



Boston City Council
ED FLYNN
Councilor - District 2

June 8, 2026

Rodney Marshall
Commissioner, Boston Fire Department
115 Southamton Street
Boston, MA 02118

James Hooley
Chief of Emergency Medical Services
785 Albany Street
Boston, MA 02118

Michael Cox
Commissioner, Boston Police Department
1 Schroeder Plaza
Boston, MA 02120

RE: Elevator Safety at Boston Housing Authority (BHA) Developments

Dear Commissioner Marshall, Chief Hooley, and Commissioner Cox:

I'm writing today to seek clarity on the protocol for our first responders, including police officers, firefighters, and EMTs, in the event of an emergency at Boston Housing Authority (BHA) developments that may potentially coincide during an elevator failure.

Over the last two years, residents in BHA developments across the city have endured repeated elevator failures that have left them trapped in their apartments, forced to miss medical appointments, unable to access groceries, and cut off from their families and daily life. Most recently, a resident, a double amputee, disabled veteran, was not able to get into his apartment to get his medication as a result of a 22-hour elevator failure. Consequently, he was forced to sleep outside of South Station overnight because BHA did not provide him with a hotel voucher to stay while he could not access his apartment. Since this troubling incident, and on account several years of similar occurrences that led to the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board to issue a rare fine of \$363,000 (reduced to 1%, or \$3,630), I have since called for an investigation into BHA elevator failures and plan to schedule a hearing in the coming months.

With the safety of both our dedicated first responders and public housing neighbors in mind, I am respectfully requesting that you please provide your protocol in the event of an emergency at a BHA development during an elevator breakdown. I'm concerned that if a resident is having a medical emergency, such as a heart attack, there may be issues transporting a gurney and other medical equipment to that person's apartment. This is a civil rights and public safety issue. Disability rights are civil rights!

Sincerely,

Ed Flynn
Boston City Councilor, District 2