



**The City & County of San Francisco
Department on the Status of Women
FY2023-2025**

executive SUMMARY

Cover Letter

Dear Community Members,

On behalf of both the Commission and the Department on the Status of Women, please find the executive summary for our Department and the strategic objectives and initiatives that will guide our work over the course of the next two fiscal years and beyond. The Department's approach outlined herein has been endorsed by the Commission and is aligned with the direction provided in the Mayor's budget and policy priorities.

Working at the intersection of health, safety, socioeconomics, politics and gender, the Department on the Status of Women has an expanded portfolio that prioritizes improving the whole lives of women, girls and nonbinary people through three core service areas: Health and Safety, Economic Security and Civic Engagement and Political Empowerment.

DOSW believes that mobility in the United States is determined and influenced by markers of difference like race, ethnicity, class, gender identity and sexual orientation. As we work to achieve gender equality across all indexes in the City and County of San Francisco, and to better understand the experiences of all women in the workforce and in society, we intend to use both gender and racial equity lenses, as well as other intersectional frameworks in our research and analyses to advance bold ideas and sustainable solutions to turn thoughts and prayers into policy and legislation.

Over the past four years, the Department has reshaped and expanded our priorities, including adding skilled professionals focused on research and data, financial empowerment, reproductive rights, and mental health. We are proud of the self-motivated, heart-centered individuals we've assembled on our team as we continue our mission of empowering women, girls and nonbinary people with the education, tools and resources they need to create opportunities, build pathways to healthy and prosperous futures and thrive!

Reorganized and reimagined to meet this post-Roe moment, today's Department on the Status of Women is one that is humanistic, informed by data and infused with confidence, conviction and clarity of purpose.

On behalf of the Department, we look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to create a more diverse, more efficient, gender equitable City and County of San Francisco.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Ellis, J.D. -- Director, Department on the Status of Women





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Mission

Tasked with helping to transform San Francisco into a fully gender equitable City, the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women champions the equitable treatment and advancement of women and girls across social, economic and political indexes through policies, programs and legislation, both within City and County government and in the private sector.

Vision

We envision a world where equality for women, girls and nonbinary people is woven into every fabric of our society. We have full agency and autonomy over our bodies and the power to shape and control our futures and our livelihoods.

Programs

The Commission uses a human rights framework to guide our policies and programs. Our portfolio includes programming in the areas of health and safety, economic security, civic engagement and political empowerment, anti-human trafficking and eradicating all forms of gender-based violence.

Background

In November of 2020, Director Kimberly Ellis had the incredible honor to be unanimously nominated and appointed by the Commission to help lead the Department on the Status of Women to its next level of greatness and to begin a refresh and renew campaign of the Department's work. Director Ellis' leadership also coincided with a new makeup of the Commission - with the majority of the members having been appointed alongside her arrival.

After several months of inquiry and a review that included an assessment of DOSW's performance measures and data collection, the strengths and weaknesses of the operations were identified, as well as opportunities to redistribute resources in a more racially equitable way as appropriate and necessary. Numerous key findings from this analysis were clear: one, the Department's work had generally siloed into a single-issue area (gender-based violence grant making); two, the Department was systematically underfunding its own staffing needs to the detriment of its mission; and three, our funding allocation was inconsistent with regards to the needs of and equity for the most impacted communities.

While the Department's historic gender-based violence grantmaking work has been incredibly impactful, the needs of women, girls and nonbinary people in the aftermath of the pandemic require us to do more to improve whole lives and ensure gender equity in all aspects within San Francisco. To that end, beginning in FY 25-26, the GBV portfolio will transition to the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, thereby allowing the Department to direct its efforts toward monitoring the state of the status of women Citywide.

With a focus on its three core service areas, DOSW has repositioned itself as the City's **Watch Dog and Accountability Partner** on all issues related to gender parity; **Chief Advocate** for equity in service delivery, employment opportunities, policy and leadership development and budget allocation; and **Community Convener** - bringing people together inside and outside the City to collaborate on ideas, strategy and impactful action to help San Francisco transform into a fully gender equitable City.

Fiscal & Finance

The Department on the Status of Women is committed to its responsibility as an effective steward of the public's dollars and duty to provide adequate fiscal monitoring of its programs to make long-lasting systems change and truly create a human-centered response to the diverse communities of San Francisco.

DOSW's Fiscal & Finance operations is reorganized, realigned, operationally and fiscally sound and is responsible for managing general funds as well as federal, state and private foundation grant dollars as well.

Our Fiscal & Finance team formulates and manages the Department's budget, develops and monitors fiscal policies and procedures, manages accounting and procurement functions, produces financial and grants reconciliation reports and oversees, reviews and approves all contracts, requisitions and purchase order requests.



Health & Safety

A healthy life isn't simply a checked box at an annual checkup; it's so much more, including what we eat, how we move and the practices and tools we use to strengthen not just our minds and bodies, but our souls too.

From maternal, reproductive and sexual health, to mental, emotional and nutritional wellbeing, to physical and digital safety, no one can be their best self without investments in selfcare and protection. Far too often, women wait for permission and encouragement to put ourselves first, if even at all. We play a disproportionate role as society's caregivers, yet we so often fail to provide ourselves with the same nurture and love that we so consistently show others.

At the Department on the Status of Women, we recognize our responsibility to take a more holistic approach as it relates to providing San Francisco's women, girls and nonbinary people with the information, tools and resources they need to live their best and healthiest whole lives possible.

Whether its access to medical services or connecting communities to new and existing wellness programming, the Department is popping the hood on the City and County of San Francisco's investments in and impacts on the health of women, girls and nonbinary people.

The lessons learned from the global (COVID-19) pandemic afford us an opportunity to rewrite what it means to prioritize women's health, safety and wellbeing in San Francisco, and in the process, create replicable models for other municipalities to follow.

Economic Security

Financial empowerment and independence have been the greatest drivers of gender equity around the world. The ability to financially care for oneself is crucial in combatting a host of issues where gender disparity is jarring. The road to financial security and freedom is paved through education, but more importantly access - access to capital, access to networks and access to opportunities. Certainly, entrepreneurship, ingenuity and grit play vital roles in generating wealth, but we cannot expect to end systems of oppression without actively taking strides to overcome the inert structures holding women, girls and nonbinary people back from equal economic opportunity.

With this in mind, the Department has expanded its focus to include services that support financial stability, security and mobility around jobs and employment, housing, financial literacy, subsidized childcare, paid family and dependent leave, saving and investing, entrepreneurship and other avenues to economic success.

DOSW continues to successfully secure and administer competitive external grants to support the buildout of our economic security portfolio. With funds from Blue Shield, coupled with an investment from the Department, we launched a micro grant program to study the impact of access to capital for women who have experienced domestic violence. The California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls has also previously provided funding to the Department to support our efforts for guaranteed income pilot programs aimed at supporting justice impacted women, as well as those from historically marginalized communities.

Housing stability is foundational for achieving economic security. To that end, DOSW has partnered with the California Consortium of Urban Indian Health, as well as the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice - Cameo House, one of San Francisco's legendary diversion and housing programs for formerly incarcerated and/ or homeless mothers - to expand opportunities for some of San Francisco's most vulnerable people. As we expand strategic partnerships inside and outside the City, we will continue to listen to the community about what they most need and how we can help.

In the coming years, the Department will further ideate and innovate solutions to improve economic security, including working with banks and other financial institutions to provide access to services like micro-lending, small business grants and debt forgiveness programs.

Civic Engagement & Political Empowerment

Benefiting from democracy only happens when citizens and residents are active, engaged, and educated to leverage the tools available to make an impact in their communities.

Whether it's getting elected to public office, appointed to a board or commission, forming an advocacy group, or even starting a ballot measure effort, the pathway to change for women, girls and nonbinary people starts with education and engagement. That means going to the places and spaces and meeting people where they're at, as well as investing in and listening to not just their ideas, but their proposed solutions too.

This core service area includes the Department's annual flagship policy summit, SHIFT Happens, as well as a host of trainings, educational workshops and public service campaigns, with the goal of getting women, girls and nonbinary people organized, registered to vote, educated on critical issues and actively participating at all levels of government.

In the lead up to the midterm elections, DOSW partnered with Ignite National to launch the *Ignite-the-Vote San Francisco* campaign aimed at getting high school girls and other students registered to vote and inspired to turnout. The Department also worked with She-The-People to produce the limited video series: "*Step Into Your Power*" that highlighted a selection of women-of-color community and elected leaders to inspire the next generation.

We can't expect changemakers to appear suddenly without cultivation, development and investment in both outreach and collaboration with those missing voices. The Department aims to support programming that is not only culturally competent, but socially relevant in the lives of everyday San Franciscans.

The importance of creating content that inspires women, girls and nonbinary people to dream big and believe in themselves and to know their own limitless potential cannot be overstated.

Policy & Legislation

If there is one thing the global (COVID-19) pandemic revealed, it's that the lack of economic security is truly a matter of life or death, especially for women, girls and nonbinary people of color. In fact, the catastrophic impacts have continued to exacerbate many of the most challenging and pressing issues the Department has long aimed to address. No longer playing a passive, defensive role when it comes to championing smart, effective policy that moves the needle of progress forward, today's Department on the Status of Women is officially on offense; and we're playing to win.

As the City's Watchdog and Accountability Partner on all issues related to gender parity, DOSW will continue to demand a systemwide, gender-equitable recovery and beyond that connects our target communities to resources and programming to not just help them build back, but to help them build back better - and stronger.

Our focus will be on developing a policy agenda that positions the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women as the gold standard for producing data driven policy solutions that improve the health, wealth, physical safety and wellbeing of women, girls and nonbinary people. Resolutions and platitudes are nice. Smart, effective policy that addresses root causes and improves one's quality of life is better.

Research, Evaluation & Data

The Department on the Status of Women endeavors to help women, girls and nonbinary people close inequality gaps, improve their social standing and wellbeing, build political power and influence and create economic stability, security and mobility.

We know that when it comes to building a knowledge and evidence-based policy agenda grounded in cohesive research, data is Queen. And bad data inputs lead to wrong outcomes. In 2022, the Department began investing in information-technology solutions to create greater accuracy in our data and reporting, efficiency in our operations, as well as increased accountability and management of limited public resources.

In FY21-22, DOSW invested in a Research, Evaluation and Data role that focuses on research projects, report writing, creating a strategic roadmap for our data management systems and programs, and the development and implementation of a community needs assessment.

Ultimately, our goal is to develop a comprehensive policy agenda that utilizes reliable data to position the Department on the Status of Women as the go-to municipal knowledge broker on policies concerning gender equity and the human rights of women, girls and nonbinary people.

Special Initiatives, Projects & Programs

ABORTION RIGHTS

The Dobbs ruling turned issues of abortion rights and reproductive freedoms on their heads for all people, especially for those who become pregnant. And although California is in a unique position with our reproductive freedoms and ability to make choices about the protection of our own bodies, the national repeal of abortion rights has and will continue to have immediate, long term and unanticipated impacts directly on California, and especially in San Francisco and the greater Bay Area.

As the country's oldest local department dedicated to women and gender equity with subject matter expertise on the policy, programmatic and political conditions surrounding reproductive freedom and access, the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women is proud to serve as the coordinating agency for the City's collective response to the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

DOSW was tapped to lead the San Francisco Bay Area Abortion Rights Coalition (BAARC), an initiative that has been recognized by the White House Gender Policy Council and is the first ever regional collective of municipal governments and reproductive health and justice stakeholders.

These challenging times, while heartbreaking and demoralizing, afford the San Francisco Bay Area an opportunity to reinforce collectively our regional response, reimagine our reproductive healthcare system and reframe the narrative to win the argument once and for all. Equal parts bold and audacious, the BAARC initiative requires an extraordinary level of coordination and collaboration, and DOSW has been proud to serve as the community convener to organize stakeholders for our communities' futures.

SHIFT HAPPENS WOMEN'S POLICY SUMMIT

With its debut in Spring of 2023, the Department hosted San Francisco's Inaugural Women's Policy Summit - SHIFT Happens: Shifting Narratives, Policies and Culture to Create a Gender Equitable Future.

A confluence of brilliant minds, big ideas and cutting-edge policies, the SHIFT Happens Women's Policy Summit reconvened again in 2024 and brought together in community and conversation some of the country's leading voices on gender equitable frameworks, practices and policies.

From health and safety to economic security to civic engagement and political empowerment, the Summit discussed topics that spanned the gamut of some of the most pressing issues women and girls face today. Ultimately, the goal of the conference served as an amplification agent to help accelerate the pace of narrative and culture change through policy and legislative change.

Fireside chats, power panels, interactive workshops, small business vendor fair and a networking lunch, the Summit was one of the most dynamic convenings of 2024!

MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Since 2018, the Department has served as the lead agency for the Mayor's Taskforce on Anti-Human Trafficking. Last year, the Department collected new data and updated the Human Trafficking in San Francisco Report and continued to build and strengthen relationships in the broader anti-trafficking community and expanded its reach and impact. Based in part on the recommendations from a comprehensive, multi-departmental analysis on human trafficking from the City's Budget Legislative Analyst Office, beginning in FY 25-26, the Mayor's Taskforce will transition to the City's new Office of Victims and Witness Rights.

In addition to its role with the Mayor's Taskforce, the Department also leads a large coalition of organizations to address the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) in San Francisco. In December of 2022, DOSW concluded the first iteration of the San Francisco SOL (Safety, Opportunities and Lifelong Relationships) Collaborative, which was originally funded in 2019 through a \$9.3M grant from the California Department of Social Services.

Because of the initiative's success, the State awarded the Department another \$7M grant beginning in January of 2023 to continue the project for another three years, including the addition of new innovations around housing for youth currently being trafficked.

GBV GRANTS PORTFOLIO PORTING PROJECT

As part of the strategic shift from a general grant-making agency to a Watchdog, Advocacy and Convening organization, beginning in FY 25-26, the gender-based violence grants portfolio will transition to the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development.

While DOSW does not plan to provide service-based contract grants as its central body of work, it will continue investing in programming dedicated to improving the whole lives of women, girls and nonbinary people through its three core service areas (Health & Safety; Economic Security; and Civic Engagement and Political Empowerment).

DATA INTEGRITY & PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVES

DOSW believes that technological solutions are intended to help streamline workflows, reduce errors and decrease time spent manually processing fiscal and programmatic data. To increase departmental transparency, accountability and integrity, the Department has implemented new IT platforms to create greater accuracy in our data and reporting and reliability in our operations, as well as strengthen efficiencies and eliminate redundancies throughout our portfolio.

In 2023, DOSW launched a performance tracking tool across all program lines and is working to consolidate contracts to maximize management of precious public dollars.

FAMILY VIOLENCE COUNCIL

Violence impacts individuals at different stages of life. Child abuse, elder or dependent adult abuse, and domestic violence (also known as intimate partner violence or IPV) are all forms of family violence that have traumatizing and far-reaching effects on individuals, families and entire communities. Family violence can include abuse that is physical, sexual, psychological or economic, and it is characterized by behaviors that are used to isolate, neglect or exercise power and control over a person.

In 2007, the Family Violence Council (FVC) was established by local ordinance to increase awareness and understanding of family violence and its consequences, and to recommend programs, policies, and coordination of City services to reduce family violence in San Francisco. Historically, the Family Violence Council and DOSW issued an annual report on family violence in San Francisco, including the prevalence of abuse, the response from City agencies and demographics of victims and survivors.

This report has helped track trends of family violence in San Francisco, identify gaps and needs in response and services and inform policymaking and funding priorities for the City. Data for the report is collected from more than 10 City agencies and 27 community-based organizations.

Beginning in FY 25-26, the Family Violence Council will transition to the City's new Office of Victims and Witness Rights.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Addressing systemic issues and serving the community starts and ends with an in-depth understanding of both the problems and those impacted. In 2024, the Department engaged a team of outside experts to help us better recognize the greatest obstacles faced by women, girls and nonbinary people in San Francisco. Not only did this comprehensive community survey highlight where our attention is needed most, it has also helped to provide the contours and details of those most affected and marginalized. Findings from this study are expected to be released in early 2025.

2024-2025 Department Reports

- Family Violence Council Report
- Gender Analysis Report on Boards & Commissions
- Preparing for an Uncertain Future in Post-Dobbs America:
A Landscape Analysis of Abortion Care in the San Francisco Bay Area
- Human Trafficking in San Francisco
- Community Needs Assessment - Citywide Survey
- Gender Analysis of Public Art, Streets, Buildings and Parks