proposed CEA will also provide advice to the Director and Executive Management in the development, interpretation, and administration of fiscal management of the Emergency Fund. The proposed CEA will represent CAL FIRE in interactions with other state agencies and departments regarding issues related to Emergency Fund expenditures and management.

This position will also be responsible for policy decisions relative to the receipt, distribution of, and accounting/ reporting on over \$250 million of federal and local government reimbursement funding authority annually, as well as policy decisions to ensure the integrity and accountability of the Department's utilization of the State's \$900 million Emergency Fund. These responsibilities are crucial to the Department's (and the State's) ability to maximize reimbursement dollars in order to ensure that CAL FIRE can sufficiently meet its operational demands. Reimbursement funds also significantly impact the Emergency Fund. CAL FIRE expends a significant amount of money from the Emergency Fund fighting fires each year. Often times these fires are in the jurisdiction of local or the federal government, in which case, CAL FIRE must seek reimbursement to replenish the Emergency Fund (or in some cases, the Department's general fund budget). The inability to collect these reimbursements can impact the State's General Fund balance and limit other Departmental General Fund needs, such as paying vendors. In addition, this position will be responsible to assess and provide direction on contested payments that must be made to the federal or local government when those entities perform fire suppression work on State lands, and the position will develop and oversee policy to CAL FIRE staff on bi-agency agreements.

The issue of who pays can be quite contentious and requires a position at a high enough level to act for the Director and the Department in general. This position must work with executives at high levels within the federal government (U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, General Accounting Office, etc.) and the California Office of Emergency Services to ensure that CAL FIRE is able to collect appropriate reimbursements timely and efficiently and to make appropriate payments to other agencies as necessary. This involves regularly evaluating and revising existing policies, as well as developing and implementing new policies when the need arises.

In addition, CAL FIRE's accounting, contracting, and procurement workload has increased in recent years due to expanding fire season, which has led to a higher demand for goods and services to support the Department's operational needs. Put simply, these higher demands create more contracts, more purchases, and lead to more bills to be paid. To address these workload demands, CAL FIRE has been able to add more positions through BCPs in fiscal years 18/19 and 19/20. Increases in workload and increases in positions means the potential for more issues to arise that require leadership and program direction and an increased focus. These increases can also lead to policy changes or the implementation of new policy.

In the absence of the Director/Chief Deputy Director or the Deputy Director, this position will sometimes be called upon to make final decisions on urgent, sensitive matters relative to financial integrity practices and emergency situations that require an immediate response.

**C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)**

**13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?**

The proposed Assistant Deputy Director of Emergency Response Finance and Data Analytics, has full decision making authority and responsibility for the oversight of the Department's policy for and expenditures charged to the Emergency Fund appropriation as well as the Department's critical financial systems and the data analytics to support those systems. The proposed CEA will formulate and influence the development of statewide policies specific to the proper usage of Emergency Funds and the process of recouping federal reimbursements, and advise and provide support to the Director and the Department's Executive Management Team in ensuring public safety services are delivered at a high professional standard, as expected by the public and existing Departmental policy.

As the Departmental expert on the Emergency Fund appropriation, financial systems, and finance data analytics, this position takes the initiative in recommending policy directives to ensure that Department employees and programs are operating in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The Department believes that the position needs to be allocated at the CEA level in order to have the authority and credibility to provide leadership and policy direction across the Department. In addition, the incumbent filling the position needs to have a specific skill set, level of experience, and level of authority to make independent decisions, provide critical leadership, and act on behalf of the Director, Chief Deputy Director, and the Executive Team.

**14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?**

Yes, the Assistant Deputy Director has full responsibility for the oversight of the Department's policy for expenditures charged to the Emergency Fund appropriation, critical financial systems, and data analytics and will have final review of all program documents, policies and procedures, and functions. The CEA will be responsible for the revision, creation and implementation of all policy related to the Emergency Fund practices and procedures as well as management of the Department's financial systems. Policies and procedures developed by this position assist in ensuring that CAL FIRE programs and staff comply with State and Department laws, rules, policies, and procedures. This position also provides advice to the Director and Executive Management in the development, interpretation, and administration of the proper use of the Emergency Fund and financial systems.