

CIVIL GRAND JURY | 2017-2018

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

CRISIS INTERVENTION: BRIDGING POLICE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

SAN FRANCISCO (June 29, 2018)— The 2017-2018 San Francisco Civil Grand Jury has released a report about the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program. The report discusses how the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) and Department of Public Health (DPH) manage behavioral health crises on our streets through CIT. It also reveals several areas in need of improvement to strengthen CIT coordination between SFPD and DPH.

Our police officers are often on the frontlines of responding to behavioral health crisis calls in San Francisco. SFPD General Order 5.21 provides a framework for the Department to emphasize de-escalation and referral to services when engaging with individuals in a behavioral health crisis. The SFPD should be commended for taking the lead in addressing our most vulnerable residents.

Among SFPD-related recommendations, the report calls for newly identified and budgeted programming personnel for SFPD's Technology Division to be hired no later than October 1, 2018. The jury believes this will enhance the CIT program's data and measurement capabilities. This is important for the CIT program to obtain additional resources.

Among DPH-related recommendations, the report calls for DPH's renewal and elaboration of the current memorandum of understanding (MOU) between SFPD and DPH no later than January 1, 2019. An updated draft MOU should be presented to the Mayor for review no later than January 1, 2019 and adopted no later than June 1, 2019. The jury also recommends filling the five budgeted Crisis Intervention Specialist positions with field-ready clinicians no later than October 1, 2018. Clinicians should be dedicated to the CIT program.

The CIT program requires strong leadership from DPH to be successful. Our city's behavioral health needs cannot be undertaken by the Police Department alone.

The Superior Court selects 19 San Franciscans to serve year-long terms as Civil Grand Jurors. The Jury has the authority to investigate City and County government by reviewing documents and interviewing public officials and private individuals. At the end of its inquiries, the jury issues reports outlining findings and recommendations. City and County agencies identified in the report receive copies and must respond to these findings and recommendations. The Board of Supervisors conducts a public hearing on each Civil Grand Jury report.

The public may view the reports online at <http://civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/report.html>

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