



# OCFA

## Monthly Bulletin - November 2022

### From the Fire Chief

Dear OCFA Family:

Everyone has their favorite sign that the season of gratitude is upon us — from the changing of the leaves and snow-covered college football fields to the presidential turkey pardoning and pumpkin-infused baked goods. While I enjoy these and many other fall traditions, for me, the season of giving thanks begins on the same date every year; a day that we, as a nation, pause to share our gratitude for our veterans and the infinite ways in which their sacrifices led to the freedoms we enjoy – Veterans Day.

And as I wrote to all personnel this past Veterans Day, the veterans who serve as OCFA firefighters and professional staff make all of us stronger, infusing their work with the many laudable traits that stem from their military service. These tenets so align with our OCFA mission, the end result is an agency that upholds and enhances the incredibly high standards of both the armed forces and the fire service. In doing so, our heart of service beats with the spirit of giving and gratitude that is synonymous with the holidays – not one season out of the year, but every season of every year.

There are endless examples of this truth — from the crew of Engine 61 bringing groceries to an elderly woman after the Amazon truck that was delivering them was in an accident, to the crew of Engine 36 bringing Molly the dog home after treating her owner who fell on their walk together. Yes, the media happened to pick up these two stories, but every day, hundreds of similar stories of above-and-beyond kindness and care transpire across our service region without the attention of lights and cameras. That is just who we are and what we do. And when I write “we,” I am including the army of professional staff who support our firefighters.

Our round-the-clock delivery of these services is always impressive, but it is especially poignant during the holidays. Indeed, while the rest of us are at home celebrating with our families, our firefighters and dispatchers are in our ECC and at our stations, saving lives and protecting communities. That commitment is further amplified when you consider that our firefighters often put their lives on the line to do this work in service of others.

Like many of you, I have seen the cost of that ultimate sacrifice first-hand, and each time, it reinforces our responsibility to not only honor the fallen firefighter, but also extend our gratitude to their family, friends, and community. After the heartbreaking loss of Engineer Mike Tooley, we have come together to do exactly that, and as we honor Mike around Thanksgiving dinner tables this week and at his memorial service next week, we are reminded of the importance of expressing our gratitude; for our loved ones, for our health, for each other, and of course, for the honor of building upon the legacy that Mike and every fallen firefighter has entrusted us with.

With that in mind and on this Thanksgiving Eve, I am proud to extend my gratitude to all of you — our firefighters and professional staff — who continue to build upon that legacy. In both good and challenging times, you answer the call, spreading the spirit of service, gratitude, kindness, and care whether it's the holiday season or not. Thank you. You inspire me just as you inspire the communities we serve, and I wish you a happy and joyous Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Brian Fennessy  
Fire Chief

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## IN THIS ISSUE

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- Retirements



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## MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT - EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE

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**Spark of Love Holiday Toy Drive**



**DONATE TOYS  
HERE UNTIL  
DECEMBER 24TH**



We've officially kicked off our Spark of Love Holiday Toy Drive! Materials for collecting toys went out to the fire stations, and we are collecting toys at the station level as well as our six events throughout the County during the month of December:

- Saturday, December 3rd, 12-3pm - Walmart Supercenter, 26502 Towne Centre Dr, Foothill Ranch, 92610
- Sunday, December 4th, 12-3pm - The Market Place - CPK Food Court, 3001 El Camino Real, Tustin, 92782
- Saturday, December 10th, 12-3pm - Walmart at Buena Park Mall, 8450 La Palma Ave, Buena Park, 90620
- Sunday, December 11th, 12-3pm - Market Place / Mathis Brothers Food Court, 13300 Jamboree Rd, Irvine, 92602
- Friday, December 16th - ABC7 Stuff-A-Bus Event, Red Robin Parking Lot, 1307 W Sunflower Ave, Santa Ana, 92704

**We have officially reopened volunteer driving opportunities to collect and drop off toys. This OCFA program is only successful with all of your generous participation. We are still in need of many drivers starting next week Thursday 12/1 through Friday 12/30. We need a minimum of 4 drivers per day and a maximum of 8.**

Thank you to those few who have already signed up (Brandi Najm, John Lim, Matt Wallace, Dawn Lien)!

#### **Eligible Volunteers:**

**OPS** | Must be rank of Captain and below; SA time is approved.

**PROFESSIONAL STAFF** | Must be on-duty and have permission from your supervisor.

#### **There are two ways to sign up:**

1. Click link (must be signed into The Hive):

<https://thehive.ocfa.org/Lists/Spark%20of%20Love%20Volunterr%20Truck%20Driving/calendar.aspx>

2. Or follow these instruction from theHIVE:

- Click the Calendars icon on The Hive Homepage.
- Scroll down to RFOTC calendar, click on the Spark of Love Volunteer Driving calendar icon.
- Click the date / route you want (North, Central, South, or Back-up).
- Click Edit Item (top left corner of screen).
- Add your name and cell number on the Title line in parenthesis as indicated, making sure not to delete anyone else's information or the route name. Vehicles hold a max of two people.
- Click Save (top left corner or bottom of screen).

[Spark of Love Holiday Toy Website](#)

**OCFA Holiday Luncheon**





OCFA Annual Employee

# Holiday LUNCHEON

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13TH**

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM | FLEET SERVICES BAYS  
LUNCH TICKET \$10

**RAFFLE TICKETS ON SALE!**

1 X \$1 | 6 X \$5 | 15 X \$10 | ARM'S LENGTH \$20

GIFT BASKETS WILL BE COLLECTED FROM EACH SECTION

PAYMENT FOR TICKETS CAN BE MADE VIA VENMO  
TO LORIANE STARK, BUT CASH IS PREFERRED.



Please note your first and last  
name and OCFA Luncheon.

Last day to buy lunch tickets is **Monday, December 5th.**  
Lunch tickets will NOT be available the day of Luncheon.

**FOR LUNCHEON TICKETS AND RAFFLE TICKETS, PLEASE SEE  
LORIANE STARK AT EXT. 6650  
JUDY RADER AT EXT. 6023  
NICOLE CHUNG AT EXT. 6806**

OCFA Holiday Luncheon – Dec. 13th at 11:30 a.m. at the RFOTC Fleet Service Bays  
Last day to purchase \$10 lunch tickets is Dec. 5th

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## **OCFA's Annual Christmas Party**





Orange County Fire Authority's

# Christmas Party

The Ritz-Carlton • One Ritz-Carlton Drive • Dana Point

Pacific Promenade Room

**Sunday, December 18, 2022**

All OCFA employees, family, and friends are cordially invited to an evening of dinner and dancing!

Cocktails 6:00 – 7:00 pm • Dinner 7:15 pm • Cocktail Attire

\$65 per person • RSVP by 12/15/2022

## ENTERTAINMENT BY

“The Trip”

-Live Band & DJ

## DINNER RSVP & PRIZE TICKETS

Call 714-573-6240

[www.ocfabenevolent.org](http://www.ocfabenevolent.org)

Raffle Tickets 5 for \$20

Organize a table for 6-10 to  
receive 5 prize tickets

## ROOM RATE

\$269

Call The Ritz

(800) 930-5146

to book your room.

Ask for: “The Orange  
County Fire Special Rate”

Guest Room Block

## PRIZES AVAILABLE

**Grand Prize:** \$1,000

**2nd Prize:** 3 Day Get-Away at Oasis Resort,  
Palm Springs

**3rd Prize:** One-night stay at the Ritz with  
breakfast for two

**4th Prize:** One-night stay at the Ritz

**5th Prize:** Dinner for two at the Ritz

**6th Prize:** \$100

Christmas Party is brought to you by OCFA Benevolent Association, Local 3631, OCFA Chief Officers Association,  
and Orange County Employees Association

OCFA's annual Christmas Party is on Sunday, December 18, at the Ritz Carlton in Dana Point.

If you are new to OCFA or have not been before, we know you and your guest will have a great time!

Bring your spouse, significant other, family members, and friends to a memorable Christmas Party that includes a fantastic dinner (*filet mignon & chicken*) and dessert. Dance the night away as you enjoy an unforgettable evening at the Ritz. In 2019 & 2021, the event sold out and everyone enjoyed a wonderful evening (entertainment by live band & DJ).

ONLY \$65 per person with **complimentary wine with dinner**.

This Christmas Party is open to everyone and put on by the OCFA Benevolent Association, Local 3631, the Chief's Officer Association, and the Orange County Employees Association.

Call (714) 573-6240 to make reservations and buy Raffle Tickets (5 Tickets for \$20). You can win thousands of dollars in cash prizes and free night stays at the Ritz Carlton! [www.ocfabenevolent.org](http://www.ocfabenevolent.org) to sign up on line.

**Hotel rooms are at a discounted rate. Call the number on the flyer or click on the link below to book (almost every year the Ritz upgrades all rooms to a Coastal View). Many couples spend the night & enjoy the beautiful SoCal coastline and the resort.**

<https://book.passkey.com/go/OCFireChristmasParty>

**If you organize a table for 6 - 10 people, you will receive 5 free raffle tickets!**

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## **Award of Excellence**



**Award of Excellence**

**Press Conference or Press Tour**

**Orange County  
Fire Authority**

**Holiday Fire  
Hazard Demonstrations  
and Safety Tips**

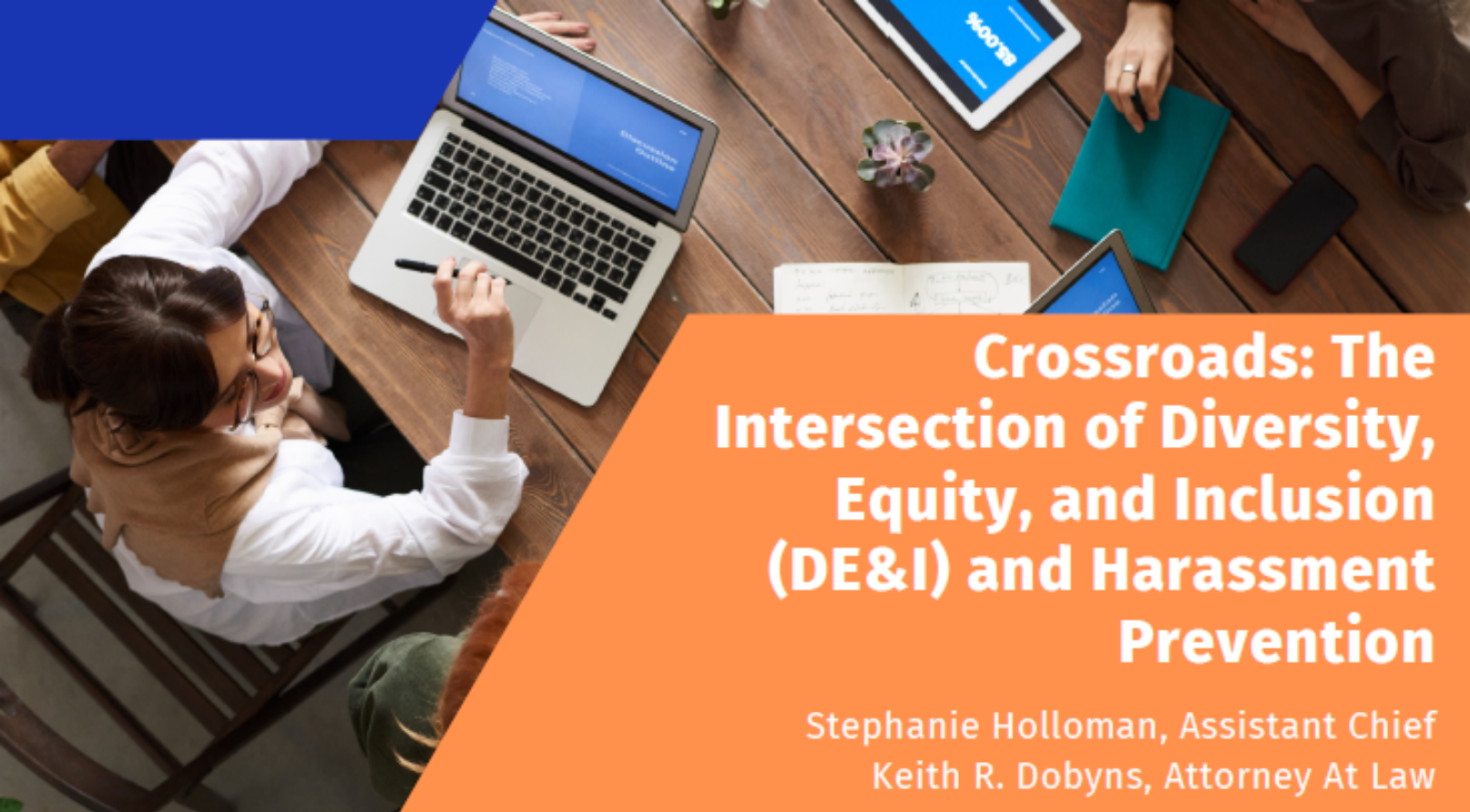


**October 6, 2022**

Last month, our Corporate Communications team was given the award of excellence from the Orange County Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America for their outstanding work on last year's Holiday Safety Press Conference.

[Click to Watch the Press Conference Livestream](#)

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



# Crossroads: The Intersection of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) and Harassment Prevention

Stephanie Holloman, Assistant Chief  
Keith R. Dobyns, Attorney At Law

Last week Human Resources Director/Assistant Chief Stephanie Holloman Presented "Crossroads: The Intersection of DEI and Harassment Prevention presentation" at the California Public Employer Labor Relations Conference alongside Keith Dobyns (former OCFA Counsel).

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Over the past month OCFA's social media platforms had:

- Over 1.8 million impressions (eyes on our content)
- 97,786 engagements (interaction with our content)
- 462 link clicks/redirects
- 12 new followers

Despite that success, we are always looking to improve and share information of interest with each other and the communities we serve. To that end, and per Chief Fennessy's June 20, 2022 memo, there is now a new area on the HIVE for all OCFA personnel (safety and non-safety) to submit photos, videos, and story ideas for OCFA's social media accounts and other information-sharing platforms.

[Click to Submit Photos/Videos](#)



[Click to Read the Memo](#)



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## Top Social Media Posts

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### Lake Forest House Fire





Lake Forest - Shortly before 10:00 pm last night, firefighters were dispatched to the 21000 block of Midcrest Dr. for a house fire. On arrival, firefighters from Engine 19 found a two-story home with heavy smoke and well-established fire showing. Due to the conditions, additional resources were requested. It took crews one hour and 32 minutes to get the fire under control. Investigators were on scene, but cause has not yet been determined. A SAVE cash card was provided to the family, and the Red Cross was requested to assist them. Assistance was also provided by the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

[Click For Social Media Post](#)

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## Traffic Collision in Irvine



Irvine - Firefighter/Paramedics responded to a traffic collision in the intersection of Modjeska and Irvine Blvd involving two vehicles. One of the vehicles required the use of our hydraulic rescue tools to provide for extrication. A total of five patients were treated and transported by paramedic engine crews and ambulances to hospitals. The cause of the collision is being investigated by the Irvine Police Department. With a continued assessment of the incident, crews determined there were a total of seven patients.

[Click For Social Media Post](#)

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## Firefighter Friday Highlight - Obet Martinez





It's Firefighter Friday, and we are proud to feature Firefighter Obet Martinez.

Born in Mexicali, Mexico, Obet moved to the U.S. at age nine and grew up in Santa Ana and Westminster. He was on the football and track team at Westminster High School before continuing to [@SantaAnaCollege](#) to earn his A.A. Obet has two brothers, and he resides in Huntington Beach.

Before becoming a firefighter, Obet was a front end supervisor at Costco in Cypress. He started his fire service career as a Reserve Firefighter with Santa Ana Fire in 2005 before becoming a career firefighter there in 2007. In 2012, he joined the OCFA as part of the Santa Ana Fire transition.

Currently assigned to station 20 in Irvine as a Hazardous Materials Team Specialist, Obet also proudly serves on [@FEMA](#) California Task Force 5. He values being able to make a difference in somebody else's life as a firefighter, and he says he loves that every day at work is different.

He enjoys working out, time with his family, riding his beach cruiser, live concerts, USC and Raiders football games, new restaurants, road trips, and traveling. Obet also enjoys cooking spicy food, and some of his family recipes include pozole and ceviche.

Asked what thoughts he would share with a young person, Obet says, "Value your family time and respect your parents. You truly don't know how much you need them until they are no longer here." He also encourages fellow firefighters "to take advantage of opportunities outside of your normal schedule. It's really cool being able to go out of county on an overhead position or on a FEMA deployment to do something you don't get to do every day."

Thank you, Obet, for your service to the OCFA and the citizens of Orange County.





## World Cup Kickoff Video









What do soccer and the fire service have in common? Click the video to find out!

[Click For Social Media Post](#)

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## Orange County Fire Authority In the News

**[Crime and Public Safety | Woman's remains found in burned Lake...](#)**

The Orange County Register - Oct 2, 2022

**[Firefighters Work To Douse Lake Forest House Fire](#)**

MSN.com - Oct 2, 2022

**[Body Found Inside Home That Burned In Lake Forest](#)**

Patch.com - Oct 3, 2022

**[Swimmer dies off Thousand Steps Beach in Laguna Beach](#)**

MSN.com - Oct 5, 2022

**[Crime and Public Safety | Swimmer dies off Thousand Steps Beach in Laguna...](#)**

The Orange County Register - Oct 5, 2022

**[Local News | Orange unveils new Fire Station 1, replacing...](#)**

The Orange County Register - Oct 6, 2022

**[Tour A Fire Station, Donate Toys In Lake Forest](#)**

Patch.com - Oct 11, 2022

**[OC Firefighters Knock Down House Fire In Santa Ana](#)**

MSN.com - Oct 12, 2022

**[OCFA to receive \\$16.95M for new facility to fight wildfires](#)**

Spectrum News 1\_LA-WEST - Oct 19, 2022

**[Fullerton Rejects Joining OC Fire Authority Despite Staffing Concerns Over Existing Department](#)**

Voice of OC - Oct 20, 2022

**[Local News | Fullerton opts to build up its Fire Department...](#)**

The Orange County Register - Oct 20, 2022

**OCFA gets \$16.95 million in state funding to house expanding hand crew program**

MSN.com - Oct 21, 2022

**Man Arrested For Bomb Threat At OC Metrolink Station Saturday, Police**

MSN.com - Oct 22, 2022

**Man Arrested For Alleged Bomb Threat at Laguna Niguel Train Station**

The Epoch Times - Oct 23, 2022

**Hazmat Team Investigates Rancho Mission Viejo Starbucks Sunday**

Patch.com - Oct 24, 2022

**Calif. FD gets nearly \$17M in funds to build facility for expanded hand crew**

FireRescue1 - Oct 25, 2022

**Crime and Public Safety | Fire breaks out at former Orange County...**

The Orange County Register - Oct 27, 2022

**Helitankers on display above Helispot 69 Bravo, near Topanga, show what they can do**

Los Angeles Daily News - Oct 27, 2022

**Owl Saved In Santiago Fire Still Not Ready To Take Wing**

Patch.com - Oct 28, 2022

**California Sues SoCal Edison, T-Mobile for Allegedly Sparking Silverado Fire**

The Epoch Times - Oct 28, 2022

**Seven People Injured During Multi-Car Crash In Irvine**

Patch.com - Oct 31, 2022

**7 Injured in Irvine Crash**

The Epoch Times - Oct 31, 2022

**Garden Grove Man Rescued From Apartment Fire**

Patch.com - Feb 22, 2022

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# PROMOTIONS



Lucas Bauer, Fire Captain  
Curt Corbin, Fire Captain  
Tyler Eckhoff, Fire Captain  
Justine Gorin, Service Center Technician I  
Frank Granados, Fire Captain/PM  
Tyler Green, Fire Captain/PM  
Michael Jaucian, Fire Captain/PM  
Christopher Johns, Fire Captain  
Carlos Delcampo, Fleet Services Supervisor  
Scott Martin, Fire Captain/PM  
Eric Monroe, Fleet Services Supervisor  
Brian Raymond, Fire Captain/PM  
Tyler Sanford, Fire Captain

Jacob Smeltzer, Fire Captain  
Shawn Stacy, Fire Captain/PM  
Hans Strebelt, Fire Captain  
Timothy Stuart, Fire Captain/PM  
Ryan Summers, Fire Captain/PM  
Ryan Swanson, Fire Captain  
Justin Topalian, Fire Captain  
Ryan Vanwie, Fire Captain  
Scott Wiedensohler, Fire Division Chief  
Craig Covey, Fire Division Chief  
Cheyne Maule, Fire Division Chief

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## Years of Service

# 25

**YEARS OF SERVICE**







25 Years | Brian Roberts, Fire Battalion Chief ECC

# 20

## YEARS OF SERVICE



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John Bowden, Assistant Fire Marshal  
Andrew Guzman, Fire Prevention Analyst  
Jeffrey Smith, Fire Captain/PM

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### Retirements



We thank Division Chief Mike Contreras for his 33 years of service at the OCFA as he retires this month. Chief Contreras started here in 1989 in Academy 13. He has contributed to the department in a variety of positions including Paramedic, Assistant Fire Training Officer, Academy Cadre, Academy Coordinator, and OCFA's Wellness and Fitness Coordinator. When asked about one of his many stand-out assignments, he says being a POD (Point of Dispensing) Director for the Orange County Covid-19 vaccination response is one of the most impactful assignments of his 33 years of service to the community. Most recently, Chief Contreras served four years as the Division Chief for Division 5, which covers Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, and Lake Forest.

Living in Mission Viejo with his wife, Michelle, Chief Contreras has two grown sons, one of whom serves as an OCFA firefighter. The next chapter of his life continues as he will now serve as the Fire Chief of Cathedral City. He is excited for the opportunity to continue serving the public with the same passion and dedication that has defined his career of serving others.

Chief Contreras reflects on his career as a "life of service." He says, "It's all about the people. It's not about you. You can make a difference one person at a time." As he serves his last day at the OCFA, Chief Contreras shares with his fire family, "Take care of yourselves. Focus on how you can help and bring joy to others, and the rest takes care of itself."

Thank you, Chief Contreras, for your 33 years of service and dedication to the citizens of Orange County.

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- Robert Frick, Fire Apparatus Engineer
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