

1 [Urging Urgent Homelessness Policy Changes]

2

3 **Resolution urging the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing to**
4 **implement urgent policy changes to serve pregnant individuals, families living in single**
5 **room occupancy units or doubled-up families; and urging the Department to pursue**
6 **additional policy changes in coordination with the Board of Supervisors.**

7

8 WHEREAS, The 2019 Point-in-Time Count of the homeless population in San
9 Francisco revealed a 30% increase in homelessness from 2017 to 2019; and

10 WHEREAS, The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (“DHS”) has
11 responded with strategic investments in problem-solving and shelter, including for the growing
12 population of individuals living in their vehicles; and

13 WHEREAS, The number of unsheltered families has remained relatively stable, unlike
14 other subpopulations counted in the semi-annual Point-in-Time Count; and

15 WHEREAS, The homelessness crisis in San Francisco necessitates additional urgent
16 action and policy changes at times to respond to changing conditions on the ground and
17 within the population of individuals struggling with homelessness; and

18 WHEREAS, National data from 2017 suggests that 33% of all people experiencing
19 homelessness are persons in families; and

20 WHEREAS, The 2019 Point-in-Time Count identified 612 persons in 201 families
21 experiencing homelessness, similar to the 601 persons in 190 families identified in 2017; and

22 WHEREAS, The official Point-in-Time Count does not account for all homeless families
23 due in large part to the fact that many families’ condition of homelessness is not readily
24 detectable or visible, and because the Point-in-Time Count excludes data on families living in
25 SRO units or doubled-up households, meaning a household having one or more adults in

1 addition to the head of household and spouse or partner, such as an adult child living at
2 home, two related or unrelated families residing together, or a parent living with an adult child;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The Point-in-Time Count uses the federal U.S. Housing and Urban
5 Development or HUD definition of homelessness, which includes only those individuals and
6 families residing in a shelter designated to provide a temporary living arrangement or those
7 individuals and families with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not
8 designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; and

9 WHEREAS, Unlike HUD, San Francisco's definition of homelessness includes
10 doubled-up families as well as families living in SROs or substandard or inadequate living
11 situations including overcrowded spaces; and

12 WHEREAS, In 2014, the San Francisco Unified School District reported approximately
13 2,000 homeless students, of which 60% were living in doubled-up households; and

14 WHEREAS, A study found that 75% of the over 1.2 million homeless students in the
15 United States live doubled-up, a percentage that has increased dramatically since the
16 economic recession began in 2008; and

17 WHEREAS, As of May 2019, the number of homeless students reported by the San
18 Francisco Unified School District has reached 2,293; and

19 WHEREAS, 699 households with minor children were residing in SROs according to
20 the SRO census of 2015; and

21 WHEREAS, Children in families experiencing homelessness, including those in SROs
22 and living in doubled-up conditions, face increased incidences of illness and are more likely to
23 have emotional and behavioral problems than children with stable living accommodations; and

24
25

1 WHEREAS, Currently, families living in SROs or in doubled-up housing situations are
2 excluded from accessing shelter, housing, or other services through the City's Family
3 Coordinated Entry System; and

4 WHEREAS, There are over one thousand families in need of greater housing stability
5 but currently ineligible for homeless family assistance; and

6 WHEREAS, By revising the intake forms and questionnaires at access points, the City
7 could qualify these families for eligibility and equitably assess their needs and vulnerability;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, These changes would also ensure that the aggregate needs of all
10 members of a household are assessed and factored into the family's overall prioritization
11 score, as opposed to just the needs of the head-of-household which currently determines an
12 entire family's prioritization score; and

13 WHEREAS, Current policy states that pregnant individuals can only access the
14 homeless family shelter and services system through the City's Family Coordinated Entry
15 system upon arriving at the third trimester of pregnancy; and

16 WHEREAS, The third trimester is often too late to prevent long and short term fetal
17 complications and preterm labor; and

18 WHEREAS, Mayor London N. Breed has expressed support for urgent action to
19 expand eligibility for homeless pregnant individuals and families living in SROs and in
20 doubled-up housing conditions; and

21 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors recognizes that multiple other policies and
22 practices being utilized to address the needs of individuals and families struggling with
23 homelessness and unstable housing are necessary to effectively address continuing issues
24 including, but not limited to, low-barrier programming for homeless youth, official identification
25

1 prerequisites to qualify for aid, the length of stay in Navigation Centers and other shelters;
2 now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Department of Homelessness
4 and Supportive Housing to establish, publicize, and consistently apply a policy that
5 guarantees that homeless pregnant individuals are eligible for family homeless services and
6 housing at any point in their pregnancy by extending the definition of family homelessness to
7 include homeless individuals with a confirmed pregnancy that do not have any other minor
8 children; and, be it

9 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Department of
10 Homelessness and Supportive Housing to adhere to San Francisco's health data-driven
11 established definition of homelessness established by Board of Supervisor Resolution No.
12 997-01 which includes SRO and doubled-up families; and, be it

13 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Department of
14 Homelessness and Supportive Housing to establish, publicize, and consistently apply a
15 definition of homelessness that includes families living in Single Room Occupancy hotels and
16 doubled-up housing situations as eligible households able to access shelter and other
17 services through City's Family Coordinated Entry system; and, be it

18 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Department of
19 Homelessness and Supportive Housing to modify the calculation of a family's prioritization
20 score under Family Coordinated Entry to ensure that the aggregate needs of all members of a
21 household are assessed and factored into the family's overall prioritization score, as opposed
22 to solely considering the needs of the head-of-household; and, be it

23 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors affirms the independent
24 authority of the Local Homelessness Coordinating Board to develop its own public meeting
25

1 agendas in order to meaningfully respond to these and other policy concerns related to the
2 City's homelessness response system; and, be it

3 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors strongly supports the Mayor's
4 commitment to meet monthly with representative service providers with expertise and an
5 established history of serving homeless individuals and families to address these and other
6 policy concerns related to the homelessness response system; and, be it

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Department of
8 Homelessness and Supportive Housing to coordinate with the Mayor's office, homeless
9 stakeholders, and the Board of Supervisors to address the homelessness crisis and ongoing
10 policy concerns to improve access to, and efficacy of, the City and County of San Francisco's
11 homelessness response system.

12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25