



San Francisco Human Rights Commission Response to Human Rights Council Advisory Committee Questionnaire

- 1. Please provide background information on the reasons and circumstances which led your city to take steps towards the implementation/mainstreaming of human rights.**

The roots of HRC go back to 1964 when the modern day civil rights movement manifested in San Francisco through demonstrations against hotels, supermarkets, drive-in restaurants and automobile showrooms that discriminated against African Americans. In early 1964, Mayor John F. Shelley appointed an Interim Committee on Human Relations, which subsequently recommended to the Board of Supervisors that a permanent Human Rights Commission be established. In July 1964, the Board of Supervisors passed the recommendation, and Mayor Shelley signed an ordinance establishing the Human Rights Commission. From 1964, the Human Rights Commission grew in response to City government's mandate to address the causes of and problems resulting from prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and discrimination. The Mayor and the Board of Supervisors gave the Human Rights Commission more and broader powers and duties to address these problems, and passed additional ordinances, which were implemented by the Human Rights Commission. In June 1990, the voters of San Francisco established the Human Rights Commission as a Charter Commission. Today, HRC performs its Charter mandated obligations and duties pursuant to the following City ordinances and laws:

- 2. What measures (normative, institutional, policies, projects, etc.) have been undertaken at the city level for the implementation/mainstreaming of human rights?**

12(N) City Ordinance LGBTQ Youth Sensitivity and Cultural Competency Training Module

HRC is charged with enforcing Chapter 12N of the SF Administrative Code which requires all City departments to provide LGBT sensitivity training to any staff who has direct contact with youth or whose work directly affects youth. Since 2011, HRC - in conjunction with the City's Youth Commission and Department of Public Health (DPH) - has renewed efforts to support trainings on LGBTQ issues for youth-serving city departments and contractors. To date, efforts have resulted in to the creation of a web-based module whereby City staff can obtain LGBT sensitivity training as required by City law. In 2014, HRC will join other City agencies to establish a steering committee that will evaluate the current training

The African American Community Empowerment Initiative

In conjunction with the Commission's Equity Advisory Committee (EAC), Policy staff continues to review the numerous equity and diversity reports that have been conducted over the last two decades to address the critical nature of the decline of the African American community in San Francisco. HRC staff has produced and made public a document that offers a critical and comparative analysis of all of the equity reports to (a) decisively reflect key focus areas, (b) compile the recommendations and findings to afford greater awareness and education regarding the gap related to improving the quality of life for the African American community, specifically but generally all communities of color, (c) identify common trends and themes to effectuate implementation which have stalled the process, (d) highlight any "potential" advancements, and (e) outline the components of a youth training and vocational internship/mentorship program

AAMEMSA Community Impact Assessment and Anti-Semitism Programs

In 2013, HRC coordinated a city-wide response to hateful MUNI advertisements which equated Arabs and Muslims with "savages." It formed an Oversight Committee, comprised of representatives from the HRC, SF District Attorney's Office, Department of Public Health, Asian Law Caucus, Council on American-Islamic Relations and Islamic Networks Group, that determined that proceeds from the MUNI ads should be used create a tool to evaluate the community impact assessment of Islamophobia in San Francisco. In 2014, HRC will engage members of the Arab, African, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian (AAMEMSA) community to assist in determining the extent and impact of Islamophobia in San Francisco. Concurrently with these efforts, HRC will work with Jewish organizations to develop a similar project around anti-Semitism within San Francisco.

Beyond Marriage Report

In 2011, the HRC released *Beyond Marriage: Unrecognized Family Relationships* which examines the concept of family and how the definition of family should be broadened to include familial relationships beyond those created by traditional means via marriage, legal adoption or biological ties.

On July 18, 2011, the Commission hosted a work group meeting with representatives from the National Center for Lesbian Rights, Larkin Street Youth Services, AIDS Legal Referral Panel, and the Disability Rights and Education Fund to discuss and review the proposed local kinship or caregiver registry including creating applicable forms and possible impacts on current marriage equality issues.

Bisexuality Report

On March 10, 2011, the HRC adopted and released its groundbreaking report *Bisexual Invisibility: Impacts and Recommendations*. It is the first governmental report of its kind to explore bisexuality as it relates to advancing greater acceptance and awareness of bisexuality in our society and culture. Examining statistical data, historical perspectives, surveys, defining language, and personal accounts, the report notes that despite years of activism, bisexual sexual

orientation is often still branded as invalid, immoral, or irrelevant. This results in the needs of bisexuals going unaddressed and their very existence still called into question. Policy Staff is meeting with the San Francisco Health Commission and the Department of Public Health to coordinate a work group and indentify a legislative sponsor to champion this cause to advance implementation.

Coalition for Safe San Francisco (SafeSF)

HRC works closely with the Coalition for a Safe San Francisco (SafeSF), a growing grassroots alliance dedicated to protecting the civil rights and civil liberties challenged by overbroad national security policies. SafeSF seeks to end racial, religious, and ethnic profiling and harassment by local and federal law enforcement agents in the City and County of San Francisco through community organizing, education, and policy and legal advocacy.

Deaf and People with Disability Work Group

The LGBTAC Deaf and People with Disability Work Group met monthly in 2013 to identify means by which to increase awareness and sensitivity to the needs and issues facing the LGBT deaf and people with disabilities communities; increase services and accommodations offered to them, and create guidelines that city agencies and non-profits that receive city funding must abide by for providing services for these communities. In 2013 the workgroup hosted a panel discussion aimed at increasing awareness to the needs of the LGBT deaf and disability community in San Francisco. The panelists called for greater oversight and policy development to heighten compliance to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The panel discussion also included an examination on how reasonable public accommodation should be applied more broadly to effectuate increased equal access and inclusion for those persons living with physical and/or mental limitations

Discrimination Complaints and Investigations

In 2013, HRC received close to 1300 inquiries of possible discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodation. For each inquiry, HRC was able to counsel each complainant either by phone or in person, provide them with guidance and, where appropriate, refer them to agencies better able to address their needs. Of the nearly 1300 inquiries received, 123 (nearly 10%) led to HRC filing formal complaints on behalf of the complainants, of which 18 (or 15%) resulted in a settlement. As shown below, 70% of the complaints filed by HRC were predicated on discriminatory actions in housing and the three protected classes raised most frequently across all complaint types were disability (36%), race (15%) and national origin (10%).

Domestic Workers Bill of Rights

On April 12, 2011, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in support of AB 889. On May 26, 2011, the HRC voted unanimously to recommend that the Governor and California Legislature to pass AB 889, the Domestic Worker Employment Equality, Fairness and Dignity Act (2011). In a letter to the California State Assembly Members, the HRC asserted that passing this legislation was critical to ensuring equal rights and protections are extended to all domestic workers. On August 17, 2011, HRC sent a letter to the California State Senate to express its continued support for this bill and the human rights issues it would address.

EAC Increasing Awareness about Deferred Action for Early Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Work Group

In June 2012, President Obama signed a memo calling for deferred action for childhood arrivals, or DACA. Through this program, certain undocumented youth who came to the U.S. as children and who have pursued education or military service in the United States can be granted a two-year deportation reprieve, along with work authorization. The DACA subcommittee began DACA advocacy by interviewing DACA legal service providers to assess need. Upon learning about the underutilization of legal services available to eligible youth in San Francisco, the Equity Advisory Committee chose to focus efforts on connecting eligible youth with service providers. In July, the DACA subcommittee drafted a letter that the Human Rights Commission submitted to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors in support of declaring September 4, 2013 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Day. On September 10, 2013 the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution that September 4, 2013 be declared "DACA Day".

Hearing to Address Plight of African American Youth in the San Francisco School System

HRC has long advocated for more efforts on the part of City leaders to recognize education as a human right. In 2012, HRC's African American Leadership Council, in conjunction with HRC's Equity Advisory Committee, worked to develop strategies to effectively address the historical disproportionality of African American youth represented in school suspensions, expulsions and the achievement gap. At the request of HRC's AALC, San Francisco Board of Supervisors Christina Olague, Malia Cohen and David Campos spearheaded a joint hearing between the City and SF Unified School District on September 27, 2012 to specifically address these issues. As a result of this hearing, HRC's AALC will be working with the BOS and The Joint School District and City Select Committee — comprised of three school board members and three city supervisors — to form a Education Task Force to look at the disparities in the achievement gap related to African-American Students in the SFUSD.

Human Rights Impact of the War on Drugs

HRC staff worked with the Commission to create a record of the 2012 War on Drugs hearing. Looking Ahead in 2014, HRC, in partnership with Mo Magic, will convene a monthly Youth Reading Group on the War on Drugs - considered by many to be akin to the Jim Crow laws of the last century. Transitional aged youth with contacts within the criminal justice system will attend a two- hour workshop on criminalization, reentry and civil rights. The goal of the workshop will be to youth to think critically about how to revitalize families and communities most impacted by the War on Drugs.

The LGBT Aging Policy Task Force

On May 24, 2012, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed unprecedented legislation establishing one of the first LGBT Aging Policy Task Forces in the nation. The Task Force investigates issues affecting San Francisco's LGBT seniors and makes policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

LGBTAC Comprehensive Immigration Reform Work Group

In 2013, the LGBTAC Comprehensive Immigration Reform Work Group created a dialogue amongst a wide-range of LGBT and immigrant communities, and increased awareness of LGBT immigration issues in federal immigration reform, throughout the City of San Francisco, among local and regional stakeholders. On May 29, 2013, the Work Group facilitated a panel discussion entitled: “Why Does It Matter? A Community Conversation on LGBTQ Inclusive Comprehensive Immigration Reform.” The forum was comprised of well-informed and thought provoking leaders from the LGBT community who discussed family unity, asylum and detention issues, pathways to citizenship and other measures that greatly impact California’s diverse LGBT and immigrant communities. This event proved critical toward enhancing the public’s understanding of the vital nature of comprehensive immigration and fostering equity and inclusion for LGBT individuals and their families in the immigration debate on the federal level.

LGBTAC Economic Empowerment Work Group

The goal of the LGBTAC Economic and Empowerment Work Group was to identify, educate and create a community response to current economic climates and find means by which to promote a fiscally healthy community that can generate, protect and invest in its own resources. On July 23, 2013, the Economic and Empowerment Work Group hosted a panel discussion and community forum called “Sky High Rents-Disappearing Non Profits.” This important community forum explored the impact on the LGBTQ community as non-profit organizations; specifically those serving this community are being forced to leave the city due to unaffordable rent increases on commercial spaces that house these vital and life sustaining organizations. Spearheaded by the panel discussion and public forum, this topic has become a much more wide-spread discussion amongst policy makers, city leaders and community stakeholders toward identifying solutions that would keep these organizations in the city and serving our vulnerable communities.

Memorandum of Understanding with Naples

In the Fall of 2013, HRC hosted the Honorable Luigi de Magistris, Mayor of Naples, Italy. During his visit, Mr. De Magistris addressed the Commission regarding the need for greater cooperation around the promotion and protection of human rights. His presentation to HRC was subsequently followed by a Memorandum of Understanding between HRC and the Naples Department of Equal Opportunities whereby both agencies identified means by which to work closely together to advance and promote human rights globally. (October 24, 2013)

Project Homeless Connect

In 2013 HRC partnered with Project Homeless Connect to hold the first ever LGBT Homeless Connect. The Commission advised homeless connect and other city departments on how to ensure volunteers interacted with participants in a sensitive, professional and cultural competent manner.

Reducing Barriers for Persons with Prior Arrest and Conviction Records

On April 14, 2011, HRC supported a legislative proposal to reduce barriers for persons with arrest and conviction records, noting that doing so is a key factor in decreasing recidivism. Throughout 2013, HRC continued to advocate for reduced barriers for persons with arrest and

conviction records. The agency received multiple inquiries from city residents regarding their rights when they are denied housing or employment because of their conviction history. While the HRC has no jurisdiction to investigate these claims, we continue to provide employers and housing providers with best practices for ensuring every applicant is fairly evaluated. HRC also created and gave know your rights presentations to transitional aged youth with criminal backgrounds. Through film screenings, power point presentations and reviewing job announcements, youth were given tips on answering questions about their criminal histories using honest, professional and successful language. In addition, HRC participated in the a quarterly Criminal Records Roundtable. The purpose of this meeting was for civil rights organizations around the country to share best practices for reducing discrimination against persons with arrest and conviction records. Finally, HRC worked with city departments including the Mayor's Office of Housing and the Department of Human Resources to contribute to local legislation and regulations on criminal background checks.

Sanctuary City Outreach and Training

HRC is charged with working with all City agencies, community organizations and non profits to raise awareness about Sanctuary City Ordinance and its enforcement. In 2013, HRC developed a "Sanctuary City 101" training curriculum for new arrivals to the City. A copy of this training was provided to the Mexican Consulate for distribution to new immigrants and consulate visitors. Also in 2013, the City of Toronto requested formal comments from the HRC regarding possible implementation of its own Sanctuary City laws. The Commission analysed Toronto's proposed legislation and issued a response.

SF Collaborative against Human Trafficking (SFCHAT)

The San Francisco Collaborative Against Human Trafficking (SFCAHT) has a membership of over 30 agencies representing a broad array of nongovernmental organizations, government agencies, law enforcement agencies, service providers, educators, and community members. In 2013, HRC hosted two events related to raise awareness on human trafficking: "Human Trafficking 101: What does modern day human trafficking really mean and how can YOU help combat it?" and "Identifying HT Victims and bringing their Traffickers to Justice." In addition, HRC helped organize the SFCAHT's 2013 Conference to End Child Sex Trafficking which was held on August 9, 2013.

Transgender Health Care

Policy staff is working very closely with Assemblyperson Tom Ammiano, D-CA, State Department of Managed Health Care (DMC) and the Transgender Law Center to implement and advance comprehensive healthcare policy and regulations to greater serve the needs of the Transgender Community. HRC Staff conducted a meeting with the Department of Public Health (DPH) Director and the Director of the Healthy SF Medical Care Access Program to assist in creating a medical access program that would provide comprehensive healthcare to this community to include transitional and re-assignment procedures.

Translatina Violence Prevention

San Francisco has long been a safe haven for people who have faced discrimination, exclusion and violence. Despite this reputation, many residents continue to experience violence and lack support in seeking relief from this violence. One such community in San Francisco involves transgender Latinas (“trans Latinas”). Trans Latinas, particularly those who are monolingual, face a wide range of barriers in achieving true safety in San Francisco. In response, and throughout 2013, HRC facilitated various meetings between the trans Latina community and SFPD to increase reporting of hate incidents and hate crimes. HRC also convened the first of a series of discrimination clinics aimed at combating discrimination against transgender persons in housing, employment and public accommodations. In addition, thanks to the efforts of Supervisor Campos, HRC was able to secure \$200,000 from the Board of Supervisors to fund community-based organizations working on violence prevention. After issuing an Request for Proposals in September 2013, a review panel determined that El/La Para trans Latinas, an education and advocacy organization that works closely with the trans Latina community, was strongly positioned to carry out the grant objectives. In 2014, HRC will work with El/La Para trans Latinas in order to meet the case management, community building and education and outreach needs of trans Latinas in the Mission.

U.S. State Department International Visitors Program

In 2013, HRC hosted various delegates from around the world participating in the State Department’s International Visitors Program. Program participants included diplomats, politicians, press, and educators from Argentina, Australia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Egypt, China, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, Kuwait, Liberia Mexico, Nepal, Palestinian Authority, Peru, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Turkey, US Mission to the African Union, and Vietnam. The goal of each event was to educate participants on San Francisco’s anti-discrimination laws and HRC’s recent and past policy initiatives. (6/27/13). (January 31, February 6, and June 27, 2013).

Violence Prevention through Safe Spaces

Beginning in 2014, and thanks to funding secured in 2013, HRC will begin forming partnerships with community-based organizations to launch “safe spaces” at places of worship in the Mission District, Tenderloin and SOMA. Safe spaces involve HRC working with community-based organizations to engage at-risk groups around violence prevention and intervention services. At designated safe spaces, HRC will facilitate discrimination complaint intakes, linkage with health and social service providers, “Know Your Rights” trainings on City laws and policies, and peer-to-peer support. Safe spaces will allow HRC to use the reach and resources of community-based organizations to increase awareness on violence prevention and continue building partnerships between at-risk groups, civil society organizations, and government agencies.

3. Please describe the main challenges faced by the city authorities to implement/mainstream human rights.

Ensuring inclusive outreach is the main challenge the HRC faces when implementing Human Rights in San Francisco. The HRC works to incorporate perspectives from all of San Francisco communities before implementing policies and programs.

Deadline for submission of responses to the questionnaire:

In order to give the Drafting Group the opportunity to take into account the different contributions, all parties are encouraged to submit their responses as soon as possible and at the latest by **11 April 2014**.

Answers can be submitted via email to the following address:

hrcadvisorycommittee@ohchr.org

OR

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Thank you for your contribution.

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