

Changes to Executive Branch Management*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Draft for Consideration
On: Wednesday, July 22, 2026
Members: Packard, Wong, Bella, Paxton

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: TBD

The Way It Is Now: The Mayor is the chief executive officer of the City and oversees the executive branch, including most City departments.

Transfer of Functions: The Mayor can reorganize executive branch departments established by ordinance by transferring their functions to different departments, subject to rejection by the Board of Supervisors (Board). But the Mayor cannot reorganize departments established in the City's Charter by transferring their functions.

Deputy Mayors: The Mayor may not hire deputy mayors to supervise most of the departments established in the Charter.

Department Heads: When a department operates under the oversight of a board or commission, the Mayor usually selects a department head from candidates recommended by the board or commission. In most cases, the board or commission may fire the department head, but the Mayor may not.

Commissioners: The Mayor, Board, and other officials can appoint certain members to the boards and commissions established in the Charter. In most cases, appointed members can only be suspended or removed after a hearing and decision that the member engaged in official misconduct or committed a felony involving moral turpitude.

The Proposal: Transfer of Functions: Proposition ____ would amend the Charter to allow the Mayor to reorganize many executive branch departments established in the Charter, subject to rejection by the Board. The Mayor could transfer functions between departments or combine one or more departments together under a single department head. In addition, if the Mayor transfers a function to a different department, the Mayor could also assign the oversight of the transferred function to that department's commission. But these powers to reorganize departments would not apply to the following City departments: City Administrator, Controller, Board of Appeals, Port, Airport, Asian Art Museum, Fine Art Museums, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Public Utilities Commission, Civil Service Commission, Department of Human Resources, Retirement Board, Health Service System, Department of Elections, Ethics Commission, or departments headed by other elected officials. Further, the duties of the Department of Police Accountability could not transfer to the Police Department, and the duties of the Sheriff's Inspector General could not transfer to the Sheriff.

Deputy Mayors: The measure would allow the Mayor to hire deputy mayors.

Department Heads: Proposition ____ would allow the Mayor to hire some department heads without board or commission involvement and would authorize the Mayor to fire most department heads without board or commission involvement.

Commissioners: Proposition ____ would authorize the Mayor, Board, and other officials to remove their appointees to most boards and commissions without cause. This change would not apply to the Board of Appeals, Civil Service Commission, or Ethics Commission.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to expand the Mayor's authority to reorganize some City departments' functions, subject to rejection by the Board of Supervisors; allow the Mayor to hire deputy mayors; expand the Mayor's authority to hire and fire department heads; and allow the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and other appointing officials to remove members of most boards and commissions without cause.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to make these changes.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*