

CITY OF SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO
COMMISSION ON EQUITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Purpose

- A. *Establishment:* The Commission on Equity and Public Safety (hereinafter called the “Commission”) was established by an ordinance (Chapter 2.85 of Title 2 of the South San Francisco Municipal Code) passed by the City Council on February 23, 2022.
- B. The Commission on Equity and Public Safety is organized to make recommendations regarding policies and procedures that impact equity, safety, and security across City departments. This Commission bolsters community participation and decision making and increases transparency and accountability. The Commission on Equity and Public Safety focuses on a holistic approach to community safety and applies an equity lens to advance equitable practices in housing, social services, policing, and other areas.

ARTICLE II

Composition

- A. *Membership:* The Commission shall consist of a maximum of 7 members, plus one alternate. Members of the Commission shall be residents of South San Francisco. In making appointments, the City Council shall consider diverse and active community members of integrity and commitment to racial and social equity representing the diversity of South San Francisco.
- B. *Selection:* The City Council shall appoint the members of the Commission. Each Councilmember shall appoint one member and is not limited to selecting candidates from their District. The remaining two members and one alternate shall be appointed by a majority of the City Council. Members of the Commission appointed by an individual Councilmember may be removed by the Councilmember who appointed them. Members of the Commission appointed by a majority of the City Council may be removed by a majority of the City Council.
- C. *Terms:* Except as provided in “Limitation of terms” below, the term of each member of the Commission shall be four years and until a successor is appointed and qualified; however, terms shall be staggered and members shall be appointed to either an initial four-year or -two year term to allow for staggered terms. Terms shall expire in even-numbered years. Terms of members of the Commission appointed by an individual Councilmember shall coincide with the term of the Councilmember who appointed them.
- D. *Limitation of terms:* Commission members shall be limited to three consecutive terms. For purposes of calculating consecutive terms, service of at least two years plus one day during a term shall be counted as a complete term; all prior continuous service of existing Commission member shall be counted. Upon serving the maximum number of consecutive terms, a Commission member shall not be eligible for re-appointment to the Commission for a period of two years. If a vacancy occurs on the Commission, the alternate shall serve the remaining unexpired term of the former incumbent. If an additional vacancy occurs, the City Council shall appoint an individual to serve the remaining unexpired term.

- E. *Officers:* At the first meeting of the Commission and the first meeting of each calendar year, the Commission shall elect a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. The term of said offices shall be one year. The Vice Chairperson shall serve as chair in the absence of the Chairperson. The City's Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer or designee shall serve as Commission Secretary.

ARTICLE III

Meetings

- A. *Regular meetings:* The Commission shall hold regular meetings on the third Monday of every month. It is expected that each member will contribute and provide meaningful input on the topics on the meeting agenda. The Chairperson will collaborate with the Secretary to establish meeting agendas. Individual Commission members may suggest topics to be placed on a meeting agenda during a public meeting.
- B. *Special meetings:* The Commission may meet more frequently than prescribed in subsection (A) to address identified issues related to racial or social equity or special circumstances.
- C. *Subcommittees:* The Commission may create committees and/or subcommittees to review data, develop a plan to assess the areas of concern with respect to systemic racism within South San Francisco, and provide input or recommendations to the entire Commission and/or the City Manager and City Council.
- D. *Quorum:* A majority of the then-serving members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.
- E. *Brown Act:* All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public and comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act (California Government Code section 54950 et seq.).
- F. *Holidays:* If the day designated as a regular, adjourned regular, special or study meeting falls upon a legal holiday, the Commission shall meet upon the next succeeding day which is not a holiday unless otherwise ordered by the Commission.
- G. *Bylaws:* The Commission may create, amend, and repeal its own bylaws or otherwise establish rules of procedure and other rules for the conduct of its business by resolution.
- H. *Minutes:* The Secretary of the Commission shall ensure the preparation and maintenance of minutes of the business conducted and actions taken by the Commission.
- I. *Compensation:* Members of the Commission shall be eligible for a stipend as provided for in Chapter 2.84.
- J. *Attendance at meetings:* Commission members are expected to attend all regular and special Commission meetings. Commission members may be removed by a majority vote of the City Council following three excused or two unexcused absences for such meetings during the course of one fiscal year. An absence is considered excused when a Commission member notifies the Secretary of the intended absence at least twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. All other absences are considered unexcused.

ARTICLE V

Commission roles and responsibilities

- A. *Advisory body:* The Commission shall be an advisory body to the City Manager and City Council on matters relating to community equity and safety, applying an equity lens to community issues and fostering a sense of safety. The Commission's role includes, but is not limited to,

carrying out and, as applicable, making recommendations to the City Manager with respect to the following tasks:

- a. *Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging*: The Commission will identify areas to improve equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in all areas of City processes and public safety and make appropriate recommendations to the City Manager. Any policy or procedure that is not simply administrative and is under City Council's purview will be brought to City Council for discussion and approval.
- b. *Public safety services*: The Commission will recommend appropriate changes of public safety and equity policies and procedures toward the goals of safeguarding the rights of persons and promoting higher standards of competency, efficiency and justice in the provision of equitable community public safety services.
- c. *Youth in the criminal justice system*: The Commission may recommend policies and practices and advocate for early intervention strategies that minimize involvement of youth in the criminal justice system.
- d. *Liaison for the community*: The Commission will act as a liaison between the community and City staff, offering strategies to develop and implement sound community public safety concepts, increase public awareness, and further efforts of transparency and accountability.
- e. *Other arenas*: The Commission will utilize community voice not only to address concerns regarding policing but also other equity and public safety arenas that impact quality of life and safeguard against disaster, crime, and other threats or danger to civilian protections.
- f. *Community connections*: The Commission will connect with community networks and community-based organizations as necessary in pursuit of its goals.
- g. *Report-back*: The Commission will periodically share its efforts externally through updates on the City website and social media, through community meetings or other outreach efforts as necessary, and through an annual written report to the City Manager and City Council concerning its priorities and progress. The report will include an annual work plan with progress on initiatives.
- h. *Police-community relations*: The Commission will promote positive police-community relations in an effort to provide better services and expectations from the community and police.
- i. *Complaints*: The Commission will provide an alternative channel for members of the public to file a complaint regarding compliance with City policies and applicable laws by City personnel, as follows:
 - i. The Commission will receive complaints regarding South San Francisco personnel alleging failure to comply with City policies and applicable laws. The Commission shall refer such complaints to the City's Human Resources Department.
 - ii. The Commission will not investigate complaints received. In consultation with the City Attorney's Office, the Human Resources Department will determine the appropriate form of investigation and assign an investigator.
 - iii. The complaint and investigation process shall be designed to respect the rights of both complainants and the City personnel who is the subject of the

- complaint, and shall comply with applicable federal and state law, including California laws governing general law cities and Government Code section 3300 et seq., and bargaining agreements. The complaint and investigation process shall also maintain the confidentiality of the complainant to the extent possible.
- iv. For complaints made directly to the Commission, the Commission may receive updates only on the assignment of a complaint to an investigator and the identity of the investigator, investigation completion date, whether the complaint was substantiated, and any remedial actions taken. “Remedial actions” do not include discipline or other personnel info, but may include certain remedy to the complainant such as, for example only, whether a citation is dismissed.
 - v. The foregoing process shall not alter existing procedures relating to filing complaints with the City. Complaints made by City personnel related to matters within the course of employment shall be made in accordance with the City’s existing policies and procedures.
 - vi. The City Council may adopt additional policies and procedures governing the Commission’s receipt, referral, and review of complaints.
- j. *Records review:* In instances where investigatory files and related material are considered public records under California Penal Code sections 832.5 and 832.7, the Commission shall have the ability to review records and files relating to the investigation and the outcome of the investigation when the records, files or outcome are considered public records. Such records and files shall only be provided to the Commission upon conclusion of the investigation or after all administrative and judicial appeals have been exhausted, if required by applicable state law.
 - i. The Commission may ask questions and make policy recommendations for future investigations, but in no event shall the Commission make independent decisions, or determine or make recommendations regarding specific disciplinary actions or related outcomes.
 - k. *Data:* The Commission will review data related to equity and public safety.
 - l. *Work plan:* The Commission will submit a yearly work plan to the City Manager and City Council in order to ensure a manageable scope of work. The Commission will also submit an annual report including the work plan and progress made on initiatives.

ARTICLE VI

Purpose and Guiding Language

- A. *Background & Rationale:* Acknowledgment of equity and public safety as necessary to optimize success
- B. *Mission:* The South San Francisco Commission on Equity and Public Safety aims to proactively advance equity in the City’s internal and external processes, as well as to recommend policy and program changes to overcome institutional inequities in housing, employment, education, policing, healthcare (including mental health and addiction services), accessibility, other social services, development, and any other equity-related area in the city. The Commission also provides a community space where the people have a seat at the table.

- a. This Commission builds on and draws from the previous SSF Commission on Racial and Social Equity, which met for one year and produced a Final Report and Racial and Social Equity Action Plan.
- C. *Vision*: Government and other institutions within the city proactively address structural racism, ageism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, and other oppressions to promote social equity and equality. Government institutions have increased transparency and accountability to the community. This will contribute to a community in which all residents including those with marginalized identities, residents of color, and historically disenfranchised community members are safe, feel a sense of belonging, have abundant opportunities, and reach their full potential.
- D. *Goals and Objectives*: The Commission's goals and objectives will be directly influenced by the City of South San Francisco's General Plan as well as other relevant City of South San Francisco Master Plans including the Racial and Social Equity Commission Action Plan.
- E. *Group agreements*: The Commission operates with the following group agreements:
 - a. Focus on our common goal
 - b. Build and strengthen partnerships and community relationships
 - c. Be open to new ideas and perspectives
 - d. Participate and be self-aware
 - e. Be prepared for uncomfortable conversations
 - f. Calling in versus calling out
 - g. Acknowledge intent, address impact
 - h. Foster psychological safety and a safe space for discussion
- F. *Levers of change Framework*: The Commission plans to effect change by making recommendations in the following arenas:
 - a. Programs: The services provided
 - b. Policies: Regulations, institutional procedures, how resources are distributed/targeted to neighborhoods and residents
 - c. Practices, Approach, and Culture: How services are provided; when/why and how community engagement happens; recruitment, hiring, training, and professional development
 - d. Processes: Internal procedures related to programs and policies