

TRANSGENDER-INCLUSIVE SAN FRANCISCO CITY ID:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S MUNICIPAL ID PROGRAM

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May 1, 2018

DISCLAIMER PAGE

This study has been prepared for the San Francisco's Office of Transgender Initiatives, San Francisco, CA. The student author conducted this study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Policy at Mills College. The judgments and conclusions are solely those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by the Mills College Public Policy Program, the sponsoring Client organization, or any other organization or agency.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current design of the San Francisco City ID does not meet the needs of transgender people looking for an identification that accurately displays their name and gender. Lacking identity documents that reflect the name and gender that transgender people identify with poses daily obstacles and unnecessary barriers to their well-being.

Due to the many challenges transgender people face with changing the name and gender on their state and federal documents, many are left with no accurate form of identification. Of the transgender population in San Francisco, those that are undocumented are at greatest need for an identification. Undocumented transgender people are also the most likely to report being assaulted or attacked when presenting incongruent identity documents (Sandy E. James, 2016). Although there have been recent improvements for transgender people in California to be able to access accurate identity documents, they are mostly inaccessible to people who do not have legal status in the United States.

The modernization of San Francisco's City ID provides a unique opportunity for San Francisco to take major steps in addressing the challenges faced by transgender people without proper documentation to reflect their identity. San Francisco has the opportunity to position itself as a leader of transgender rights by taking the necessary measures to ensure its residents have access to accurate identity documents.

As is evident in San Francisco and other jurisdictions, a municipal ID can be the key to accessing life-altering services, such as housing, financial services, and assistance from law enforcement.

Based on a holistic understanding of the problem, an analysis of the legislative framework that surrounds identity documents for transgender people, and a look at New York City, New York and Chicago, Illinois' programs for a best practices analysis of transgender-inclusive provisions in their municipal ID, it is recommended that San Francisco modernize its municipal ID program to include:

- Option for residents to use their first initial and/or middle initial and last name in place of their full first name.
- Option for residents to self-designate their gender.

- Option for residents to select between Male “M,” Female “F,” Non-Binary “NB” as a gender marker.
- Option for residents to not include any gender marker on their ID
- City Clerk’s Office encrypt the applicant data and store applicant photos separately from any identifiable data.
- City Clerk’s Office staff assist a mandatory sensitivity training around how to best serve transgender people.
- City Clerk’s Office partner with community-based organizations in creating mobile stations.
- Outreach materials be created that are specifically tailored for transgender applicants and raising awareness of the benefits of the SFCID for the transgender community.
- City Clerk’s Office reduce the fee of \$5 to \$0 for applicants who qualify.