

Minutes from the August 10, 2026 meeting of the Immigrant Rights Commission

Date and Time

August 10, 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: 2661-741-8512 / 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 5:39 p.m.

IRC Commissioners present: Chair Souza, Commissioners Abdou, Ng, Obregon, Paz, Ratanapakdee, Reyes, Wang.

Also present: How, Padilla, Traore.

IRC Commissioners not present: Commissioners Fara (excused), Kennelly (excused).

OCEIA staff present: Director Rivas, Clerk Shore, Operations and Grants Administrator Chan, Language Access and Policy Manager De Carolis, Senior Communications Specialist Richardson, Senior Data & Field Systems Coordinator Rivera.

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

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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. 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.

4. Recognizing Commissioner Aljiran and Welcoming Commissioner Reyes

(Information)

This item is to allow Director Rivas and Chair Souza to recognize Immigrant Rights Commissioner Aljiran for her service on the Commission, and to welcome newly appointed Immigrant Rights Commissioner David Reyes.

Director Rivas and Chair Souza thanked Commissioner Aljiran for her service on the Commission and welcomed newly appointed Commissioner Reyes. Commissioner Reyes shared his personal story immigrating from Mexico at age 10 with his mother and siblings, his service as an officer in the U.S. Army, and the importance of recognizing the contributions of immigrants. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item.

5. 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 May 11, 2026.

[IRC Full Commission minutes - May 11, 2026](#)

Commissioner Abdou motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner How. Chair Souza called for public comment and there was no comment on this item. The minutes were approved.

6. Recognition of the Community Ambassadors Program (Commissioner Abdou, OCEIA Senior Data & Field Systems Coordinator Julia Isabel Rivera)

(Information)

This item allows Commissioner Abdou to recognize the Community Ambassadors Program (CAP) for its 16 years of service to San Francisco communities, and allows OCEIA Senior Data & Field

Systems Coordinator Julia Isabel Rivera to present on the impact of the program.

[Presentation on Community Ambassadors Program](#)

Commissioner Abdou thanked the Community Ambassadors Program (CAP) for their work making community members feel safe, including helping children walk to school safely in the Tenderloin. OCEIA Senior Data & Field Systems Coordinator Rivera provided a presentation on the creation, growth, and impact of the program over the past 16 years. Commissioners Obregon, Paz, and Ng expressed gratitude for CAP, and Director Rivas noted that the program established trust with community members. Chair Souza thanked Commissioner Abdou for bringing this item to the Commission, thanked CAP, and expressed her wish for the program to be reactivated.

Chair Souza called for public comment and there was one comment.

1. Hector, a former ambassador, expressed ambassadors' love for their neighborhoods, noted that diverse community members are often afraid to speak up, discussed the importance of engaging people in multiple languages, and thanked the Commission for recognizing the work of the Community Ambassadors Program.

**7. Information/Discussion Item: Language Access Ordinance Quarterly Complaint Report
(OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager Ana De Carolis)**

(Information/Discussion)

This item allows OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager Ana De Carolis to provide 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 described the language access complaints received and investigated by OCEIA. She answered questions from Commissioners regarding updating liaison lists, services for languages that have smaller populations in the Bay Area, outreach efforts and ethnic media, sharing complaints with the director of the City department, helping community members reach the correct City department, identifying the language a community member is speaking, informal complaints that are not being captured, frequency of trainings and train-the-trainer models, and the Know Your Rights brochure. There was no public comment on this item.

**8. Information/Discussion Item: Language Access Update on Language Service Technology
Pilots (OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager Ana De Carolis)**

(Information/Discussion)

This item allows OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager Ana De Carolis to provide an update on OCEIA's plans for a three-month pilot program to test new translation and interpretation technologies for the City and County of San Francisco.

[Presentation on Language Service Technology Pilots](#)

OCEIA Language Access and Policy Manager De Carolis provided an update on OCEIA's plans for a three-month pilot program to test new translation and interpretation technologies for the City and County of San Francisco. She answered questions from Commissioners regarding the accessibility of technology for community members who are elderly, limited English proficient and not tech savvy, services for smaller language communities, services during emergencies, expertise of reviewers and decision makers, challenges of testing interpretation, evaluation of current technologies, concerns about data sharing by third parties, privacy considerations when submitting medical or financial information through a translator, prevention of data breaches, and OCEIA's vision for language access in the future. There was no public comment on this item.

9. Action Item: Commission Officer Election (Director Rivas)

(Action)

Election of the Vice Chair of the Immigrant Rights Commission.

Director Rivas provided an overview of election procedures for the election of vice chair. OCEIA staff received one nomination for Commission Vice Chair: Jose Ng. Director Rivas asked the nominee if he accepted the nomination, and he accepted. Director Rivas asked Commissioners if they would like to make any other nominations from the floor. Commissioner Abdou nominated Lucia Obregon. Director Rivas asked the nominee if she accepted the nomination, and she accepted. Commissioner Ratanapakdee nominated Aseel Fara, and Director Rivas stated that Commissioners must be present to accept the nomination. Commissioners Ng and Obregon provided brief remarks. In the Commission's first roll-call vote for Commission Vice Chair, Commissioner Ng received six votes and Commissioner Obregon received five votes. In the second roll-call vote, Commissioner Abdou asked if she could abstain from the vote and Director Rivas stated that Commissioners may abstain if they have a conflict of interest. Commissioner Abdou abstained. In the second vote, Commissioner Obregon received two votes, and Commissioner Ng was elected Commission Vice Chair with eight votes. There was no public comment on this item.

10. Chair's Reports (Chair Souza)

(Information)

This item allows Chair Souza to provide brief updates on the work of the Executive Committee.

Chair Souza provided updates on the Immigrant Leadership Awards (led by Co-Chairs Fara and Obregon), meetings with the Mayor's Office and President of the Board of Supervisors as a follow-up to the IRC's letter on immigrant priorities (written by Commissioner Ng), the IRC letter on immigrant resources at the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) (written by Commissioner Fara), the IRC statement on birthright citizenship (written by Commissioner Ng), the IRC's work on strengthening sanctuary policies (led by Commissioners Chaudhary and Obregon), planning for a special hearing on access to healthcare for immigrant communities (led by Commissioners Padilla and Paz), planning for a policy presentation (led by Commissioners How, Ng, and Padilla), and the

recognition of the Community Ambassadors Program (led by Commissioner Abdou). The Executive Committee reviewed Commissioner Abdou's proposal to issue regular commendations but resolved instead to continue honoring immigrant leaders through its annual Immigrant Leadership Awards. There was no public comment on this item.

11. Staff Reports (Director Rivas)

(Information)

This item allows Director Rivas and OCEIA staff to provide brief updates on activities and announcements including plans for Welcoming Week in September.

Director Rivas invited Senior Communications Specialist Jamie Richardson to provide information about San Francisco's upcoming Welcoming Week on September 10-19, 2026. Commissioners are encouraged to repost, reshare, and invite their networks to attend Welcoming Week events. Director Rivas provided information on OCEIA's upcoming San Francisco Pathways to Citizenship Imitative workshop on August 22. OCEIA is also submitting a public comment on the proposed rule to increase the naturalization fee and eliminate the fee waiver and reduced-fee option. Comments are due August 24, 2026. There was no public comment on this item.

12. 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.

Commissioner Obregon proposed asking for a Letter of Inquiry from the City regarding the expansion of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) operations at the San Francisco International Airport (SFO), and greater detail on what this expansion is. Commissioner Ratanapakdee agreed, noting that people need to know where to find those who are arrested.

Commissioner Wang proposed exploring partnering with City College of San Francisco's English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes, inviting the chancellor or staff to present to the IRC, and discussing how to reinstate classes and address cuts to those programs.

There was no public comment on this item.

13. Adjournment

Chair Souza adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m