



City and County of San Francisco
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

San Francisco Department of Public Health

Barbara A. Garcia, MPA
Director of Health

San Francisco Department of Public Health *Policy & Procedure Detail**

Policy & Procedure Title: Communications between SFDPH staff and Individual Health Commissioners		
Category: Health Commission		
Effective Date: April 6, 2016		Last Revision Date:
DPH Unit of Origin: Health Commission		
Policy Owner: Colleen Chawla, Deputy Director of Health, Director of Policy & Planning	Phone: (415) 554-2769	Email: Colleen.Chawla@sfdph.org
Distribution: DPH-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Other:

**All sections in table required.*

1. Purpose of Policy

The San Francisco Charter and Administrative Code prescribe the roles of the Health Commission and the Director of Health. The Health Commission establishes plans, policies, and goals for the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) and the Director of Health administers and manages SFDPH. Specifically, City Charter Section 4.102 provides that “Each board or commission shall deal with administrative matters solely through the department head or his or her designees.” This purpose of this policy is to establish a procedure for the Director of Health to authorize designees to communicate with individual Health Commissioners on matters related to SFDPH.

2. Policy

Communication (written and oral) between SFDPH staff and individual Health Commissioners on matters related to SFDPH must be authorized by the Director of Health. New ideas or suggestions that arise during approved communications shall be shared with the Director of Health, the Deputy Director of Health, and the Health Commission Executive Secretary to ensure appropriate follow-up and possible review by the full Health Commission.

3. Procedures

a. Requests for Communication by Individual Health Commissioners

A request by an individual Health Commissioner to communicate with SFDPH staff must be made to and approved by the Director of Health. SFDPH staff that are contacted by an individual Health Commissioner on matters relating to SFDPH shall direct the individual Health Commissioner to the Director of Health and also advise the Director of Health of the individual Health Commissioner’s inquiry.

The mission of the San Francisco Department of Public Health is to protect and promote the health of all San Franciscans.

We shall ~ Assess and research the health of the community ~ Develop and enforce health policy ~ Prevent disease and injury ~
~ Educate the public and train health care providers ~ Provide quality, comprehensive, culturally-proficient health services ~ Ensure equal access to all ~

b. Requests for Communication by SFDPH Staff

A request by a SFDPH staff member to communicate with an individual Health Commissioner must be made to and approved by the Director of Health.

c. Notification of Health Commission Executive Secretary

SFDPH staff that have been authorized by the Director of Health to communicate with the Health Commission shall notify the Health Commission Executive Secretary.

d. Scope of Communications

Approved communications between SFDPH staff and individual Health Commissioners are for information-sharing purposes only. Because Section 4.102 of the San Francisco City Charter prohibits individual Health Commissioners from “any dictation, suggestion or interference” on administrative matters and confers the powers and duties of the Health Commission on the body as a whole and not in individual members, neither SFDPH staff nor individual Health Commissioners staff shall interpret any portion of the communication as a direction from the Health Commission.

e. Post-communication Follow-up

New ideas or suggestions that arise during approved communications shall be shared by SFDPH staff with the Director of Health, the Deputy Director of Health, and the Health Commission Executive Secretary to ensure any appropriate follow-up.

f. Informal Discussions Between a Health Commissioner and SFDPH Staff

Due to the nature of the relationship between the Health Commission and SFDPH, informal discussions may occur between SFDPH staff and individual Health Commissioners, for example before and after Health Commission meetings. SFDPH staff should be open and helpful when approached by a Health Commissioner and should respond in a manner consistent with this policy.