

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Charter Amendment - Requirements for Commission Membership]

Describing and setting forth a proposal to the voters at an election to be held on November 3, 2020, to amend the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco to require that members of boards, commissions, and advisory bodies be residents of the City and of legal voting age, replacing the requirement that members of boards, commissions, and advisory bodies be United States citizens and registered voters.

Existing Law

City government includes many boards, commissions, and advisory bodies (“Policy Bodies”). The Charter establishes many Policy Bodies, and the Board of Supervisors and the voters have also established other Policy Bodies in legislation.

Under the Charter, members of Policy Bodies must be registered to vote in San Francisco. This means they must be voting age (currently 18 years old), U.S. citizens, and San Francisco residents. There are three exceptions to this rule:

- If the Policy Body was established in the Charter, the Charter may include exceptions to the age, citizenship, and residency requirements. For example, the Charter allows people under voting age to serve on the Youth Commission. But the Charter does not allow non-citizens to serve on any Policy Body.
- If the Policy Body was established by legislation, the legislation can create exceptions to the age and residency requirements but not the U.S. citizenship requirement.
- If the Policy Body was established by legislation, the appointing officer or entity may waive the residency requirement based on a finding that a qualified resident could not be located. But appointing officers or entities cannot waive the age or U.S. citizenship requirement.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed Charter amendment would allow non-citizens to serve on Policy Bodies. The proposed Charter amendment would require members of Policy Bodies to be City residents and voting age, with three exceptions:

- If the Policy Body was established in the Charter, the Charter could include exceptions to the age and residency requirements.

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- If the Policy Body was established by legislation, the legislation could create exceptions to the age and residency requirements.
- If the Policy Body was established by legislation, the appointing officer or entity could waive the age or residency requirements based on a finding that a qualified person could not be located.

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