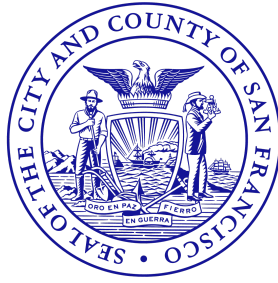


City and County
of San Francisco



Board of Supervisors
Member, District 6

MATT DORSEY

麥德誠

NEWS RELEASE

Dorsey seeks report on extent to which S.F. is a destination city for ‘drug tourism,’ city benefits

Anecdotal evidence, past experience with jurisdictions exploiting City’s social safety net ‘raise legitimate questions for which San Franciscans deserve more reliable answers’

SAN FRANCISCO (Feb. 1, 2024) — Supervisor Matt Dorsey today requested a formal analysis by the Office of the City Controller that will standardize a research methodology and report on known address histories of individuals implicated in San Francisco’s ongoing drug crisis or who are recipients of general assistance benefits from the County Adult Assistance Program, or CAAP. Once finalized, Dorsey intends to propose legislation to require that the report be updated annually, to better inform policymakers about unintended incentives that may be exacerbating problems local taxpayers are investing considerable resources to solve.

Dorsey’s request follows up on research his office conducted into different methodologies employed by various city agencies, which in some recent cases reached starkly divergent conclusions about the residential status of individuals arrested for public drug use in San Francisco, or who died from accidental drug overdoses here. Dorsey’s letter of inquiry, which will be facilitated through the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, cited high-profile anecdotal examples of the phenomenon of “drug tourism,” which included a nationally aired CNN special from May 2023 that reported, “[Notably, no one was from San Francisco.](#)”

“The report I’m requesting from the City Controller is necessary to more accurately quantify the extent to which San Francisco is a destination city for open-air drug scenes and related public nuisances, as well as for those who avail themselves of general assistance for indigent adults,” said Supervisor Dorsey. “Apart from quantifying the phenomenon, another benefit this report will offer is better visibility into relevant individuals’ counties and states of origin, which may reveal patterns that merit further investigation. Apart from anecdotal evidence of ‘drug tourism,’ it’s also worth noting that San Francisco has experienced documented instances of [outside jurisdictions dropping off unhoused individuals here](#) and even a [multi-year ‘patient dumping’ scandal](#) perpetrated by an out-of-state psychiatric hospital.”

When Dorsey served on former City Attorney Dennis Herrera’s executive staff, the City Attorney’s Office [sued the State of Nevada](#) after its investigation found that a Las Vegas-based psychiatric hospital engaged in improperly transporting more than two-dozen patients to San Francisco by bus over a five-year period.

“We’ve seen a multitude of problematic examples that raise legitimate questions for which San Franciscans deserve more reliable answers,” Dorsey added. “I’m grateful to the City Controller’s Office for taking on a project that will offer a high-value perspective for city policymakers on challenges we’re struggling to address — especially as they relate to ‘drug tourism’ following the deadliest year for fatal drug overdoses in San Francisco history.”

Dorsey’s request asks the City Controller’s Office to develop an accurate and replicable methodology to assess the longevity of relevant individuals’ residential status in San Francisco, relying on commercially available research databases. Once established, the report would quantify the longevity of relevant individuals’ residential status in San Francisco and report on relevant individuals’ origins at the county, state and national levels.

Populations for which Dorsey is seeking this anonymized report would include: individuals arrested for violations of HSC § 11550 (public drug use) under Drug Market Agency Coordination Center, or DMACC, operations; individual decedents as reported by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner’s Report on Accidental Overdose Deaths; and CAAP recipients, broken down by general assistance and Care Not Cash beneficiaries.

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Supervisor Dorsey News Release: Page 3 of 3

For immediate release:

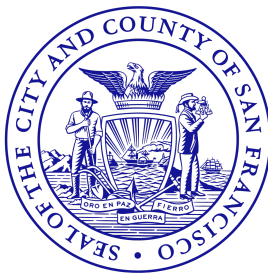
Feb. 1, 2024

Contact: BRYAN DAHL

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City and County
of San Francisco



Board of Supervisors
Member, District 6

MATT DORSEY

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February 1, 2024

Ms. Angela Cavillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
City Hall, Room 244
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, Calif. 94102-4689

Emailed to: Angela.Cavillo@sfgov.org

LOI: Controller's report request on known address histories for individuals implicated in San Francisco's drug crisis and County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) recipients

Dear Madam Clerk,

This Letter of Inquiry (LOI) follows up on my request of September 6, 2023,¹ in which I sought information from relevant city agencies on the various methodologies currently employed to determine the residential status or known address histories of individuals implicated in San Francisco's ongoing drug crisis. After reviewing responses and discussing my office's policy objectives with outgoing City Controller Ben Rosenfield and his recently confirmed successor, Greg Wagner, I write this letter of inquiry to request an anonymized report by the City Controller's Office that would accomplish the following:

- **Methodology.** To develop an accurate and replicable methodology for assessing the longevity of relevant individuals' residential status in San Francisco;

¹ Clerk of the Board of Supervisors Cover Memo and Letter of inquiry: Methodologies to determine residential status and known address histories to reliably quantify the phenomenon of 'drug tourism' in San Francisco, Sept. 6, 2023, <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:US:38fcdd94-1be4-49fd-964c-f758bcb18800>.

- **Longevity.** To quantify the longevity of relevant individuals' residential status in San Francisco, relying on commercially available research databases; and
- **Origin.** To report on relevant individuals' origins at the county, state and national levels, relying on commercially available research databases.

I ask that this anonymized report assess residential history data for three populations, within time periods that the Controller deems workable, replicable and reliably representative:

- **Drug-use arrestees.** Individuals arrested for violations of HSC § 11550 (public drug use) under Drug Market Agency Coordination Center, or DMACC, operations;
- **Drug OD decedents.** Individual decedents as reported by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner's Report on Accidental Overdose Deaths; and
- **CAAP Recipients.** County Adult Assistance Programs (CAAP) recipients, broken down by general assistance and Care Not Cash beneficiaries.

As referenced in my preceding LOI, I believe this report is necessary to more accurately quantify whether and to what extent San Francisco may be a destination city for individuals engaged in the use of potentially addictive substances, as well as those availing themselves of public assistance for indigent adults. In my view, the need for a reliable methodology for assessing this phenomenon is heightened by the starkly divergent representations we have seen in recent months about the residency of individuals who use illegal drugs in San Francisco. Anecdotal examples — including some that have gained national attention² — raise legitimate questions for which San Franciscans deserve reliable answers.

I am cc'ing relevant city departments here, which include the San Francisco Police Department's Crime Strategies Division that I understand is doing work on a similar project.

² CNN Anchor Sara Sidner conducted multiple interviews with individuals engaged in open-air drug scenes and others in San Francisco's unhoused population for a one-hour episode of the Whole Story with Anderson Cooper, aired on May 8, 2023, and entitled "What Happened to San Francisco?" In it, Sidner concluded: "Notably, no one was from San Francisco." Sidner's interview with a young unhoused couple living in the South of Market neighborhood included an observation from Ryan, from Fresno, who disclosed, "Honestly, I mean...there's a lot more assistance for sure out here, you know, compared to everywhere else." <https://x.com/mattdorsey/status/1703400858103447573?s=20>

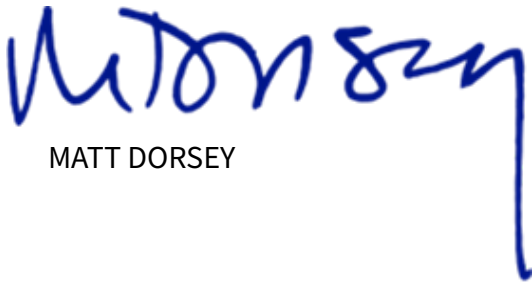
LOI: Controller's report request on known address histories for individuals implicated in San Francisco's drug crisis and County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) recipients

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Please know how much I appreciate the work of you and the Board of Supervisors' Clerk's Office to facilitate this as well as my earlier request. I welcome the opportunity to discuss it further. Please feel free to contact me or my Chief of Staff, David Owen, at david.a.owen@sfgov.org, should you or your team require any further clarification.

Thanks so much!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matt Dorsey", with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end of the signature.

MATT DORSEY

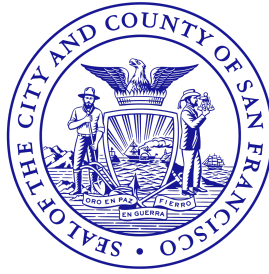
Cc: City Controller Ben Rosenfield
Office of the City Controller
Emailed to: Ben.Rosenfield@sfgov.org

City Controller-Designate Greg Wagner
Department of Public Health
Emailed to: Greg.Wagner@sfdph.org

Chief of Police William Scott
San Francisco Police Department
Emailed to: William.Scott@sfgov.org

Director of Crime Strategies Ryan Kao
San Francisco Police Department
Emailed to: Ryan.Kao@sfgov.org

City and County
of San Francisco



Board of Supervisors
Member, District 6

MATT DORSEY

麥德誠

September 6, 2023

Ms. Angela Cavillo, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
City Hall, Room 244
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, Calif. 94102-4689

Emailed to: Angela.Cavillo@sfgov.org

Letter of inquiry: Methodologies to determine residential status and known address histories to reliably quantify the phenomenon of ‘drug tourism’ in San Francisco

Dear Madam Clerk,

In accordance with the power of inquiry and review that San Francisco Charter § 16.114 vests in the Board of Supervisors, I write this letter of inquiry to request the following:

- **Current practices.** I seek information from relevant city agencies on methodologies currently employed to determine the residential status or known address histories (if any) of individuals implicated in San Francisco’s ongoing drug crisis; and
- **Prospective best practices.** Relatedly, I seek guidance from relevant offices on best practices, areas for improvement, and legal obstacles (if any) to standardize research and reporting on known address histories of selected populations moving forward.

I believe this information is essential to more fully inform legislation I am in the process of drafting, which aims to more accurately assess, quantify and mandate the publication of periodic and anonymized reports on the phenomenon of “drug tourism” in San Francisco.

Problem Statement

Recent months have seen starkly divergent quantitative representations about the residency of individuals involved in the use of illegal drugs in San Francisco. While the populations cited below differ in key respects, numerical conclusions ascribed to each highlight, in my view, an improbable differential that is far beyond what one should reasonably expect.

- **95 percent of drug-use arrestees are non-residents.** According to a June 16, 2023 report in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, “Nearly 95% of people arrested for drug use in San Francisco since May 30 are from out of town, Police Chief Bill Scott said at a public hearing this week, corroborating perceptions that many residents already have — that their city has become a magnet for the narcotics trade.”¹ The report noted that only three out of 45 individuals who were arrested for public drug use in the Tenderloin and South of Market neighborhoods claimed a San Francisco address.
- **95 percent of drug overdose decedents were residents.** According to a July 25, 2023 proposed resolution that appeared on yesterday’s Board of Supervisors agenda, the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner’s report on Accidental Overdose Deaths for June 2023 “reveals that the vast majority of people who were housed and died of accidental overdose were San Francisco residents,” and that among “people who have died to overdose in 2023, 280 were determined to have had a fixed address, and 265, or 95%, of them were San Francisco residents.”²

Given the potentially important insights these datasets may hold to inform policymakers about unintended incentives that may be underpinning our City’s record-setting crises in drug overdose deaths and drug-related harms, I believe these examples — particularly given the stark differences they portray — merit further examination. This should include ways for the City to improve and standardize its data collection for reporting purposes moving forward.

¹ “Is S.F. a ‘drug tourism’ destination? SFPD arrests stat stirs debate” by Rachel Swan, *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 16, 2023, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/sf/article/san-francisco-drug-tourism-arrests-tenderloin-18156424.php>.

² City and County of San Francisco, Board of Supervisors, Proposed Resolution, File #:230875, Version: 1, “International Overdose Awareness Day - August 31, 2023,” introduced July 25, 2023, <https://sfgov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6301306&GUID=D4FD222C-E944-4D73-BDDD-05BCB1B82D3C>.

Letter of inquiry: Methodologies to determine residential status and known address histories to more reliably quantify the phenomenon of ‘drug tourism’ in San Francisco

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Discussion

Based on my office’s initial research, it appears that neither California law nor San Francisco’s municipal code offer a uniformly understood definition for the term “residency,” which for purposes of legal requirements can range from several days to more than a year.

General assistance benefits such as the County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) or Cash Assistance Linked to Medi-Cal (CALM), for example, provide that San Francisco residency is established after “15 continuous days,” under S.F. Admin. Code § 20.7-11. Another example is Charter Section § 13.110, which requires candidates for the Board of Supervisors to have established residency in the respective districts for which they seek election no fewer than 30 days immediately preceding the date of their declaration of candidacy.

State law appears to account for more stringent residency requirements, by contrast, with a continuous physical presence of 366 days (together with an intent to make California one’s permanent home) required to qualify for in-state resident college tuition rates. And while the residence requirement to serve as governor is now believed to be unenforceable under U.S. Constitutional case law, the California Constitution’s Article V, Section 2 appears to set the upper limit for residency at five years.

In his June 14, 2023 statement to the San Francisco Police Commission, Police Chief Bill Scott was circumspect in his representation “that only three out of 45 list San Francisco as their address,”³ among those arrested for violations of Calif. Health and Safety Code § 11550, a misdemeanor offense for being under the influence of a controlled substance without a valid prescription. Although Chief Scott made no direct representation about the residency status of other individuals, it would be important to explore whether the San Francisco Police Department is relying solely on self-reported addresses, or if these were verified with information obtained through the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, or CLETS. Related to that, I believe policymakers would be well served to learn more from the City Attorney about whether and to what extent CLETS may be used to research and report aggregate totals on known address histories provided personal data is shielded.

³ San Francisco Police Commission meeting, June 14, 2023, <https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/player/clip/43920>.

Letter of inquiry: Methodologies to determine residential status and known address histories to more reliably quantify the phenomenon of ‘drug tourism’ in San Francisco

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The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner’s most recent Accidental Drug Overdose Report, which reported data from January 2023 through July 2023, describes as follows its representations as to whether its address determinations for decedents who lost their lives due to accidental drug overdoses should be interpreted as evidence of legal residency.

“Fixed Address” denotes a verifiable address associated with the decedent, which may indicate their residence; it is not intended to verify a decedent’s legal domicile, which is a broader legal concept, pertaining to a person’s permanent and primary residence for various legal matters.

“No Fixed Address” denotes a verifiable address associated with the decedent was unable to be determined (e.g., housing insecurity, multiple addresses in a short timeframe).

“Unknown Address” denotes the inability to identify any reliable address associated with the decedent, or information source.⁴

I think it would be important to understand the tools and methodologies OCME employs to identify fixed addresses, and how these might relate to known address historical information.

Departmental Inquiries

To more fully inform legislation I am now in the process of drafting to quantify and mandate the periodic publication of reports on “drug tourism” in San Francisco, I request the following information within 30 calendar days on current practices and recommendations for best practices moving forward from the following city departments.

- **San Francisco Police Department.** I seek information on methodologies now employed to determine the residential status and/or known address histories of individuals arrested for violations of HSC § 11550 (public drug use) under operations currently being directed by the Drug Market Agency Coordination Center, or DMACC.

⁴ Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, San Francisco, Accidental Overdose Report, Jan. 2023 – July 2023, published Aug. 15, 2023, https://sf.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/2023%2008_OCME%20Overdose%20Report.pdf, page 3.

Letter of inquiry: Methodologies to determine residential status and known address histories to more reliably quantify the phenomenon of 'drug tourism' in San Francisco

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- **San Francisco Sheriff's Department.** I seek information on methodologies now employed to determine the residential status and/or known address histories of individuals booked for violations of HSC § 11550 under DMACC operations. Additionally, I would welcome information on the availability of data to track those booked for all other crimes committed while under the influence of illegal drugs.
- **Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.** I seek information on methodologies now employed to determine the residential status and/or known address histories of decedents who lost their lives to accidental drug overdoses in San Francisco, and databases available to OCME investigators to identify known address histories.
- **Office of the City Attorney.** I seek guidance, confidentially or otherwise, on the availability of CLETS to law enforcement agencies to determine the residential status and/or known address histories of individuals arrested for violations of HSC § 11550 and/or decedents who lost their lives to accidental drug overdoses in San Francisco.
- **Chief Information Officer, Department of Technology.** I seek guidance from San Francisco CIO Linda Gerull and her team on the best available data sources to research known address histories of individuals implicated in San Francisco's drug crisis. These may include commercial investigative databases for verifying individuals' identities, such as Thompson Reuters CLEAR or LexisNexis Accurint. I also welcome recommendations on best practices for using these technologies, and procedural recommendations to legislate requirements for periodic data reporting.

I am cc'ing relevant city departments here, and I invite informal conversations to better clarify my letter of inquiry. Please know I appreciate your office's efforts to facilitate these requests, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss it further with you, too. Please feel free to contact me or my Chief of Staff, David Owen, at david.a.owen@sfgov.org. Thanks so much!

Sincerely,



MATT DORSEY

Letter of inquiry: Methodologies to determine residential status and known address histories
to more reliably quantify the phenomenon of 'drug tourism' in San Francisco

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Cc: Chief of Police Bill Scott
San Francisco Police Department
Emailed to: William.Scott@sfgov.org

The Honorable Paul Miyamoto
Sheriff of the City and County of San Francisco
Emailed to: Paul.Miyamoto@sfgov.org

Christopher Liverman, M.D., Ph.D
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David Serrano Sewell
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Executive Director, Department of Technology
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