



CITY and COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO 2017 – 2018 CIVIL GRAND JURY FACT SHEET and SELECTION TIMELINE

What is the Civil Grand Jury?

- The Civil Grand Jury is 19 members randomly drawn from a pool of applicants who volunteer to serve for a one year term.
- As required by the California Constitution, the Civil Grand Jury is a “watchdog” that investigates the operations of the City and County’s government, including its officers, departments, and agencies.
- Civil Grand Jurors are San Franciscans who are passionate about their City; who want to make a difference in their communities; and who work together to carry out the charge of the Jury.

How does it Work?

- Individual jurors bring ideas for investigations to the Civil Grand Jury for discussion. The Jury then votes on which issues to pursue as investigations.
- The Jury divides itself into committees, which carry out the investigations and write the reports. Each juror typically serves on one or more investigative committees and at least one administrative committee.
- To write its reports, Civil Grand Jurors review records and financial documents; interview City and County department heads, elected officials, and staff; and visit government facilities.
- Each investigative committee drafts a report, which is then reviewed, deliberated, and discussed by the entire Jury. The reports typically go through several drafts and are carefully edited to ensure accuracy. The Jury must vote to approve each report as final.
- After the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court reviews the reports to ensure they meet legal requirements, the reports are issued publicly. The affected departments are required by law to respond to each finding and recommendation contained in the reports.
- The Board of Supervisors holds a public hearing on each report. The Civil Grand Jury presents the report and each affected department responds. The Board of Supervisors then issues its own response.

When?

- The entire Civil Grand Jury meets once per week, generally in the late afternoon. Subcommittees meet as needed. Most of the Jury’s work takes place during regular business hours.
- Jurors must be able to serve the entire one year term, from July 1 through June 30. Jurors must be able to commit time consistently throughout the entire term.

Who is Eligible?

- In order to volunteer to be considered for the Civil Grand Jury, you must be a United States citizen; at least 18 years of age; have lived in San Francisco for at least the past one year; have no felony convictions; and have the ability to communicate in English.

How Does the Civil Grand Jury Make a Difference?

- The Civil Grand Jury represents the residents of San Francisco. By selecting timely and relevant issues to investigate, the Jury's reports add a different perspective to the discussion and debates of issues that affect San Franciscans.
- Civil Grand Juries have chosen to investigate both big and small issues. The Jury decides as a group how it wants to use its term to affect change in the City.
- Frequent topics focus on issues around streamlining processes, such as permitting and planning related to construction issues; encouraging coordination among City departments as related to disaster and emergency preparedness; highlighting needs to expand use of technology in the City; improving the quality of City services, such as MUNI and Public Works; and tracking of performance measures related to budgeting and contracting for services.
- Significant reports of prior Civil Grand Juries include the many issues related to funding City pensions; assessing the need to plan for rising sea levels and climate change; tracking progress made in addressing the complex issues related to homelessness; and evaluating the effectiveness of reforms to ethics legislation in City government.

Where Can I Get Civil Grand Jury Reports?

- Civil Grand Jury reports from 1995 to the present are available at <http://civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/report.html>. Responses from the City departments and agencies to the reports are posted. The Government Desk at the Main Library maintains copies of the reports.
- The Board of Supervisors hearings on Civil Grand Jury reports from 2011 to the present are available for viewing at <http://civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/hearings.html>.

How do I Apply?

- Applications may be downloaded from <http://civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/join.html>.
- Applications may also be picked up at San Francisco Superior Court, 400 McAllister Street, Room 007.
- The application deadline is May 31, 2017.

What Happens after I Submit an Application?

- You will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of your application.
- The most qualified applicants will be invited to attend one mandatory informational session. Sessions will be held on June 6, 7, and 8, 2017.
- Applicants who attend the informational session will then participate in selection on June 16, 2017. During selection, a panel of Superior Court Judges will interview each applicant and recommend the most qualified to become the pool from which the Civil Grand Jury will be randomly selected.
- Each selected Civil Grand Juror is required to attend training on June 20 and 21, 2017.
- The Civil Grand Jury takes office on July 1, 2017.