

Minutes from the May 11, 2026 meeting of the Immigrant Rights Commission

Date and Time

May 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Location

- San Francisco City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 416
- [View the meeting online](#)
- Call in to listen:
 - 415-655-0001
 - Access code: 2660 108 9820 / Webinar password: 2026

Overview

Members of the Immigrant Rights Commission will attend this meeting in person. Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting in-person or remotely using Webex or by calling the phone number and entering the access code above. Everyone attending the meeting in person is encouraged to wear a mask throughout the meeting. Each member of the public attending in person may address the Commission for up to two minutes. Public speakers using consecutive interpretation assistance will be allowed to speak for twice the amount of time. For each agenda item, there is one comment per person. Members of the public may also submit public comment by email to: civic.engagement@sfgov.org.

Agenda items

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Souza called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Present: Chair Souza, Vice Chair Chaudhary (5:52 p.m.), Commissioners Abdou (5:47 p.m.), Aljiran, How, Ng, Obregon, Padilla, Paz, Ratanapakdee, Ruiz (left at 7:25 p.m.), Traore (5:42 p.m.), Wang (left at 8:08 p.m.).

Not present: Commissioners Fara (excused), Kennelly (excused).

OCEIA staff present: Director Rivas, Clerk Shore, Operations and Grants Administrator Chan, Senior Communications Specialist Richardson, Senior Spanish Language Specialist Cosenza, Language Access Assistant Liu, Language Access and Policy Manager De Carolis, Senior Chinese Language Specialist Wong.

2. Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgment

We, the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission, acknowledge that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As the indigenous stewards of this land and in accordance with their traditions, the Ramaytush Ohlone have never ceded, lost nor forgotten their responsibilities as the caretakers of this place, as well as for all peoples who reside in their traditional territory. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland. We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the ancestors, elders and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.

Chair Souza read the land acknowledgment statement.

3. Announcements (Director Rivas)

(Information)

This item allows Director Rivas to provide information on interpretation services available for today's meeting and other brief announcements.

Director Rivas provided announcements on the San Francisco Immigrant Forum (<https://sf.gov/immigrants>) and interpretation for today's meeting, which is being interpreted in Spanish, Cantonese, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Arabic.

4. General Public Comment

This item allows members of the public to address the Commission on matters that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission and that do not appear on today's agenda.

There was no public comment.

5. Information/Discussion Item: Language Access Update on Implementation of Vietnamese as a Required Language (Ana De Carolis)

(Information/Discussion)

This item allows OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager Ana De Carolis to provide an update on language access and the implementation of Vietnamese as a new required language in the City and County of San Francisco.

[Presentation on Vietnamese Implementation](#)

OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager De Carolis provided an update and answered questions from Commissioners on the implementation of Vietnamese as a certified language in San Francisco.

Chair Souza called for public comment, and there were two public comments.

1. A member of the public and former IRC Commissioner congratulated OCEIA and the IRC on

providing interpretation for this meeting and making announcements in language.

2. Jegy Sering of SEIU 1021 expressed concerns that the City is not funding a Vietnamese language specialist, and urged the IRC to recommend that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors fund a language specialist for OCEIA.

6. Information/Discussion Item: Language Access Ordinance Quarterly Complaint Report (Ana De Carolis)

(Information/Discussion)

This item allows OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager Ana De Carolis to provide the Commission with an overview of the complaints OCEIA has received and investigated from members of the public regarding the City's language services.

[Language Access Ordinance Quarterly Complaint Report](#)

OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager De Carolis provided an overview and answered questions from Commissioners on the complaints received and investigated by OCEIA this quarter. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item.

7. Information/Discussion Item: Housing Resources for Immigrant Communities (Deputy Director Maria Benjamin and Director of Rental Housing Programs Sonia Delgado-Schaumberg, Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD))

(Information/Discussion)

This item allows MOHCD to provide a brief overview of housing resources for immigrant communities, including how to access affordable housing opportunities in San Francisco, tenant protections, and community-based services that help immigrant residents navigate these options safely.

[MOHCD presentation](#)

Chair Souza thanked Commissioner Abdou for inviting today's presenters, and Commissioner Abdou introduced the two speakers. Deputy Director Maria Benjamin and Director of Rental Housing Programs Sonia Delgado-Schaumberg of the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) provided an overview and answered questions from Commissioners on housing resources for immigrant communities.

Chair Souza called for public comment and there were two comments on this item.

1. A member of the public who serves as a volunteer tenant counselor discussed Proposition I revenue that is not being spent and questioned the definition of affordable housing, asking how much housing is available for teachers and extremely low-income residents.

2. A member of the public who was born in San Francisco in 1957 voiced support for DAHLIA but did not know anyone who had gotten through its lottery system, and suggested changing the lottery

process.

3. A member of the public asked about citizenship requirements for federal housing, expressed support for MOHCD's work, and noted that it is challenging for Arabic-speaking clients.

Chair Souza thanked the speakers, and Director Rivas thanked Commissioners Abdou for inviting MOHCD.

8. Information/Discussion/Possible Action Item: Overview of the S.F. City Attorney's Political Activity Memo and Potential Legal Implications of Adding a Presentation and Discussion Regarding a Pending Local Ballot Measure to a Future IRC Agenda (Chief City Attorney Alicia Cabrera)

(Information/Discussion/Possible Action)

Commissioner Aljiran has asked the Commission to consider placing a presentation and discussion regarding a pending local ballot measure on a future agenda. This item is only meant to allow discussion around the decision to place a pending ballot measure on the agenda and not to discuss a specific ballot measure. This item has been continued from the Commission's April 13 meeting, when the Commission voted to table the discussion.

[February 2026 Political Activity Memo](#)
[Admin Code Section 5.201](#)

Chair Souza noted that Commissioner Aljiran originally introduced an item at the February 25 Executive Committee meeting asking the Commission to consider a resolution and policy analysis taking a position on a pending local ballot measure. Commissioner Aljiran has since asked for an educational presentation on the measure. Chair Souza said she did not feel comfortable adding a ballot measure to the agenda, and potentially exposing the Commission to violations, without having a full discussion of the rules around political activities. On April 13, Chair Souza asked the Full Commission to vote on whether to include the ballot measure on a future meeting agenda, and the City Attorney's Office presented the potential legal implications. The item was continued to today's meeting.

Commissioner Aljiran said she had proposed neutral educational programming and had shared another analysis of the ballot measure. Director Rivas said he did not share the analysis with Commissioners because it could put them at risk.

Chief City Attorney Alicia Cabrera answered questions from Commissioners.

Chair Souza responded to a question raised during the March 25, 2026 Executive Committee meeting, when Commissioner Aljiran asked about the Commission Chair's potential conflict of interest related to affiliation with labor groups that support the ballot measure. Chair Souza stated that she does not have a conflict of interest, has met with the City Attorney's Office for guidance,

and does not have any recusal or disclosure requirements. However, for transparency, she disclosed her individual relationships with labor groups through her volunteer work, which she said did not influence her decision. This includes her volunteer work with the San Francisco Labor Council for state Proposition 50, participation in phone banking to save health care, Medicaid and other programs for low-income families and seniors, and former membership in IFPTE Local 21.

Commissioner Wang made a motion to empower the Executive Committee to decide the matter at its first meeting after the June elections; if the ballot measure passes, the Executive Committee can decide whether to agendaize an item on its impact on immigrant communities, and if it does not pass, the Executive Committee has the authority to do nothing. Commissioner How seconded the motion. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item. The motion was approved, with nine Commissioners voting in favor and three (Commissioners Aljiran, Ratanapakdee, and Traore) opposing. (Commissioner Ruiz left the meeting early.)

9. Discussion/Possible Action Item: Follow-up from Travel Ban Resolution: Proposed Letter or Statement on SFO Immigrant Resources (Commissioner Fara)

(Discussion/Possible Action)

This item allows Commissioner Fara to propose issuing a letter or statement to the Mayor's Office and Board of Supervisors in support of establishing immigrant support resources at San Francisco International Airport (SFO), and allows the Commission to discuss and take possible action. The Executive Committee made suggested edits to the draft at its April 29 meeting and moved the amended draft forward to the Full Commission, with Commissioners Ng and Obregon volunteering as co-sponsors. This is a follow-up to the IRC's May 2025 [resolution](#) opposing discriminatory travel bans and supporting impacted communities.

[Draft statement on SFO immigrant resources](#)

Commissioner Obregon made a motion to approve the letter as written, seconded by Commissioner How. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item. The motion was approved.

10. Discussion/Possible Action Item: Proposed Resolution on War in West Asia (Commissioner Aljiran)

(Discussion/Possible Action)

This item allows Commissioner Aljiran to propose issuing a resolution denouncing the war in West Asia and reaffirming immigrant rights and resources, and allows the Commission to discuss and take possible action. The Executive Committee made suggested edits to the draft at its April 29 meeting and moved the amended draft forward to the Full Commission, with Commissioner Fara volunteering as a co-sponsor.

[Draft resolution on the war in West Asia](#)

Commissioner Aljiran provided an overview of the resolution. Commissioner How made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Paz. Chair Souza called for public comment

and there was no comment on this item. The resolution was approved with 11 votes.
(Commissioners Ruiz and Wang left the meeting early.)

11. Discussion/Possible Action Item: Proposed Action in Support of AB-2017 (Haney)
(Commissioner Abdou)

(Discussion/Possible Action)

This item allows Commissioner Abdou to propose asking the City to take a position in support of [AB-2017 State holidays: Eid \(Haney\)](#) through the State Legislation Committee, and allows the Commission to discuss and take possible action. The Executive Committee moved this item forward at its April 29 meeting, with Chair Souza, Vice Chair Chaudhary, and Commissioner Fara volunteering as co-sponsors.

[Draft letter on AB-2017 \(Haney\)](#)

Director Rivas noted that the City has already taken a position in support of California Assembly Bill 2017 (Haney), which would make Eid a state holiday. Commissioner Abdou proposed that the Commission reaffirm the City's position. Commissioner Obregon made a motion to reaffirm the City's support for AB-2017, seconded by Commissioner Padilla. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item. The motion was approved.

12. Discussion/Possible Action Item: Proposed Statement on Birthright Citizenship
(Commissioner Ng)

(Discussion/Possible Action)

This item allows Commissioner Ng to propose issuing a statement on birthright citizenship, and allows the Commission to discuss and take possible action.

[Draft statement on birthright citizenship](#)

Commissioners discussed the proposed statement and Director Rivas noted that the City Attorney's Office suggested adding citations. Commissioner Obregon made a motion to approve the statement with citations, seconded by Vice Chair Chaudhary. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item. The motion was approved.

13. Action Item: Approval of previous minutes

(Discussion/Action)

Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of the Immigrant Rights Commission's Full Commission meeting of April 13, 2026.

[IRC Full Commission minutes - April 13, 2026](#)

Vice Chair Chaudhary motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner How. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item. The motion was approved by 10 Commissioners, with one Commissioner (Commissioner Aljiran) opposing.
(Commissioners Ruiz and Wang left the meeting early.)

14. Chair's Reports (Chair Souza)

(Information)

This item allows Chair Souza to provide brief updates on the work of the Executive Committee, including: planning for the June 8, 2026 Immigrant Leadership Awards (with Awards Committee Co-Chairs Fara and Obregon); planning follow-up actions from the IRC's letter on immigrant priorities (with Commissioners Ng and Abdou); and planning follow-up actions from the IRC's recommendation on strengthening the City's sanctuary policy (Vice Chair Chaudhary and Commissioner Obregon).

Commissioner Obregon and Director Rivas provided updates on planning for the June 8, 2026 Immigrant Leadership Awards. Awards Committee Co-Chairs Fara and Obregon will invite consulates to the event, and all Commissioners will invite community members. During the awards event, the national organization Welcoming America will recognize San Francisco as the first city in the country to earn a five-star welcoming designation.

Chair Souza provided other updates on the Commission's work, including meeting with the Mayor's Office and Board of Supervisors on immigrant priorities; assigning Vice Chair Chaudhary and Commissioner Obregon to work on strengthening sanctuary city policies; and Commissioner Paz and Commissioner Padilla's planning for a public health hearing. Chair Souza reminded Commissioners that all new items introduced go to the Executive Committee first, and then to the Full Commission. There was no public comment on this item.

15. Staff Reports (Director Rivas)

(Information)

This item allows Director Rivas to provide brief updates on activities and announcements.

Director Rivas provided updates on the San Francisco Immigrant Forum webinar on health care, including Healthy San Francisco, on May 27; Commissioners whose seats are up for renewal; and the conclusion of the Community Ambassadors Program. There was no public comment on this item.

16. Old and New Business

(Information)

This item allows Commissioners to provide updates on items the Commission has previously discussed, and to introduce new agenda items for future consideration by the Commission.

Vice Chair Chaudhary proposed a statement in support of DACA recipients, who are currently facing delays that are impacting their ability to work.

Commissioner Paz proposed asking the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) to provide an update on DACA recipients, many of whom are losing their jobs.

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Commissioner Abdou proposed acknowledging the Community Ambassadors Program.

Commissioner Abdou proposed inviting the Public Defender's Office or community-based organizations to discuss the small percentage of San Francisco immigrants who are represented by an attorney.

Commissioner How proposed issuing a resolution expressing support for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders.

Commissioner Aljiran proposed a policy analysis on the "Billionaire Tax," a pending state ballot measure.

There was no public comment on this item.

17. Adjournment

Chair Souza adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.