



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

2021-2022 CIVIL GRAND JURY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Francisco's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing Must Improve Data Use, Can Enhance Outreach, and Lacks Meaningful Oversight

Civil Grand Jury releases

["A Progress Report About The San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing"](#)

San Francisco, CA, June 30, 2022 – The 2021-2022 San Francisco Civil Grand Jury today released a report about the status of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH, or the Department), initially formed in 2016 to monitor and coordinate City and non-profit homeless services.

The Jury investigated the operational performance of HSH, the lead agency coordinating the City's response to homelessness. Its interest in investigating this subject stemmed from its desire to follow up on operational deficiencies identified by the City's Budget and Legislative Analyst (BLA) performance audit completed in 2020, some of which remain unresolved.

Two years after the BLA report, deficiencies remain in areas such as communications, community engagement, data collection, and meaningful external oversight.

"HSH must improve its external communications and how it gathers, shares, and responds to data," said Will McCaa, jury foreperson pro tem. "If one seeks basic information about homelessness and what the City is doing about it, such info is scattered across several disparate department websites and online dashboards. Our City's homeless data *must* be more accessible to its residents.

"For example, HSH could hone its focus on the needs of older adults who are experiencing homelessness. Half of the city's homeless population is over 50 years of age and the fastest growing age group of homeless people is now 65 years and older. Older adults experiencing homelessness are sicker, more frail, and more vulnerable to violence. However, the department effectively omits this population in data reporting. As a result, HSH often falls short in considering special circumstances for older adults.

"Moreover, we believe HSH should be overseen by a Commission. HSH has the 8th largest operating budget of all City departments but is unique in that it has no formal commission overseeing its activity. We believe independent department oversight, with binding authority, must be established if San Francisco residents are to gain trust in HSH," concluded McCaa.

About the Jury: Every year, the Superior Court selects 19 San Franciscans to serve year-long terms on the Civil Grand Jury. The purpose of the Jury is to investigate the operations of the government of the City and County of San Francisco. Civil Grand Jury reports may be viewed online at <https://civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/>.

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