

City & County of San Francisco  
Homelessness Oversight Commission  
Resolution No. 24-###



**Resolution of the Homelessness Oversight Commission (“Commission”) Expressing the Importance of Protecting Essential Items Belonging to Persons Experiencing Homelessness**

Whereas, There are certain items that are essential to the well-being of an individual experiencing homelessness. These items include: vital records, items necessary for employment, items of medical necessity, survival gear, and food and water (collectively, “Essential Items”); and

Whereas, The loss of Essential Items can make it harder for persons experiencing homelessness to exit homelessness, and can worsen the homelessness problem that the City and Department are trying to address; and

Whereas, Identification documents, driver’s licenses, passports, other government-issued identification, Social Security cards, Social Security-issued income verification letters, School Records, Court Records such as Temporary Restraining Orders and Birth Certificates, can take several months to replace, and are often required for people to obtain housing and employment; their loss can cause significant delays in someone’s ability to exit homelessness; and

Whereas, Persons experiencing homelessness who have recently become homeless for the first time are more likely to become chronically homeless if they lose their job and source of income. The loss of items necessary for employment and education, such as work and school uniforms or other work clothing and shoes and work tools, (e.g. wrenches, sound equipment, food delivery totes) and school supplies makes it harder for such individuals to avoid becoming chronically homeless; and

Whereas, Many people rely on anti-psychotic and bipolar medications to help moderate their thoughts and behavior, and schizophrenia affects approximately 1% of the population, but it is estimated to affect approximately 20% of the homeless population. The loss of prescription and over-the-counter medications, including those used for mental health, substance use disorder, cardiac, diabetic, allergy and other medical health, and wheelchairs, walkers, canes,

compression socks, clean bandages, diapers and any other supplies needed to take care of infants can be devastating to a person experiencing homelessness; and

Whereas, The ideal temperature for sleep is 65° to 68°. Temperatures above 75° and below 54° can disrupt sleep. Lack of sleep can cause and/or exacerbate physical and mental health issues, and make it harder for an individual to exit homelessness. Proper sleep requires protection from wind, rain, dampness, sunburn, heat and particularly overnight cold temperatures, and therefore items such as blankets or sleeping bags and other items to stay warm and dry overnight are important to persons experiencing homelessness; and

Whereas, It is critical to health to be able to retain food including baby formula and water, and money for purchasing items which meet basic needs such as soap and shampoo, and in San Francisco, there are not many accessible public bathrooms that are open 24 x 7 nor are there reliable public sources for clean drinking water; and now, therefore, be it

Whereas, It is necessary for people to be able to communicate with case workers, family members and other supportive persons, people experiencing homelessness must be able to retain their phones, laptops and charging cables; and

Resolved that the Commission appreciates the City's efforts to help reduce homelessness in San Francisco; and, be it

Further Resolved, that the Commission recognizes that the loss of essential items can create setbacks that undo the City's progress in ending homelessness in San Francisco, and requests the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing to work with its sister agencies and partners to effect that such items are not lost, impounded, or discarded; and, be it

Further Resolved, that the Commission Secretary is directed to post a copy of this resolution on the Commission's webpage, and provide copies of this resolution to these city department heads:

Bill Scott, Chief of the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD)

Carla Short, Director of Public Works (DPW)

Mary Ellen Carroll, Director of the Department of Emergency Management (DEM)

Phil Ginsburg, General Manager of Parks & Recreation (REC)

Acting Chief, Chief of the San Francisco Fire Department (FIR)

Shireen McSpadden, Director of the Department of Homelessness & Supportive Housing

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Chair of Homelessness Oversight Commission