

**Health Commission
City and County of San Francisco
Resolution No. 18-1**

**ENDORISING THE SAN FRANCISCO SAFE INJECTION SERVICES TASK FORCE'S FINAL REPORT
AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

WHEREAS, Two million Americans suffer from substance use disorders related to prescription opioids, heroin, and synthetics such as fentanyl, and the availability of fentanyl and its poisoning of drug supplies, in particular, poses additional concern due to its ability to heighten the potency and toxic influences of heroin and cocaine when mixed; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 22,500 people inject drugs in San Francisco and approximately 160 to 200 people die in the city each year from a drug overdose; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, San Francisco has continued to see overdoses from heroin, methamphetamine, and fentanyl and increasing attention has been placed on public injection drug use; and

WHEREAS, Drug injection is a known risk factor for opioid overdose, and people who inject drugs have health needs that are of particular concern to public health such as unhealthy substance use, the acquisition and transmission of HIV and hepatitis C, serious physical and mental health conditions, and premature death; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing that addiction is a medical condition, San Francisco operates a continuum of behavioral health care services that range from prevention to treatment services and bases its services in the principles of harm reduction; and

WHEREAS, Safe injection services represent one evidence-based strategy that fits within this harm reduction model, and approximately 100 safe injection sites now operate in over 65 cities around the world; and

WHEREAS, A 2017 study found that a single 13-booth safe injection services site would result in the following each year:

- each dollar spent would generate \$2.33 in savings, for total annual net savings of \$3.5 million;
- 415 fewer hospital stays
- 3.3 fewer HIV cases
- 19 fewer hepatitis C cases
- 110 more people who inject drugs entering treatment
- 1 life saved every four years; and

WHEREAS, State and federal law prohibit individuals from possessing controlled substances without a valid prescription and building owners and operators from allowing the manufacture, storage, or distribution of a controlled substance, and allows criminal and civil penalties to be imposed on all parties engaged in the property; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 186, which is currently pending in the California Legislature, would allow designated counties, including San Francisco, to operate safe injection sites according to specific requirements and prohibit those involved with the programs from being charged with drug-related crimes; and

WHEREAS, In April 2017, the Board of Supervisors passed resolution 123-17 urging the San Francisco Department of Public Health to convene a Safe Injection Services Task Force to make policy recommendations to the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, and City departments regarding the potential opportunities and obstacles associated with safe injection services, the community need for such services, and the feasibility of opening and operating such services; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force convened three public meetings, between June 2017 and August 2017, and discussed specific focus areas identified by DPH through the review of published literature and reports: types of safe injection service models, operations, services, location, and siting; and

WHEREAS, In addition to the public meetings, the San Francisco Department of Public Health sought a diverse set of perspectives from an array of San Franciscans through:

- a public online survey of more than 500 business owners, neighborhood groups, and residents
- 18 participants in 2 focus groups with business owners, neighborhood groups, and residents
- community survey with 40 people who inject drugs and 96 people in early recovery
- public comment at Task Force meetings; and

WHEREAS, The Task Force developed 17 total recommendations that support the creation of safe injection services in San Francisco, and address the need for legal analyses, program planning and management, delivery model, location considerations, community engagement and education, and identifying special populations; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors' Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee expressed their full support for the Task Force recommendations and for the Department of Public Health to implement safe injection services in San Francisco;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Health Commission endorses the Safe Injection Services Task Force's recommendations for operating safe injection services in San Francisco; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Health Commission supports Assembly Bill 186; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Health Commission supports the implementation of safe injection services.

I hereby certify that the San Francisco Health Commission adopted this resolution at its meeting of February 6, 2018.



Mark Morewitz, MSW

Health Commission Executive Secretary