FILE NO. 251003

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Administrative Code - Expanding Drug-Free Permanent Supportive Housing]

Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to state that it is City policy to expand the availability of Site-Based Permanent Supportive Housing ("PSH") for people experiencing homelessness that supports abstinence by prohibiting illegal drug use on-site or emphasizing abstinence ("Drug-Free and Recovery-Oriented Supportive Housing"); prohibiting the City from funding Site-Based PSH for people experiencing homelessness that bars evictions on the basis of drug use alone ("Drug-Tolerant Housing") except where operation of the funded housing as Drug-Free and Recovery-Oriented Supportive Housing would conflict with standards imposed by law or as a condition of other funding; and requiring the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing to survey residents of Site-Based PSH to assess their interest in living in Drug-Free and Recovery-Oriented Supportive Housing, and submitting a report to the Board of Supervisors summarizing the summary findings.

Existing Law

Currently, there is no law requiring or prohibiting the City from funding any model of permanent supportive housing.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed ordinance would state that it is City policy to expand the availability of Site-Based Permanent Supportive Housing ("PSH") for people experiencing homelessness that supports abstinence by prohibiting illegal drug use on-site or emphasizing abstinence ("Drug-Free and Recovery-Oriented Supportive Housing"). It would also prohibit the City from funding Site-Based PSH for people experiencing homelessness that bars evictions on the basis of drug use alone ("Drug-Tolerant Housing") except where operation of the funded housing as Drug-Free or Recovery-Oriented Supportive Housing would conflict with standards imposed by law or as a condition of other funding

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing would be required to survey residents of Site-Based PSH to assess their interest in living in Drug-Free and Recovery-Oriented Supportive Housing, and submit a report to the Board of Supervisors summarizing the summary findings.

Background Information

Permanent Supportive Housing ("PSH") plays a significant role in San Francisco's response to homelessness by combining affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services

intended to address the myriad needs of chronically homeless people, including families with children, seniors, and persons with chronic disabilities. These support services are intended to build independent living and tenancy skills, and connect people with community-based health care, treatment, and employment services.

With few exceptions, San Francisco's PSH sites adhere to the drug-tolerant policies reflected in California's current implementation of the "Core Components of Housing First," as set forth in California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 8255. These policies apply to state-funded PSH, and provide that "use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself, without other lease violations, is not a reason for eviction," and that supportive services must be "informed by a harm-reduction philosophy that recognizes drug and alcohol use and addiction as a part of tenants' lives." Some – but not all – of San Francisco's PSH is state-funded, and subject to the state's current Housing First mandates.

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