

Use of Tasers by San Francisco Police Officers*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Approved digest
On: Thursday, March 1, 2018
Members: Packard, Anderson, Patterson, Raveche

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 4 p.m. on Friday, March 2

The Way It Is Now: The San Francisco Police Commission is a civilian body that sets policy for the Police Department. In November 2017, the Commission authorized the Police Department to use tasers starting December 2018. The Commission is developing a policy to guide the use of tasers.

Tasers are weapons that discharge electrical currents into an individual. Automated external defibrillators are portable medical devices used following sudden cardiac arrest. San Francisco police officers do not currently use tasers. About half of Police Department patrol vehicles have defibrillators.

Any voter-approved policy on the use of tasers cannot be changed by the Commission or the Police Department.

Under the City budget process, the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor must approve the City's budget each year. The Police Department makes budget requests as part of the budget process.

The Proposal: Proposition ___ sets policy for when officers can use tasers. Tasers may be used when a person is actively resisting, assaulting or exhibiting any action likely to result in serious bodily injury or death of another person, themselves or a police officer.

Proposition ___ would authorize the Police Department to purchase tasers for each police officer, subject to the following conditions:

- Successfully completing the Department's use-of-force and threat assessment training;
- Using only Police Department-issued tasers and holsters;
- Holstering on the side of the officer's body opposite from the firearm;
- Equipping Police Department vehicles with defibrillators in districts where tasers are carried; and
- Investigating and reporting each time an officer uses a taser.

The Police Department must request funding for the purchase of tasers and defibrillators 45 days after this measure is enacted.

The measure may be amended only by a majority of the voters of San Francisco or by an ordinance adopted by a vote of four-fifths of the Board of Supervisors.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want to set a policy for the use of tasers and authorize the purchase of tasers for each police officer by the Police Department, subject to specific conditions.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want to adopt this measure.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*