



## Commission Streamlining Task Force City and County of San Francisco

### Commission and Other Public Bodies Questionnaire

#### Commission on the Status of Women Department on the Status of Women City and County of San Francisco

##### Mandate and Purpose

1. What was the original purpose or rationale for creating this body?

***The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women was established to champion gender equity and advocate for the rights and well-being of women and girls across the city.***

***Established in 1975 through the advocacy of local feminists, the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women was created in response to growing recognition of gender disparities and the need for focused action. The Commission on the Status of Women was established under Charter Section 4.119 of the San Francisco City Charter, with additional powers and responsibilities granted by Chapter 33 of the San Francisco Administrative Code. The Charter specifically entrusts the Commission with monitoring the status of women and girls throughout San Francisco, identifying inequalities, and proposing actionable solutions to address them.***

***This advocacy led to the formation of the Department on the Status of Women (DOSW) in 1994, one of the first municipal departments of its kind. Together, the Commission and Department monitor gender equity, identify systemic inequalities, and propose solutions to uplift women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals in San Francisco.***

***The Commission serves as an important platform for community voices to influence local policy and decision-making. For example, four years after the formation of the Department, the Commission leveraged its advocacy to adopt the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1998, making San Francisco the first city in the U.S. to do so.***

##### **Our North Star:**

- ***To transform San Francisco into a truly gender-equitable city, we aim to unlock the full potential of the City and County by embedding a strong gender lens across all aspects of government. This includes both internal operations and policies and external programs, services, and partnerships, ensuring that the needs of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals are centered in all decision-making and delivery.***

##### **Key Objectives:**

- ***Advocacy: The commission focuses on promoting policies that support women's rights and address issues such as discrimination, violence, human trafficking, and economic inequality.***

- **Research and Recommendations:** It researches women's issues and provides recommendations to the city government to improve the status of women.
- **Community Engagement:** The commission engages with community organizations and stakeholders to raise awareness and foster collaboration on women's issues.

*The Commission worked with the Department on a new strategic plan in 2025, which seeks to address a fuller spectrum of women's lives, focusing on: Health & Safety, Economic Security, and Civic and Community Engagement. As the body charged with monitoring and advancing gender equity, the Commission, and the work carried out on its behalf through the Department, is instrumental in driving systemic change. Its work is essential in applying a gender lens across all City functions to build a truly equitable San Francisco, emphasizing that everyone has a part to play.*

*The commission plays a crucial role in shaping policies that impact women and ensuring their voices are heard in local governance.*

2. Has the commission's role or purpose changed over time? If so, how

*Yes, the Commission's role and purpose have evolved, adapting to shifting laws, political landscapes, and the changing needs of women, girls, and gender non-conforming individuals, as well as taking on new responsibilities delegated to it by the Mayor or Board of Supervisors. While the core mission of advancing gender equity remains the same, the scope of work has expanded significantly. Originally rooted in the women's movement of the 1970s, the Commission was created to address clear gender-based inequalities. Today, under the Department on the Status of Women (DOSW), the Commission not only monitors these persistent issues but also addresses emerging challenges such as economic insecurity, gender-based violence, underrepresentation in leadership, and access to healthcare.*

*As laws change and political power shifts, many of the same barriers reappear in new forms, and new issues, such as digital safety or reproductive rights, continue to arise. This makes the Commission's role even more vital. Commissioners serve as key advocates and educators, helping to hold City departments accountable, influence policy, and ensure that a gender lens is applied across all City operations. Their leadership is crucial in convening communities, raising awareness, and driving systemic change toward a truly gender-equitable San Francisco.*

## Public Engagement

3. How many public commenters typically speak? Is a variety of public comment made? Do the same individuals typically provide public comment?

*At the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women, we typically have anywhere from 4 to over 10 public commenters at our meetings, depending on the agenda. We hear from a range of individuals and organizations, particularly those we collaborate with on key issues such as gender-based violence and reproductive justice. While there is a core group of advocates and organizational representatives who provide recurring public comment, especially on topics aligned with their missions, we also receive*

**comments from members of the broader community. This mix ensures that our public comment reflects both consistency in advocacy and a diversity of perspectives.**

#### Commission Business

4. What kinds of topics does your department typically bring to meetings?

##### **Gender Equity & Representation**

- **Community Needs Assessment Report** – In 2024, DOSW launched a city-wide survey to determine the priorities of the community in areas of health and safety, economic resilience, and civic and political engagement. The Commission was thrilled to support this first-of-its-kind survey by the Department. The survey collected over 1,000 responses and attained geographic representation from each Supervisorial District. Specifically in the area of health and safety, a few key findings are that experiences of harassment are common among respondents, few respondents reported feeling safe walking in the City at night, and respondents reported knowing less about menopause and aging-related changes in the area of reproductive health. The Community Needs Assessment provided vital feedback and input that will guide the Commission and the Department's work in Fiscal Year 25-26 and beyond.
- **Gender Equity Policy Institute (GEPI) Presentation & Contract** – After the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, the Commission worked with the Mayor's Office and the Department to approve a series of grants to help ensure access to reproductive care, including abortion care, in San Francisco. The Department was instructed, as part of the Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition, to produce a report on the status of abortion care across the nine-county Bay Area region. The Gender Equity Policy Institute, GEPI, was awarded the contract and produced the landmark report, *Preparing for an Uncertain Future in Post-Dobbs America: A Landscape Analysis of Abortion Care in the San Francisco Bay Area*. This report has been disseminated to San Francisco's Mayor and Board of Supervisors, and numerous City and County Department Heads. The report was also shared with representatives from each of the counties included, service providers, advocates, and other stakeholders. It continues to inform the Department's work on reproductive justice, and the Commission receives regular updates on the status of abortion rights and care across the region and nation.
- **Gender Analysis of Commissions and Boards Representation Report** – Per the City's Charter (section 4.101), the memberships of all San Francisco Boards & Commissions are examined biennially to assess how local communities are represented on these crucial oversight bodies. The Commission reviews each report and offers suggestions on ways to glean more details from respondents. For example, multiple data points suggested by the Commission have been updated, including racial and demographic designations, and asking about caregiving responsibilities. By expanding our understanding of who is invited to serve and who has the capacity to serve, we can better identify gaps in representation across these policy bodies.
- **Representation of Women in City Property** – Ordinance 243-18, passed in 2018, mandated that women be represented in at least 30% of all public spaces, including in art, street names, parks, and buildings. Our analysis shows that women are still vastly underrepresented, compared to men, in public spaces across San Francisco, only averaging 15 percent of representation in public property, half the City's goal of 30 percent representation. Specifically, we found that women were represented in 21 percent of art pieces, 7 percent of street names, 28 percent of building names, and 25 percent of park names. This low level of representation is particularly problematic because it demonstrates that there has been little progress toward the City's goal over the past few years, with only a one percent increase since our last report was published in 2022. Each year, the report contains recommendations on how the city can institute policies to improve gender representation.
- **League of Women Voters SF Presentation** – In the fall of 2024, the San Francisco League of Women Voters presented their work engaging women voters and sharing strategies to promote civic engagement and increase voter turnout among women and young people. The League shared highlights of their civic

education and outreach work, as well as an overview of a cutting-edge virtual reality project led by their Junior League for new voters, including those with limited English language proficiency. Participants could virtually “visit” a polling location, making the process for new voters less confusing and intimidating. The Commission was impressed by the work and results and directed the Department to help uplift these nonpartisan resources.

### **Youth & Community Empowerment**

- **Oasis for Girls Presentation** – LaVonda Baldwin from Oasis for Girls shared about their work partnering with girls & young women of color, ages 14-18, from under-resourced communities in San Francisco to cultivate the skills, knowledge, and confidence to discover their dreams and build strong futures. Oasis for Girls provides culturally relevant and gender-specific programs to empower girls and build sisterhood through shared experiences.
- **Women and Girls in Sports (BAWSI)** – The Bay Area Women’s Sports Initiative shared BAWSI’s work advocating for gender equity in sports. The Co-CEO, Kim Turner, provided valuable analysis and data on the positive impact of ensuring equal investments in sports for girls, most notably outlining how underinvestment in girls’ sports reinforces biases and assumptions that girls have less athletic aptitude, do not deserve equal access to resources and reinforces harmful gender stereotypes. Additionally, the lack of investment puts girls at a disadvantage: they miss out on valuable team and leadership development and may miss out on opportunities to secure scholarships for higher education.

### **Gender-Based Violence & Safety**

- **Violence Against Trans Women Data Report** – Dr. Erin Wilson from the San Francisco Department of Public Health’s Center for Public Health Research shared the results of years of work within DPH engaging trans women in San Francisco. Dr. Wilson and the Center’s research demonstrated the challenges trans women face, even in San Francisco. Educational barriers and under-employment result in trans women lagging in earnings and struggling more with homelessness and experiencing violence. The problems compound one another: over 1/3 of trans women in San Francisco experienced violence. Over 75% of trans women who experienced housing insecurity experienced violence. The vast majority of trans women do not feel they can trust the police and have been victims of violence while bystanders were nearby and did not intervene. These findings add an important dimension to the Commission and Department’s knowledge base as they develop advocacy plans and programming recommendations in the coming years.
- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Grants Portfolio** – DOSW’s GBV grant agreements, which spanned five years of possible renewals, were initiated in FY 2020–21 and were set to sunset on June 30, 2025. The baseline annual funding requirement for the portfolio was \$8,470,743, supporting 27 individual grantees across 39 contracts in six program areas: crisis lines, emergency shelters, intervention and advocacy, prevention, education and training, transitional housing, and legal services.
- **Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence Grant** – The Commission on the Status of Women supported the Department’s efforts to provide necessary funding to Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence by approving a grant extension and budget increase to ensure continued delivery of culturally responsive services for domestic violence survivors. This funding, totaling \$565,000 and in partnership with the Human Rights Commission, supports critical programmatic services such as case management, client intake, referrals, outreach, and staff training related to Marsy’s Law. The Commission’s action reinforces its commitment to expanding access to survivor-centered, community-based support that directly strengthens service delivery.
- **Human Trafficking Report (2021–2023)** – The Department on the Status of Women served as the lead agency for Mayor London Breed’s Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking. This report continued the Task Force’s work by helping to broaden and deepen its impact. Part of this work involved updating the data published in the inaugural 2021 report while continuing to build relationships across the wider anti-trafficking community, expanding their reach and impact.

*This report examines the scope of human trafficking in San Francisco during the calendar years 2022 and 2023, detailing the number and types of human trafficking cases reported and identified. Data was collected from 18 agencies and community-based organizations, and 2,501 cases of human trafficking were reported. In the Fall of 2024, the Human Trafficking Report was transitioned to the Mayor's Office of Victims' Rights.*

- **Family Violence Council Participation and Report (2021-2023)** – The Commission and Department have long collaborated with the Family Violence Council since the formation of the Council in 1995. The Family Violence Council (FVC) recommends programs, policies, and coordination of City services to reduce family violence in San Francisco, including child abuse, elder abuse, and domestic violence.

*The authorizing legislation for the Family Violence Council asked the Council to prepare an annual report of family violence trends in San Francisco. This report collects data from a variety of sources, attempting to gauge the full scope of family violence in the City. The report begins with criminal justice statistics, including calls to 911, cases investigated by the San Francisco Police Department, and prosecutions by the District Attorney's Office. Reports from City and County agencies are also analyzed, including Child Protective Services and Adult Protective Services. Because many individuals seek community resources in place of City or criminal justice services, selected statistics from community-based organizations are also included in this report.*

*Since 2009, the Department has supported the Family Violence Council by administering the annual report. In 2024, DOSW released the 11<sup>th</sup> Family Violence Council report that tracks the trends of family violence in San Francisco, identifies gaps and needs in response and services, and informs policymaking and funding priorities for the City. In the Fall of 2024, the Family Violence Council Report was transitioned to the Mayor's Office for Victims' Rights. The COSW President remains a voting member of the Council and attends quarterly meetings for the Family Violence Council.*

### **LGBTQIA+ Inclusion**

- **Queer Women's Visibility – NCLR (National Center for Lesbian Rights), Local Lesbian/ Queer women-owned business** - The Commission heard from a panel of three lesbian/queer small business owners in San Francisco, who shared some of the policies that have helped them successfully open and update their businesses, such as Prop H, as well as challenges.
- **Office of Transgender Initiatives (OTI) Presentation** - Honey Mahogany- a San Francisco serves as the Director of the Office of Transgender Initiatives, appears at the COSW meetings and highlights the Office's impact, such as implementing gender-neutral bathrooms, conducting cultural competency trainings, and addressing complaints involving city departments and police interactions with trans individuals.
- **Violence Against Trans Women Data Report (also listed under GBV for overlap)**

### **Reproductive Justice**

- **The San Francisco Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition (BAARC) Report** – Preparing for an Uncertain Future in Post-Dobbs America, as well as presentations from ACCESS Reproductive Justice and Reproductive Freedom, highlighted the growing challenges to accessing safe, legal abortions and comprehensive reproductive healthcare. With protections being rolled back across the country, these organizations underscored the urgent need to safeguard not only abortion access but the full spectrum of women's healthcare, from contraception to prenatal care, amid escalating legal and political threats.

### **Policy, Budget & Planning**

- **Strategic Planning (see # 5)**
- **Budget Review and Approve the Department's Budget Annually**



5. Does the commission (or other public body) provide input or approval on departmental policies, strategic plans, or budgets?

***Yes, the Commission on the Status of Women provides input and oversight on the Department on the Status of Women's policies, strategic plans, and overall direction. We engage in strategic planning on a 2–3 year cycle, adjusting as needed in response to emerging issues and community needs. Commissioners offer direct feedback to the Department's Director and staff, particularly on initiatives such as equity-focused surveys and research.***

***Our role is to ensure that the Department's work aligns with the Commission's mission to advance the rights and well-being of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals in San Francisco. In addition, the Commission reviews and approves the Department's high-level budget annually, including any proposed cuts required by the Mayor, though we do not engage at the line-item level.***

***The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women, established in 1975, was tasked with advancing gender equity across the city. To realign with its chartered mission, the Commission and Department on the Status of Women (DOSW) have redoubled their efforts to bring San Francisco inline with its goal of being a fully gender-equitable city and enacting reforms that align with the City's adoption of a local Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ordinance in 1998. The Commission and Department's focus is to advance gender parity, advocate for equitable service delivery, and enact collaborative, citywide action. A key component of this strategic shift is the transition of DOSW's Gender-Based Violence (GBV) grant portfolio, previously spread across 39 contracts and 6 service areas, to more mission-aligned and better-resourced City departments. This change not only ensures stronger alignment but also enables grantee organizations to access greater resources to continue their vital work in protecting the most vulnerable members of our community.***

***In November 2023, DOSW prepared a Porting Memo and 39 contract summaries for the Mayor's Budget Office to support the transfer of GBV grants to the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD). The Mayor and Board of Supervisors approved the transfer in May 2024 as part of the two-year budget process. Although this decision was made in 2024, it reflects a long-standing priority recognized by Commissioners past and present: to focus the Commission and Department's mission on systemic accountability, equity in City operations, and driving long-term structural change. It is a necessary step toward fulfilling the Department's original vision and advancing San Francisco toward true gender equity.***

6. What types of decisions, policies, or initiatives has the commission (or other public body) reviewed or approved of in the past year?

***The San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) drives gender equity and safety in San Francisco through policy leadership, community partnership, funding, and accountability. The Commission uplifts the rights and well-being of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals, especially those most impacted by violence, marginalization, and systemic barriers, by:***

***Key Areas of Work:***

***1. Policy & Research Leadership***

- a. Hosts public presentations from leading gender equity organizations (e.g., GEPI, League of Women Voters, OTI, BAWSI) to inform policies and programs.***
- b. DOSW produces in-depth reports and assessments, including:***

- i. *Community Needs Assessment (Health & Safety, Economic Security, Civic Engagement)*
  - ii. *Human Trafficking Trends*
  - iii. *Representation of Women in Public Property*
  - iv. *Abortion Access Post-Dobbs*
  - v. *Demographics of Boards & Commissions*
- c. *Other Department and Organization reports and assessments, including*
  - i. *Violence Against Trans Women*
  - ii. *Decriminalizing Sex work*
- 2. **Strategic Grantmaking**
  - a. *Oversaw gender-based violence (GBV) grant portfolios to support survivors and prevent harm.*
    - i. *39 contracts and 6 service areas.*
  - b. *Funds targeted initiatives like Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence to address racial and gender disparities.*
  - c. *Funding for the creation of the Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition and ongoing coalition work, including an emergency grant for wrap-around abortion care services, grants to the Gender Equity Policy Institute for a landmark abortion care landscape analysis, webinars, and participation in statewide reproductive justice coalitions*
  - d. *Oversaw the creation of two innovative guaranteed income and microgrant programs supporting survivors of violence and those who have been justice system involved.*
- 3. **Budget & Resource Advocacy**
  - a. *Develops and approves multi-year budgets that align with community needs and Commission priorities.*
  - b. *The Commission is the sole body that can approve any sole-source grants proposed by the Department. (Administrative Code Chapter 21G; Section 21G.8)*
  - c. *Evaluates the impact of funded programs and contracts, including with key partners like the Gender Equity Policy Institute.*
  - d. *Each month, the Commission receives a detailed report from the Director on all Department activities, including updates on fiscal and administrative matters.*
- 4. **Indigenous Justice**
  - a. *In recent years, DOSW has collaborated with Indigenous Justice to spotlight the violence impacting Indigenous communities. In 2023, for the first time, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP) event was held inside San Francisco City Hall, symbolizing deeper institutional support. The event honored victims, supported affected families, and reinforced the city's commitment to justice and healing. The department has taken part in this impactful Indigenous ceremony each May, a deeply important annual event that brings crucial attention to the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples.*
- 5. **Community & Youth Empowerment**
  - a. *Collaborates with community organizations such as Oasis for Girls, IGNITE, and Alliance for Girls to invest in the next generation of women and girls.*
  - b. *Elevate voices through forums, presentations, and events*
- 6. **Oversight & Accountability**
  - a. *Participates in the Family Violence Council to coordinate interagency response to violence.*
  - b. *Reviews citywide appointments to ensure gender and racial equity across public boards and commissions.*
- 7. **Resolutions**
  - a. *San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women Resolution Recognizing the Women's Leadership Committee of the San Francisco Police Officers Association.*

- b. Resolution Recognizing Captain Alexa O'Brien.**
- c. Resolution Recognizing Captain Trenia Wearing.**
- d. Resolution Recognizing Lieutenant Tracy McCray.**
- e. Resolution Recognizing Captain Amy Hurwitz.**
- f. Resolution Honoring Women's History Month**
- g. Resolution Approving the Contract Extension for the Gender Policy Institute's Grant**

7. What is the typical follow-up process when the commission makes a recommendation or request?

***The follow-up process for recommendations or requests made by the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women varies depending on the nature of the request and who it was directed to. Typically, when a request results in an agenda item, the Department responds with an update or formal presentation at the next Commission meeting. For more time-sensitive matters, the Commission President works directly with the Department Director and the Commission Secretary to coordinate a timely response or action, such as responding to the Prop E Commission Streamlining Task Force questionnaire. This flexible approach allows the Commission to remain responsive while maintaining transparency and accountability.***

***Another example is creating a subcommittee for the recruitment of the next department head to ensure an efficient timeline and enable the Commission to provide three names to the Mayor.***

#### Contracts

8. How many contracts (including grant approvals) are heard?

**FY 22-23: 4**

**FY 23-24: 6**

**FY 24-25: 3**

9. What kinds of contracts or grants does the commission (or other public body) typically review?

***In January 2019, the department received a \$9.3 million "Continuum of Care" grant from the California Department of Social Services to provide wraparound services and housing options for commercially sexually exploited youth. In January 2023, the grant was extended with an additional \$7 million award. The project, called the Safety Opportunities and Lifelong Relationships Collaborative (SF SOL), is a three-year initiative running from 2023 through December 2025. Designed to develop a set of trauma-informed services—including a continuum of placements and services for youth at risk of or experiencing commercial sexual exploitation—the project expanded to take a regional approach, now including other counties within the greater San Francisco Bay Area.***

***The Commission conducts a formal review of the Department's annual budget, which outlines allocations for grants, RFPs, and major contracts. As the sole authority empowered to approve sole-source grants, the Commission plays a critical oversight role. At each meeting, the***



***Director's report provides a level update on departmental expenditure and invoices, enabling ongoing fiscal monitoring and accountability.***

***The current Mayor has suspended any new contracts for this fiscal year; however, the Department will continue to administer grants related to reproductive justice and gender-based violence services. Grantees have the opportunity to address concerns directly to the Commission.***

10. On average, how long does it take for contracts to be approved?

***On average the grant process can take between 2-4 weeks. Typically, it takes the City Attorney's Office about 2 weeks to complete their review, which includes back-and-forth communication with the CAT and the Department. Once the contract is finalized, it is then ready for signatures, usually in the following order: grantee, department head, and City Attorney. The Commission oversees all grants, which are reviewed as needed and typically amended or approved in a single meeting.***

***All City grants and contracts must follow the processes set forth by the City Administrator, the Office of Contract Administration, the City Attorney's Office, and other oversight bodies.***

***A new vendor contract for goods or services—including a Request for Proposal (RFP)—for the City can take 4 to 6 months from initiation to vendor selection and contract execution. An RFP is presented to the Commission during the planning stage, with updates provided as it moves through the review process and is posted. The Office of Contract Administration helps the Department with the review of all documents and ensures the process meets the city's requirements. The contract process then moves through the City Attorney's Office for processing, which can take 1-2 months depending on the specifics of the contract and the needs of the parties involved. An example of this was the Gender-Based Violence Portfolio.***

11. Are commission meetings scheduled frequently enough to support timely contract or grant approvals?

***Yes, the Commission meets monthly, and special meetings have been scheduled, when necessary, such as in preparation for a budget hearing or other time-sensitive matter. Thanks to the staff's strong time management. Commission meetings support timely contracts and grant approvals.***

## Outcomes and Impact

12. What measurable outcomes or impacts has the commission achieved in the past year?

***The Commission has been engaged in a wide range of work over the past year.***

***As the oversight body for the Department on the Status of Women, we reviewed and approved the Department's proposed plans and budget. The Department and Commission also played a key role in successfully negotiating the migration of the Gender-Based Violence Portfolio to the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, while maintaining funding at prior levels despite citywide budget cuts.***

*The Commission issued commendations for female leadership in the San Francisco Police Department after supporting efforts to address the Department's lack of lactation spaces for officers—an issue that directly contradicts the City's lactation ordinance.*

*The Commission is mandated to review biennial reports on the representation of women in public spaces and the composition of San Francisco's Boards and Commissions. We have regularly provided feedback to improve the survey and have worked to share the outcomes of these reports more broadly. The Commission has directed the Department to collaborate with the San Francisco Arts Commission to address the lack of women's representation in public spaces. The City continues to fall significantly short of its self-imposed mandate that 30% of all public art, street names, spaces, and works represent or be created by women. The Commission has also requested that the Boards and Commissions survey include additional questions to better understand which groups may be underrepresented on these critical oversight bodies, including representation by Supervisorial District. Furthermore, the Commission has called for increased representation of women, nonbinary individuals, young people, and parents in these roles.*

*The Commission also reviews regular reports on reproductive justice from the Department and makes recommendations to uplift credible information. We have asked the Department to continue its work within the Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition—a nine-county regional coalition—to share best practices related to reproductive justice and women's health across the region.*

***Reports:*** *These reports are revisited and updated every few years to track progress, reassess community needs, and inform ongoing policy and program decisions.*

- ***San Francisco Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition (BAARC) Report:*** *In response to the fall of Roe v. Wade, DOSW launched BAARC to coordinate a regional sanctuary for abortion access. This report outlines the coalition's work, current gaps in care, and actionable policy recommendations.*
- ***Gender Analysis of Commissions and Boards Report:*** *As required by the City Charter, this biennial report assesses the demographic makeup of San Francisco's Boards and Commissions to ensure inclusive representation. It highlights trends and proposes strategies to improve equity in civic leadership.*
- ***Community Needs Assessment Report:*** *The Department's first-ever Community Needs Assessment identifies key priorities in Health and Safety, Economic Security, and Civic and Political Empowerment. The findings will shape DOSW's funding decisions and advocacy efforts going forward.*
- ***Representation of Women in Public Property:*** *Four years after the passage of Ordinance 243-18, which set a goal for women to be represented in at least 30% of public spaces, our report reveals that San Francisco continues to fall short and calls for renewed urgency to meet this mandate.*
- ***Human Trafficking Report:*** *Based on data from 18 agencies and community partners, this report documents 2,501 reported cases of human trafficking in 2022 and 2023, providing critical insights into the scope and nature of trafficking in San Francisco.*

### **Council / Hearings**

**Family Violence Council:** The President and designated staff of the Commission on the Status of Women (COSW) and the Department on the Status of Women (DOSW) represent the Department on the Family Violence Council, contributing to citywide efforts to prevent and respond to family violence.

### **Grants:**

**Black Women Revolt Against Domestic Violence Grant:** provides holistic, culturally responsive support to Black women and their families as they heal from domestic violence. The team helps survivors navigate complex systems to close critical gaps in education, health, and economic stability, empowering them on their path to long-term healing and self-sufficiency. [Between FY23-FY25, approximately 300K]

**Gender-based violence (GBV) grant portfolio:** The GBV Grant Portfolio supports a wide range of programs that address and prevent gender-based violence across San Francisco. Funded initiatives span six key Program Areas to provide a continuum of care and prevention for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of GBV [FY23-24 & FY24-25 approximately \$8.5 million]

- **Crisis Line Services:** Programs in this area offer 24/7 access to immediate support, safety planning, and crisis intervention for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- **Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter:** These grants support safe, confidential shelters for individuals and families fleeing abusive situations, ensuring access to basic needs and support services.
- **Intervention & Advocacy:** This area provides survivors with culturally responsive support services, safety planning, and case management to help stabilize and empower them.
- **Legal Services:** Legal assistance programs help survivors navigate the justice system, obtain restraining orders, and secure immigration relief, custody rights, and other protections.
- **Prevention, Education & Training:** These initiatives focus on community education, youth engagement, and outreach to prevent GBV before it occurs and to build healthier relationships.
- **Transitional Housing:** Programs in this area provide longer-term housing and support services to help survivors transition to independent, violence-free lives.

### **Recognition and Advocacy**

The Commission has supported the Department's work with the Mayor's Office, Board of Supervisors, and other City leaders on annual events, including leading Women's History Month programming and participation in Women's Equality Day.

The Commission has also supported the Department's collaboration with and participation in statewide organizations and agencies, including the California Commission on Women, Girls and the Future of Abortion Council, the CROWN Coalition, and Rosie the Riveter Certification Awards Consortium.

13. How does the commission's work align with your department's strategic goals and priorities?

**The Commission's work is deeply aligned with the Department on the Status of Women's strategic goals and priorities. Working at the intersection of health, safety, socioeconomics, politics, and gender, DOSW**

**prioritizes improving the overall well-being of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals through three core areas: Health & Safety, Economic Security, and Civic Engagement & Political Empowerment.**

**The Commission plays a vital role in advancing these goals by engaging directly with the community, listening to public input through presentations, surveys, and testimony, and partnering with aligned organizations to understand current needs and emerging challenges. Commissioners visit and collaborate with community-based organizations doing work in our shared mission areas, helping to amplify their efforts and connect them with broader advocacy channels.**

**Through public education, outreach, and direct engagement with City officials, departments, and the public, the Commission helps ensure that gender equity, safety, economic security, and empowerment remain central priorities across City operations. Our work is not only about equity, but also about the advancement and thriving of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals. By serving as a bridge between grassroots needs and government action, the Commission supports the Department's efforts to drive systemic change, amplify community voices, and build a San Francisco where everyone has the opportunity to live safely, securely, and with dignity.**

14. Are there overlapping reporting, engagement, or approval processes across public bodies that involve this commission?

**The Commission on the Status of Women is actively engaged in collaborative efforts with various public bodies and community stakeholders to advance gender equity, safety, and empowerment throughout San Francisco.**

**We collaborate and partner with a wide range of nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, and educational institutions. This includes organizations such as the Women's Foundation of California, Cameo House, Indigenous Justice, The Women's Building, Community Forward, WOMAN, Inc., San Francisco Women Against Rape, Young Women's Freedom Center, and grassroots groups focused on domestic violence prevention, reproductive rights, and economic security. We also work with schools and universities to promote educational opportunities and leadership development for women and girls.**

**At times, we have opportunities to highlight systemic problems, such as a lack of representation, and then work with the San Francisco Arts Commission, Department of Public Works, City Administrator's Office, and Recreation and Parks to collect information involving the names of places and things, culminating in the biennial Representation of Women in City Property report. The Commission tracks the information and provides a series of recommendations for departments to improve their representation of women in public spaces, especially as the city is woefully behind its self-imposed goal.**

**The gender analysis of San Francisco boards and commissions requires the participation of all boards, commissions, and other advisory bodies. The Commission regularly looks to improve both the rate of participation and the quality of the data provided in the report. Participation is crucial to obtain accurate information about the makeup of these policy bodies and to ensure women, nonbinary people, parents, and individuals of diverse backgrounds have opportunities to participate. The Commission and**

***Department have also made recommendations to the Mayor's Office of Appointments on ways to improve diversity.***

***The Commission also receives quarterly reports from the City Attorney's Office and the Department of Human Resources on harassment cases (including but not limited to sexual harassment) that are filed in the City and externally. These reports provide redacted data on the types of harassment filings, the agency where the incident was reported, and the status of filings. This information is critical to understanding challenges within the City and County to protect women and nonbinary individuals.***

***These overlapping partnerships strengthen the impact of our work by ensuring community needs are reflected in public policy and amplify the voices and expertise of organizations working on the front lines of gender justice.***

15. Are there other public bodies performing similar functions or working on similar issues as this commission?

***No, there are no other public bodies in San Francisco performing the same functions as the Commission on the Status of Women.***

***While some departments may address specific gender-related issues within their individual scopes, the Commission on the Status of Women, alongside the Department on the Status of Women, is the only local public entity that solely focuses on the comprehensive advancement, safety, and empowerment of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals across all areas of civic life.***

***Without civilian oversight and a dedicated commission and department, there would be no entity responsible for ensuring citywide accountability, cross-sector coordination, and consistent application of a gender lens in policymaking and service delivery. Our role is unique and essential to identifying disparities, elevating community needs, and driving systemic change for gender equity in San Francisco.***

***Given the federal environment, the Commission's role is more critical than ever in addressing these concerns.***

16. Can you provide examples of how the commission has influenced department policy, operations, or helped address key issues?

***The Commission has played a critical role in shaping departmental policy, operations, and addressing key gender equity issues across the City.***

***As the City's sole agency devoted to gender equity, the Commission has responsibilities and duties with the city and county government and beyond. The Commission departments are accountable by reviewing reports, policies, and programs through a gender lens, ensuring they serve the needs of***



**women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals. We push for equity in public policy, service delivery, employment opportunities, leadership development, and budget allocations—often influencing department priorities and citywide planning processes.**

**The Commission also has unique powers and duties that facilitate its work as a community and coalition builder, bringing together public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community members to identify gaps in services and policies, share solutions, and coordinate impactful strategies. Through regular public meetings, community presentations, and issue-based hearings, the Commission helps surface real-time challenges, such as barriers to reproductive healthcare, gender-based violence, and economic insecurity, which informs how the recommendations the Commission forwards to city leadership, the Department on the Status of Women, and other City entities respond.**

**One recent example includes our support and oversight of the Department’s Gender-Based Violence (GBV) portfolio, which we have now transitioned to other City departments better equipped to deliver services, allowing DOSW to refocus on systemic change and long-term impact. We also provide feedback on equity-focused research and community needs assessments that guide strategic planning and funding decisions.**

**Historically, the Commission has led transformative efforts, such as the Justice & Courage Initiative launched in response to the 2000 murder of Claire Joyce Tempongko by her unsupervised, repeat-offender ex-boyfriend. This tragedy exposed critical failures in the City’s domestic violence response system. In partnership with community advocates, the Commission spearheaded a comprehensive review that led to the landmark Justice & Courage Report (2002), with over 100 policy reform recommendations. Ongoing oversight and cross-departmental training efforts resulted in four years (2010–2014) with zero domestic violence homicides in San Francisco. These reforms, along with increased funding for services addressing domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, reflect the Commission’s long-term commitment to systemic change and public safety.**

**Our work ensures that a gender lens is consistently applied across all City operations, and we believe that realizing a fully gender-equitable San Francisco requires collaboration across all departments, leaders, and communities.**

Optional

17. Are there any other comments or feedback that you would like to share?

**In San Francisco, gender equity is more than an ideal — it’s a responsibility. Nearly 50 years ago, the Commission on the Status of Women was created because women’s voices were systematically excluded from decisions that shaped their lives. In response, local feminists organized, advocated, and built a body that could hold the City accountable to a vision of justice, inclusion, and opportunity.**

**When the United States failed to ratify the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), San Francisco stood up and became the first city in the nation**

***to adopt it as local law, and we backed that law with real investment. This bold leadership remains a point of pride, but also a call to action: we cannot lead without commitment, and we cannot commit without infrastructure.***

***That infrastructure is the Commission on the Status of Women, and it is more essential than ever. As the main agency charged with ensuring gender equity with City and County agencies and beyond, the Commission plays a vital role in elevating community voices, building coalitions, and advocating for crucial policy reforms. The Commission plays a uniquely powerful role in shaping how San Francisco serves its people.***

***Working in deep alignment with the Department on the Status of Women, the Commission ensures that gender equity is not a checkbox, but a lens applied to everything from budgeting and public safety to health, economic opportunity, and civic power. We elevate issues often ignored, support underfunded community-based organizations, and help turn advocacy into action. Whether it's transforming the response to gender-based violence, increasing women's political participation, or protecting access to reproductive healthcare, the Commission works at the intersection of the City and its communities, driving structural change from the ground up.***

***We do this not alone, but in close collaboration with nonprofits, educators, researchers, and everyday San Franciscans who believe that a gender-equitable city is a better city for everyone. From strategic planning and policy input to community listening and public education, the Commission acts as both a mirror and a megaphone: reflecting urgent community needs while amplifying the voices that have too often been silenced.***

***The Commission is not symbolic. It is a force for progress. It holds space for accountability; champions change in times of complacency and leads with vision in moments of crisis. Without it, there would be no public body solely focused on ensuring that the lives, safety, and leadership of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals are prioritized across all city functions.***

***We built this Commission and the Department it supports not just to make promises, but to deliver. San Francisco has the courage and capacity to lead the way, as it always has. But that leadership requires unwavering investment in the structures that turn values into action.***

**See attached Supplement Documents**

- **DOSW\_BAARC Report**
- **DOSW\_CNA\_Jan2025 Appendix A and B**
- **DOSW FY2023-25 Executive Summary\_JAN 2025**
- **CDOSW Strategy FY2020-23 121119-Final**
- **DOSW FY2023-25 Strategic Plan\_JAN 25**
- **DOSW\_2023 Commissions and Boards Report**
- **DOSW Representation of Women in City Property 2024**

If you have any further questions, please [email CommissionStreamlining@sfgov.org](mailto:emailCommissionStreamlining@sfgov.org)