

SAN FRANCISCO
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DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS

REGULATION OF NAVIGATION CENTERS

The City has a program to help persons experiencing homelessness by providing Navigation Centers. Navigation Centers are temporary shelters that provide:

- beds for between 40 and 100 residents, except that the City may allow more than 100 residents if it would not compromise the facility's operations; and
- health services, including mental health services, drug and alcohol treatment, and harm reduction programs.

The City is divided geographically into eleven Board of Supervisors ("Board") districts. By April 16, 2019, the City had opened six Navigation Centers, located in Districts 6, 9, and 10. In December 2019, the City opened one more Navigation Center in District 6. The City is considering Navigation Centers in other locations. There is no limit on how long a Navigation Center may operate.

Under local law, the City must locate Navigation Centers in areas accessible to persons experiencing homelessness and before opening a new facility, the City must reach out to neighbors and nearby neighborhood associations.

As of February 24, 2020, members of the Board have proposed amendments to the City's Navigation Center program, including:

- increasing the number of beds that a Navigation Center may provide;
- allowing residents to stay for at least 90 days, and permitting them to remain longer if they comply with individualized support and treatment plans; and
- requiring the City to open additional Navigation Centers or new homeless facilities in supervisorial districts that did not have an open Navigation Center as of April 16, 2019.

These proposed amendments may change as the Board's legislative process continues.

The proposed measure would restrict the operation and location of Navigation Centers. The proposed measure would prohibit Navigation Centers from:

- housing more than 100 residents under any circumstance; and
- permitting a resident to stay longer than 60 days, but the measure would allow a resident to stay for another 60 days if the resident was discharged from a hospital, completed a residential drug treatment program, has a serious mental health disorder, or has not stayed in another Navigation Center for 120 days.

The proposed measure would restrict where the City may locate new Navigation Centers, based on census tracts. Census tracts are smaller than supervisorial districts, and San Francisco has approximately 200 census tracts. The City would be required to locate new

Navigation Centers in the census tract with the highest number of persons experiencing homelessness, or the adjoining census tract. If the City has already opened a Navigation Center in one of those census tracts, then the City may open a new Navigation Center in the census tract with the next highest number of persons experiencing homelessness, or the adjoining census tract. This restriction would be the exclusive requirement regarding the location of Navigation Centers.

The proposed measure would prohibit Navigation Centers from operating for more than two years. If the City closes a Navigation Center, then the City could not convert that site to permit the use of alcohol or controlled substances.