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**MAYOR LONDON BREED & SUPERVISOR RAFAEL
MANDELMAN ANNOUNCE METHAMPHETAMINE TASK
FORCE**

Task Force will focus on developing and strengthening services, treatment and prevention efforts to address rise in the number of individuals using methamphetamine

San Francisco, CA — Mayor London N. Breed and Supervisor Rafael Mandelman today announced the formation of a Methamphetamine Task Force to address the rise in methamphetamine use in San Francisco. The Task Force will examine the methamphetamine landscape, impacts on residents, and opportunities and challenges for increasing rehabilitation and treatment options, including expanding existing prevention and law enforcement programs.

San Francisco is experiencing a significant rise in the number of individuals using methamphetamine, an increase that is occurring alongside heightened concern around fentanyl. Since 2008, the overdose death rate involving methamphetamine in the City has tripled from 1.8 to 5.6 persons per every 100,000 San Franciscans. Given the various challenges facing San Francisco, there is a clear and urgent need for a focused effort by the City to identify the appropriate services, treatment, and prevention efforts to address this evolving trend.

“We need to be proactive in addressing the rising use of methamphetamines in our City,” said Mayor Breed. “San Francisco is facing serious challenges around substance use, particularly on our streets, and we cannot just let these drugs destroy lives and harm our communities. By bringing together leaders and specialists from across the City, we can identify solutions that will help us to get people into treatment and to deal with the challenges caused by this dangerous drug.”

“Meth addiction is increasing among the most vulnerable San Franciscans, including those with underlying mental illnesses who are living on our streets,” said Supervisor Mandelman, who will co-chair the Task Force. “This crisis threatens the health and safety of users, as well as the well-being of our neighborhoods. Without more effective interventions, mentally ill and meth-addicted individuals will continue deteriorating on our sidewalks, in our emergency rooms, and in our jails. Ultimately many will suffer severe and irreversible health consequences or die. This Methamphetamine Task Force will bring experts to the table to find urgently-needed solutions that will save lives and lessen the impacts of meth addiction in our communities.”

Beginning in Spring 2019, Mayor Breed and Supervisor Mandelman will convene the Methamphetamine Task Force, coordinated by the Department of Public Health. The Task Force will be multi-disciplinary and multi-sector, with members including medical and public health



professionals, researchers, substance use disorder treatment providers, emergency responders, criminal justice and law enforcement officials, drug policy experts, and current and/or former substance users.

“Methamphetamine use is a significant issue in San Francisco,” said Dr. Anton Nigusse Bland, Medical Director of Psychiatric Emergency Services at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital. “These days, about half of our patients are experiencing methamphetamine intoxication, and come to us suffering from effects that can include anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations and psychosis. Some of them may have an underlying mental illness, and some do not. We are looking for ways to extend their possibilities for recovery, and the meth task force will help us to identify needed services and treatment options.”

In Fall 2019, the Task Force will release a comprehensive report with recommendations on harm reduction strategies to decrease and manage methamphetamine use, identify best practices for treatment and service options for current users, and develop policy recommendations to reduce the medical and social impacts of methamphetamine use on San Franciscans. The Task Force is an opportunity to further support cross-departmental collaboration, increase public awareness of substance use and abuse, and examine cost-effective strategies to better manage the impacts of methamphetamine use on the City’s systems and its residents.

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