



SAN FRANCISCO  
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

# Strategic Plan

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With you on life's journey



SFHSA  
Department of Benefits  
and Family Support



SFHSA  
Department of Disability  
and Aging Services

## OUR VISION

We envision a San Francisco where everyone has the opportunity and support to achieve their full potential through all stages of life.

## OUR MISSION

We are committed to delivering essential services that support and protect people, families, and communities. We partner with neighborhood organizations and advocate for public policies to improve well-being and economic opportunity for all San Franciscans.

## VALUES

We are guided by our values:

- Work with purpose
- Advancement of diversity and racial equity
- Dedication to discovering what works
- Strength in partnership
- Policies for good
- Act with integrity



SFHSA  
Department of Benefits  
and Family Support

CalFresh  
CalWORKs  
County Adult Assistance Programs  
(CAAP)  
Family and Children's Services  
(Prevention, Foster Care, Adoption)  
JobsNow!  
Medi-Cal



SFHSA  
Department of Disability  
and Aging Services

Adult Protective Services  
Benefits and Resource Hub  
County Veterans Service Office  
In-Home Supportive Services  
Office of Community Partnerships  
Public Administrator  
Public Conservator  
Public Guardian  
Representative Payee

## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVES

The San Francisco Human Services Agency (SFHSA) serves as the City’s anchor social services provider. Whether it be food support, healthcare, social connection, home care, a job, or protective service, we work hard to help San Franciscans through all stages of life. We strive to support people to meet not “just” their basic needs in a high-cost city but ultimately to reach their full potential. At the center of our work lies a vision of a San Francisco where all communities have equitable access to the resources they need to thrive.

We are excited to share how we will translate our vision to practice over the next five years. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest, and evolving demographic trends in San Francisco, SFHSA’s work feels more important than ever.

In the next five years, SFHSA will be guided by five overarching strategic goals:

1. Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility
2. Strong Workforce and Collaboration
3. Employment and Economic Security
4. Health and Well-being
5. Safety and Care

As we chart the course ahead, we must recognize that government contributes significantly to perpetuating systemic and institutional racism that has resulted in profound racial inequities. We see the ramifications of this in the disproportionate number of Black/African American and Latinx families and children in our foster care and public assistance systems, significant health disparities by race, and gaps in school readiness and learning among our Black/African American and Latinx children.

So, as we release our 2022–2026 Strategic Plan, we also reaffirm our commitment to advancing racial equity, not only through our programs

and services, but also in how we do our work and with whom we partner. Working with people of different races, ethnicities, ages, and strengths across San Francisco, our approach must reflect the unique challenges and trauma they face, but also the assets they bring to one another, their communities—and to the fabric of our City.

With our staff, partners, community, and clients, we strive to move the needle toward our vision of a San Francisco where everyone has equitable access to the resources they need to thrive. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but together, we can achieve real, lasting, and positive change in the communities we serve and the City we love.

**Kelly Dearman, Executive Director**  
Department of Disability and Aging Services

**Trent Rhorer, Executive Director**  
San Francisco Human Services Agency



# Who We Are

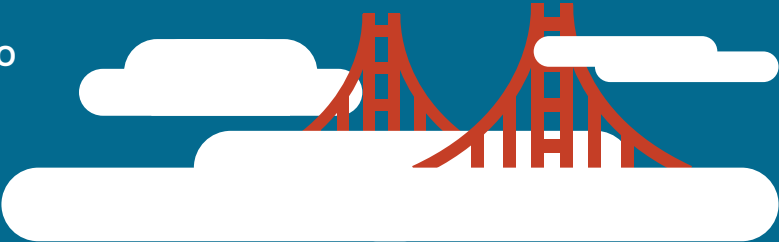
**It takes a lot to make it in San Francisco. At some point, we all need a little help to reach our goals. But some of us need more help than others; historic exclusion, racism, ageism, ableism, and trauma cumulatively cause more harm in some communities than others. We're here to provide support when it matters most to those who need it most.**

SFSA builds well-being in our communities by delivering vital programs and services that help people feel connected, valued, and supported, from infancy to older adulthood. From financial assistance to nutrition, health-care coverage, employment, protective services, and community connection, our dedicated professionals and community partners lend support for all who need it in San Francisco.

Through our **Department of Benefits and Family Support**, our **Department of Disability and Aging Services**, and our network of community-based partners, we have tremendous reach—helping over 250,000 San Franciscans a year. We provide a wide variety of direct services online, over the phone, and in-person at our nine locations across the City—and, in some cases, in people's homes. Even more, our partnerships with community-based providers who share our mission extends our reach to deliver essential services where people live and feel most comfortable seeking help.



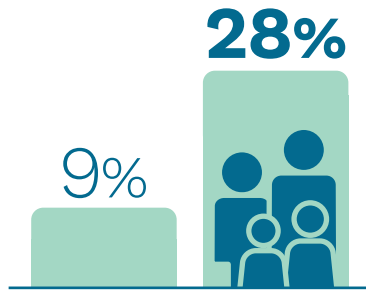
# Who We Serve



Each year, SFHSA serves over 250,000 unique individuals. That's one in four of our neighbors. In fact, we have a relationship with nearly every low-income households in San Francisco.

## WHAT'S THE NEED?

**ACCORDING TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:** Only 20,000 SF households (or 9%) meet the federal definition of poverty. (an annual income below \$26,500 for a family of four)



**IN REALITY:** Over 75,000 SF households (or 28%) do not make enough income to make ends meet. (Insight Center, 2021)

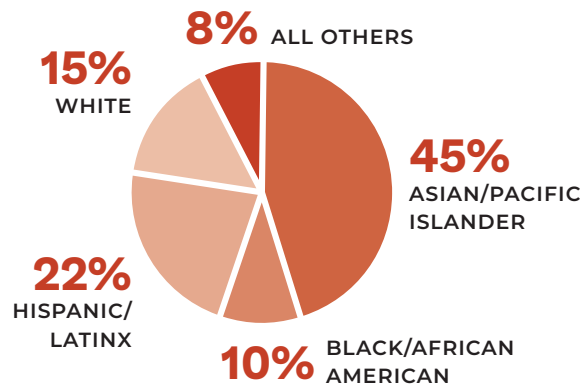
Federal standards don't account for variation in regional cost of living. Holistic estimates that factor in higher local costs for basic expenses, like housing, food, and child care, are more realistic.

## WHAT ABOUT RACE?

People who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) are almost twice as likely to live in poverty as White San Franciscans.

**48%** of San Franciscans living in poverty speak a primary language other than English.

SFHSA CLIENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Reflecting historic and ongoing structural racism, a disproportionate share of BIPOC San Franciscans face challenges meeting basic needs in this City.

**WE SERVE  
FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**



**Facing the high cost of living:**

Even in families with one or more working adults, almost 1 in 5 households in San Francisco cannot make ends meet.

**88%**

of children living in poverty are from BIPOC communities.

**67,000**

Number of families with children in San Francisco.

**50,000**

Number of children our Agency serves each year. That's 42% of children living in San Francisco.



## The fastest-growing

**age group:** The number of older adults is increasing at 3x the rate of the rest of the City population.



**100,000**  
Seniors

Almost 50% of the City's older adults are served by SFHSA each year.

**52%**

of older adults are immigrants and most speak a primary language other than English.

**1:4**

By 2025, one in four San Franciscans—250,000 people—will be age 60 or older.



**WE SERVE  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**



**Stereotypes, stigma, prejudice, and discrimination** are the most common barriers San Franciscans with disabilities report impeding their access to resources and opportunity.

**1 in 4**

Black/African American adults in San Francisco report a disability, underscoring how structural and institutional racism affects health.

NEARLY

**100,000**

**SAN FRANCISCANS** experience disabilities, with roughly 50,000 of them under age 65.

**47,000**

Number of people with disabilities served by SFHSA.





WE SERVE  
ADULTS WITH LOW INCOME

**60% of job seekers**

we work with remain employed  
two or more years later.



**38,000**

single adults in San  
Francisco live in poverty.

**14%**

The peak of our local  
unemployment rate  
during the pandemic  
—with workers in service  
industries hit the hardest.

(US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020)

**\$60,000**

Annual income a single  
adult needs to make ends  
meet in San Francisco;  
that's 72 hours/week in a  
minimum-wage job.

(Insight Center, 2021)



## A SENSE OF BELONGING

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

### OUR COMMITMENT

For us, advancing racial equity means ensuring that San Franciscans have both equitable access to and equitable outcomes in all of our programs, policies, and practices—no matter their race, ethnicity, age, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or immigration status. It means that, over time, we proactively reduce racial disparities among the people who call San Francisco home, through our programs and resources.

Reflecting complex and pervasive racial inequities,  
**over 80%**  
of the people we serve are from BIPOC communities.

Woven into everything we do is an opportunity to uplift communities and redress past and present inequities in policies and services delivered to the public, here in San Francisco and nationally.

#### Some ways we do this are:

- **COLLABORATING** with organizations deeply rooted within BIPOC communities
- **ANALYZING** community and program demographics to ensure we are effectively serving those who need our help the most
- **ADVOCATING** for policy changes to undo past wrongs and lower barriers to participate in our programs
- **PILOTING** new approaches that move the dial on structural inequity in community.

Our racial equity commitment also extends inward to create a culture of inclusion and belonging for our employees. We are engaging staff at all levels of our Agency in this work, building a common language and shared framework, so that we can effectively combat systemic racism and advance racial equity for both our staff and in community. This commitment is threaded throughout our goals and strategies we will pursue over the next five years.

# Where We're Headed

## FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

Over the next five years, we are focused on providing high quality and impactful services to reduce inequities of income, health, and wellness. Our work will help shape San Francisco's recovery from the COVID-19 emergency for years to come—and ensure that our staff and partners feel supported and successful along the way.



### 1 Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

Everyone has equitable access and outcomes across race, ethnicity, age, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, and neighborhood in all of our programs, services, and systems



### 2 Strong Workforce and Collaboration

Our staff and community partners feel supported, heard, valued, and connected to one another and our common mission



### 3 Employment and Economic Security

Everyone has a stable source of income and an opportunity to increase their economic well-being



### 4 Health and Well-being

Everyone has the food, shelter, healthcare, supportive services, and community connection to thrive



### 5 Safety and Care

Everyone is safe and connected in all stages of life, free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation



## GOAL 1

# Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

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Everyone has equitable access and outcomes across race, ethnicity, age, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigration status, and neighborhood in all of our programs, services, and systems.

SFHSA is uniquely poised to address issues of inequity and help individuals, families, and communities thrive. We strive to accomplish this not only through our programs and service approaches but also by advocating for equitable policies that remove barriers to resources and root out structural and institutional racism.

***“People will be more likely to seek mental health support if they are offered it by someone who understands their culture and that allows them to communicate their needs in the language they are most comfortable with.”***

– Older adult participant in one of our community-based services



## STRATEGIES

1. Reduce poverty, health, and wellness inequities through our programs, services, and policy advocacy.
2. Invest in initiatives to welcome and include all community members in San Francisco's social and civic life.
3. Encourage participation in our programs through data-informed and culturally appropriate outreach strategies, services, and spaces.
4. Take a holistic approach to connecting people and families to an array of programs and services to meet their unique circumstances.

## Leading to change that looks like:

- **Piloting innovative, community-directed strategies** to encourage and assist immigrants to participate in all of the benefits they're entitled to receive.
- Creating the nation's first City-funded **Disability Cultural Community Center**.
- **Partnering with local and state agencies** to remove poverty out of the definition of child endangerment and reduce racial disparities in child welfare involvement.
- **Launching the DAS Benefits and Resource Hub**—our one-stop shop for connection to aging and disability resources—and our network of community-run **Aging and Disability Resource Centers** located in each supervisorial district to reach the City's diverse older adults and people with disabilities.



**Over 2,000**  
SFHSA clients have visited  
museums for free/low-cost  
through San Francisco's  
Museums for All, which we  
helped develop in an effort  
to make the City's cultural  
attractions affordable to all.

## GOAL 2

# Strong Workforce and Collaboration

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Our staff and community partners feel supported, heard, valued, and connected to one another and our common mission.

Our Agency's work is made possible through the dedication and hard work of our staff and community partners. Drawing on their professional and personal lived experience, they bring invaluable expertise to their work.

***“We are the bridge; we provide the services. We cannot do this without City support. We couldn't do this without San Francisco's support.”***

– Aurora Alvarado, Program Director  
for Healthy Aging & Disability Services  
at Mission Neighborhood Center





## STRATEGIES

1. Ensure staff at all levels represent the diverse communities we serve and provide equitable opportunities for growth and advancement.
2. Train and support staff so that they can provide high-quality services.
3. Partner with organizations with deep roots in the community to develop and provide culturally appropriate services.
4. Facilitate interagency partnerships and research to advance systems-level change.

## Leading to change that looks like:

- **New hiring practices** that actively recruit from community, require racially diverse interview panels, and ask equity-focused questions in interviews.
- **Community-directed meal and grocery programs** in a variety of cultural cuisines developed during the pandemic and sustained in partnership with grassroots organizations.
- The **Age- and Disability-Friendly SF Task Force** spanning departments, service systems, and sectors to improve our City systems and spaces for older adults and people with disabilities.



**\$148M** invested in community-directed resources to support and engage people in the places they live and feel comfortable accessing help.

## GOAL 3

# Employment and Economic Security

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Everyone has a stable source of income and an opportunity to increase economic well-being.

It takes a lot to make it in San Francisco. To help people reach their goals, SFHSA offers a variety of employment and financial assistance resources tailored to distinct population needs. We're continuously exploring ways to support the economic well-being of communities that have been excluded from opportunity.

***“Most places don’t offer you the type of support JobsNOW! does. Everybody was supportive and helpful. If you needed help with something, they were willing to help you and teach you.”***

– JobsNOW! Program Participant







## STRATEGIES

1. Provide training, education, and wage subsidies to help people enter and advance in the workforce, particularly groups historically left out of the labor market or under-employed.
2. Ensure individuals and families receive all financial assistance available to them.
3. Develop and scale resources in innovative strategies to promote economic well-being.
4. Advocate to reform and expand public benefits so more people are eligible and able to reach economic stability.



## Leading to change that looks like:

- Employment help for San Franciscans looking for work, including the **ReServe** program tailored for older people and adults with disabilities and our nationally-recognized **JobsNOW!** program that provides wage subsidies to incentivize employers to hire our clients.
- Our **SSI Advocacy** team of on-staff clinicians, physicians, and case managers that support people with disabilities every step of the way to get Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.
- Support for youth transitioning out of foster care to build the skills for adulthood through the **Independent Living Skills** program.
- Helping the State redesign **CalWORKs** to prioritize a more empowering approach where families set and achieve their own goals, at their own pace, while our social workers offer a variety of intentional supports to help them along the road to economic stability.

Every year we help  
**over 5,000**  
**jobseekers**  
with education, and training,  
and finding good jobs.

## GOAL 4

# Health and Well-being

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Everyone has the food, shelter, healthcare, supportive services, and community connection to thrive.

Nutritious food, affordable healthcare, social connection, and stable housing are essential for everyone to reach their potential. The programs and resources provided by our staff and community help people holistically meet their needs.

We provide

**over 130,000**  
San Franciscans with meals,  
groceries, and CalFresh's  
flexible food funds.





## STRATEGIES

1. Increase access to CalFresh and community-based programs that provide healthy, nutritious, and culturally preferred food.
2. Facilitate access to Medi-Cal, behavioral health services, and other programs that support physical and mental wellness.
3. Coordinate a network of community support to foster meaningful connections, refer people to resources, and reduce isolation.
4. Help people live safely and stably in the community through linkages to home care and housing support services.



## Leading to change that looks like:

- **Medi-Cal expansions** that improve access to healthcare for undocumented San Franciscans and extend enrollment for parents with low income who have recently given birth.
- Connecting children, youth, and families in the child welfare system to the City's **Foster Care Mental Health system**.
- **LGBTQ Care Navigation**, offering peer support, social programs to enhance emotional and behavioral well-being, and help navigating systems of care for isolated older and disabled people who identify as LGBTQ.
- Housing-related supports to help a variety of populations through programs such as the **Housing and Disability Advocacy Program**, which links people with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness to supportive housing while helping them apply for disability benefits.

***“A senior center gives you a life. You don’t just have to sit at home. It gives you a place to go, health classes, activities, scripture, singing, sewing—it is just a blessing.”***

- Older adult participant in one of our community-based services

## GOAL 5

# Safety and Care

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Everyone is safe and connected in all stages of life, free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We take seriously our role in addressing abuse, neglect, and exploitation. We work hard to support the stability of children, older people, and adults with disabilities. Everyone deserves to be happy, safe, and secure.

We help  
**over 250**  
**children** in foster care  
reunify with their families or  
find another safe and stable  
home each year.





## STRATEGIES

1. Prevent children from experiencing abuse, neglect, and trauma by supporting families early on, and redressing disproportionate involvement in the child welfare system based on race, income, and other areas of bias.
2. Assure safe and stable homes for children who enter foster care by holistically supporting caregivers and by prioritizing family reunification, family home settings, and children staying in San Francisco.
3. Ensure dignity and maximize independence of older people and adults with disabilities facing heightened risk of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

## Leading to change that looks like:

- **Family Resource Centers** providing culturally appropriate parenting resources and help with housing, substance use, and other needs so families can support their children to thrive.
- Our multi-year **campaign to increase resource families** in San Francisco so that children in foster care remain close to their community.
- **Initiatives to prevent and address scams and financial exploitation** of older adults and adults with disabilities, led by Adult Protective Services in partnership with the local justice system, state agencies, and community-based organizations.



***“What motivates me the most about my work is that I’m surrounded by dedicated social workers and supervisors who are hitting the streets and going to people’s homes to help investigate and intervene in cases of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It’s great to be in a place that always tries to say ‘yes, we can help’.”***

– Ben Seisdodos, Program Analyst,  
Adult Protective Services



LEARN MORE

# Connect with Us

Together with you, our staff, partners, and communities, we will keep striving to ensure all San Franciscans have what they need to reach their full potential.

Visit us at [www.SFHSA.org](http://www.SFHSA.org)

Engage with us on social media:  
[@sfhumanservices](https://www.instagram.com/sfhumanservices)





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