

1 [Urging the Sheriff’s Department to Implement Virtual Visits for Children with Incarcerated  
2 Parents]

3 **Resolution urging the Sheriff’s Department to implement virtual visits for children with**  
4 **incarcerated parents in an effort to maintain the established parent-child relationship.**

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6 WHEREAS, COVID-19 is an unprecedented public health crisis and is impacting every  
7 aspect of our daily lives and putting our most vulnerable populations at greater risk as we see  
8 glaring at us the socio-economic disparities that have plagued our poor communities; and

9 WHEREAS, The increased vulnerability of low-income people in San Francisco can be  
10 seen in the recent statistics showing how the COVID-19 virus is hitting most vulnerable  
11 populations with 1,468 confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of April 28, 2020, split between 32%  
12 Latinx, 17% White, 14% Asian, 5% African American, 7% other and 23% unknown; and

13 WHEREAS, Among the 23 COVID-19 related deaths in San Francisco, 75% of people  
14 of color, 12 are Asian, 5 are White, 3 are African American, 2 are Latinx, and 1 other; and

15 WHEREAS, COVID-19 has forced the city to address and respond to the structural  
16 racism that exists in this county and places a spotlight on access to health care and who is  
17 more likely to contract COVID-19; and

18 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors applauds the work of the City through the  
19 District Attorney’s office and the Sheriff’s Department to decrease the number of incarcerated  
20 persons with an April 28, 2020, report of only 725 incarcerated persons in the SF county jail  
21 system; and

22 WHEREAS, As of March 13, 2020, all county jail visits have been suspended in order  
23 to protect people in custody; and

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1           WHEREAS, Children with incarcerated parents face a wide range of challenges with  
2 very few services are specifically designed to support youth with this unique but widespread  
3 experience; and

4           WHEREAS, The maintenance of family ties during incarceration is one possible means  
5 of lessening the negative impact of incarceration on families and children and most  
6 incarcerated parents want to maintain relationships with their children, including with their  
7 education; and

8           WHEREAS, Children face challenges in maintaining relationships with their  
9 incarcerated parents due to a lack of consistency in communication through phone calls,  
10 letters, and visits, thus these disenfranchised voices must be lifted as part of the responses  
11 being addressed under the current crisis; and

12           WHEREAS, In 2003, the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership  
13 (SFCIPP) published the Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights, which includes,  
14 among others, a right to not be judged, blamed or labeled because of the child's parent's  
15 incarceration, a right to support as children struggle with their parent's incarceration, and the  
16 right to a lifelong relationship with their parents; and

17           WHEREAS, The Sheriff's Department currently operates a program called "One  
18 Family" in which incarcerated persons are required to enroll in parenting classes and then  
19 assigned a case manager to work with the family to ensure a therapeutic and meaningful  
20 relationship is built through parent-child visitation; and

21           WHEREAS, It is estimated that around 40 incarcerated persons are enrolled in this  
22 program have not been able to visit with their child during the COVID-19 crisis; and

23           WHEREAS, The parent-child contact visits can be achieved through video  
24 conferencing visitation allowing children to contact and communicate with the incarcerated  
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1 parent helping to continue to build on the relationships that were being established prior to the  
2 COVID-19 visitation halt without further interruption; and

3 WHEREAS, The Sheriff's Department currently allows virtual court appointments and  
4 virtual visits with attorneys, proving that they have the existing technology and ability to  
5 provide virtual visits; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors strongly urges the Sheriff's Department to  
7 immediately implement the "One Family" program allowing current enrolled families to have  
8 video conferencing visits in an effort to maintain the established parent-child relationship; and,  
9 be it

10 FURTHER RESOLVED, That video conference visits shall only be used to supplement  
11 in person visits and shall in no way replace, interfere with, or discourage in-person visits  
12 between parents and children after the COVID-19 crisis; and, be it

13 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors strongly urges the Sheriff's  
14 Department to designate staffing to allow for virtual conferencing visits to create the  
15 opportunities for children of incarcerated people to strengthen the parent-child bond in  
16 accordance to the Children's Bill of Rights.

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