



City and County of San Francisco  
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

# San Francisco Health Commission

## Guidelines

<b>Policy &amp; Procedure Title:</b> Communications between Individual Health Commissioners and SFDPH staff		
<b>Effective Date:</b> ??? 2016	<b>Last Revision Date:</b> N/A	
<b>Policy Owner:</b> Mark Morewitz, Health Commission Executive Secretary	<b>Phone:</b> (415) 554-2666	<b>Email:</b> Mark.morewitz@sfdph.org
<b>Distribution:</b> DPH-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Other:</b>	

### 1. Purpose of Guidelines

Health Commissioners rely on SFDPH staff members to provide information regarding SFDPH-related topics to help inform them and guide policy decisions. Individual Health Commissioners may have additional questions about an item presented at a meeting or wish to discuss a topic at length with an SFDPH staff member with expertise in a particular subject matter.

The San Francisco Charter and Administrative Code prescribe the roles of the Health Commission and the Director of Health. The Health Commission establishes plans, policies, and goals for the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) and the Director of Health administers and manages SFDPH. Specifically, City Charter Section 4.102 provides that “Each board or commission shall deal with administrative matters solely through the department head or his or her designees.”

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the appropriate process for an individual Health Commissioner to meet with a SFDPH staff member. An additional intent is to reinforce the Charter which states that the Health Commission has authority to act as a body; individual Health Commissioners do not act on behalf of the full Health Commission.

### 2. Guidelines

Requests to meet or correspond with an individual SFDPH staff member on matters related to SFDPH are authorized by the Director of Health. Ideas or suggestions that arise during such communications shall be shared by the staff member with the Director of Health. The Health Commissioner is also encouraged to share ideas or suggestions with the Health Commission Executive Secretary to ensure appropriate follow-up.

### 3. Procedures

#### a. Requests for Communication by Individual Health Commissioners

A request by an individual Health Commissioner to meet or correspond with a SFDPH staff member on matters related to SFDPH should be made to and approved by the Director of Health. The Health Commission Executive Secretary can assist to facilitate such a request.

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**The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans.**

We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~  
~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally-proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

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(SFDPH staff that are contacted by an individual Health Commissioner on matters relating to SFDPH shall direct the individual Health Commissioner to the Director of Health and also advise the Director of Health of the individual Health Commissioner's inquiry.)

**b. Requests for Communication by SFDPH Staff**

A request by a SFDPH staff member to meet or correspond with an individual Health Commissioner will be made to and approved by the Director of Health. The Executive Secretary will work with the staff member and the Commissioner to arrange a meeting.

**c. Notification of Health Commission President and Health Commission Executive Secretary**

A Health Commissioner shall notify the Health Commission Executive Secretary prior to the meeting. The presence of the Health Commission Executive Secretary may be helpful to assist with note-taking and any follow-up items.

**d. Scope of Communications**

Communications between individual Health Commissioners and SFDPH staff are for information-sharing purposes only. Because Section 4.102 of the San Francisco City Charter prohibits individual Health Commissioners from "any dictation, suggestion or interference" on administrative matters and confers the powers and duties of the Health Commission on the body as a whole and not in individual members, neither individual Health Commissioners nor SFDPH staff shall interpret any portion of the communication as a direction from the Health Commission.

**e. Post-communication Follow-up**

The Health Commissioner is encouraged to share new ideas or suggestions that arise during such meetings with the Health Commission President and Health Commission Executive Secretary to ensure appropriate follow-up. The SFDPH staff member will also be sharing ideas or suggestions from the approved communications with the Director of Health, the Deputy Director of Health, and Health Commission Executive Secretary.

If the Health Commission Executive Secretary was present, she/he will draft notes from the meeting and will send to the individual Health Commissioner and the Health Commission President. Upon review and approval from the Health Commissioner, the Executive Secretary will forward the notes to the Director of Health.

**f. Informal Discussions Between a Health Commissioner and SFDPH Staff**

Due to the nature of the relationship between the Health Commission and SFDPH staff, informal discussions may occur. These types of informal interactions are welcome and can help strengthen the working relationship between the Health Commission and SFDPH. If new ideas or suggestions arise out of these types of interactions, the individual Health Commissioner is encouraged to share them with the Health Commission Executive Secretary to ensure appropriate follow-up.

#### 4. Agenda Setting and Ongoing Communication

Ongoing communication between the chairs of Health Commission committees and the lead SFDPH staff associated with the committee is necessary to plan agendas and conduct regular committee business. The following are a list of SFDPH and Commission positions that do not need additional authority to communicate about SFDPH-related business.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>SFDPH Staff Position</b>	<b>Health Commission</b>
Community and Public Health Committee	Director of Population Health Director of The San Francisco Health Network	Committee Chair
Finance and Planning Committee	Chief Financial Officer	Committee Chair
LHH JCC	LHH Executive Administrator	Committee Chair
ZSFG JCC	ZSFG Chief Executive Officer	Committee Chair

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