

1 [Amending the Imminent Danger Policy in City-Funded Family Shelters Regarding Victims of
2 Domestic Violence]

3 **Resolution urging the Human Services Agency to adopt the Shelter Monitoring**
4 **Committee’s recommendations for amending the Imminent Danger policy in City-**
5 **funded family shelters as it pertains to victims of domestic violence.**

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7 WHEREAS, Under the existing Imminent Danger policy in city-funded family shelters,
8 families are not eligible for shelter placement or to remain in shelter for thirty days if they are
9 in an imminently dangerous situation that might cause harm to themselves, shelter families, or
10 shelter staff; and

11 WHEREAS, Recently, HSA reduced the denial of service period from thirty days to
12 fifteen days, but this is insufficient in assisting victims of domestic violence; and

13 WHEREAS, In most cases of imminent danger, all members of the family will be
14 required to leave immediately; and

15 WHEREAS, An example of imminent danger includes domestic violence incidents that
16 have occurred between people in intimate relationships – either at the shelter or up to fifteen
17 days prior to the family being placed in the shelter; and

18 WHEREAS, Sixteen families received Denials of Service (DOS) from February 2014 –
19 June 2015; and

20 WHEREAS, Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing constitute a critical service
21 for families fleeing from domestic violence. In Fiscal Year 2013-2014, city-funded emergency
22 shelters provided 3,591 bed nights to women and their children escaping domestic violence,
23 while three transitional housing programs and one permanent supportive housing program
24 provided 11,659 bed nights to women seeking longer-term stability. Unfortunately, 1,893
25 individuals were turned away due to lack of space; and

1 WHEREAS, The work of city agencies, community organizations and advocates, such
2 as the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, the Domestic Violence
3 Consortium, and the Family Violence Council have led to ground-breaking programs, policies
4 and best practices supporting domestic violence victims and reducing domestic violence-
5 related crime; and

6 WHEREAS, Prohibiting victims of domestic violence and their families from shelter
7 goes against these ground-breaking programs, policies and best practices; and

8 WHEREAS, Domestic violence is a significant and pervasive problem affecting
9 thousands of San Francisco residents and is one of the most chronically underreported
10 crimes; and

11 WHEREAS, On November 18, 2015, the Shelter Monitoring Committee unanimously
12 approved policy recommendations to amend the Imminent Danger policy as it pertains to
13 victims of domestic violence; now, therefore, be it

14 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Human Services Agency (HSA)
15 to adopt the Shelter Monitoring Committee’s policy recommendations for amending the
16 Imminent Danger policy in City-funded family shelters as it relates to victims of domestic
17 violence, including the following:

- 18 a. Prohibition of a denial of service on the basis of being a victim of domestic violence;
- 19 b. Prohibition of a denial of service based on self-disclosure of domestic violence;
- 20 c. Requirement of the use of lethality assessments upon intake to assess all families
21 for the risk of domestic violence;
- 22 d. Establishment of procedures in which shelters contact law enforcement for the
23 provision of emergency protective orders in cases of domestic violence;
- 24 e. An update to the shelter training manual for shelter staff on how to handle domestic
25 violence and other crisis situations;

- 1 f. Requirement of consistency with the San Francisco Shelter Grievance Policy; and
- 2 g. The inclusion of these policies in contracts upon renewal or establishment of new
- 3 contracts with shelter providers; and, be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors reinforces its commitment to
5 protecting and supporting victims of domestic violence in all aspects.

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