



Patrick Ford
Executive Director
San Francisco Ethics Commission
25 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 220
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Dear Ethics Commission,

I write to seek a narrow, program-specific waiver of the one-year post-employment restriction on communications with my former department, established by San Francisco Campaign and Governmental Conduct Code Section 3.234(a)(2). I was previously an employee of the City's Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing ("HSH"), and my last day of employment was May 2, 2025. At the time of my departure, I was the Manager of Housing Placement at HSH. I am currently a Senior Advisor at the San Francisco Housing Accelerator Fund ("HAF").

The narrow waiver I request would allow me to communicate with my former colleagues in HSH specifically regarding a review of the City's permanent supportive housing portfolio. This effort will be led by Mayor's Office of Community Development ("MOHCD"), but HSH employees will also be involved. The review kicked off in October 2025 and will require approximately six months to complete.

Work History

I have spent my career working on affordable housing, supportive housing, and housing placement.

During the majority of my career, I worked for the Charities Housing Development Corporation of Santa Clara County ("Charities Housing"), an affordable housing organization in Silicon Valley.

Later in my career, I also worked at Episcopal Community Services and the Tipping Point Foundation on similar issues, including reentry placement.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, I became a temporary City employee and was involved in the creation of a housing placement team for the Department of Emergency Management ("DEM"). During the epidemic, many persons experiencing homelessness were placed in hotels, and as the FEMA funding for the hotels began to wane, the City needed to find permanent housing for these individuals. The housing placement team led this effort.

At the end of the COVID-19 epidemic, I became a permanent City employee at HSH. At HSH, I managed the housing placement team to reduce vacancies in permanent supportive housing. The team also worked through referrals and cooperated with providers of general assistance housing. The team was also responsible for transfers, responding to requests for reasonable accommodations.

I joined HAF on May 5, 2025. HAF is a small nonprofit organization – currently comprised of 14 employees – that aims to preserve and expand quality affordable housing and community facilities. HAF seeks to “accelerate” the production and preservation of affordable housing for economically disadvantaged households by lending to, investing in, and directly acquiring real estate assets. At HAF, my role is to bring my expertise regarding housing placement and supportive housing to the organization’s projects.

Review of City’s Permanent Supportive Housing Portfolio

As mentioned above, the City has recently initiated a review of its permanent supportive housing portfolio. This project will be led by MOHCD, involves several City departments including HSH, and will also involve the HAF. At the end of the review, the City will develop a draft optimization plan for its permanent supportive housing portfolio.

MOHCD has invited HAF to engage in this review, largely to provide the perspective of providers of permanent supportive housing as the City determines its long-term strategy. HAF has a small number of employees with this experience, including myself. As a partner in this effort, HAF would share what it has learned from providers and offer recommendations. It is possible that this cooperative project would, in a technical sense, implicate the City’s one-year post-employment communications restriction. By providing input and recommendations on the City’s permanent supportive housing portfolio, including with HSH employees, I would arguably be communicating with the intent to “influence a government decision” – that is, how to make improvements in permanent supportive housing. However, as described further below, the circumscribed work for which I seek a waiver does not confer an ability for me to actually influence decision-making.

This review is estimated to take approximately six months. While this review is just beginning, there likely be a couple of meetings a month, with approximately a dozen meetings in total. In addition to meetings, the group will share ideas via email and various draft documents.

Since this will be a short-lived project, if I do not receive a waiver, I will likely be unable to participate in the proposed work altogether. My one-year communications ban would end in May 2026, when the review would likely be complete.

No Undue Influence or Unfair Advantage

Under Section 3.234(c)(1), the Ethics Commission can grant a waiver from the one-year post-employment ban, if the waiver would not create the potential for undue influence or unfair advantage.

As described above, the City – principally MOHCD – has invited HAF to engage in the process of reviewing the City’s permanent supportive housing stock. HAF is not seeking to influence the City’s decision-making process for any contracting advantage or financial gain. Likewise, I would not receive any potential monetary benefit.

To the contrary, the HAF and I would be involved for the sole purpose of providing our decades of expertise on supportive housing and improving the City’s processes regarding the same.

Since the permanent supportive housing review has already begun, I hope that the Ethics Commission can consider this waiver at its next meeting. I will plan to attend your next meeting to answer any questions and am available for questions from staff as well.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Chris Block