Recommendations to Improve the Experience of LGBT Residents in Shelters

General Recommendations:

1. The City should continue its efforts and remove all obstacles in creating the City's first LGBT homeless shelter and should pursue augmenting the number of beds available based on need.

2. The City should explore creating LGBT youth shelter, transitional, and long term supported housing and connect youth to appropriate services.

3. The City should create 24 hour designated staffed safe spaces for LGBT youth.

Specific Recommendations to Shelters:

4. The Board of Supervisors should pass an ordinance requiring that all city funded shelters, transitional and long term housing staff undergo comprehensive annual LGBT, in particular transgender, cultural competency training. The training should be provided in English and Spanish and other necessary languages. It is recommended that the training be provided by the HSA to ensure uniformity.

5. Department of Human Services amend its “Shelter Training Manual for San Francisco Single-Adult Shelters” to include a comprehensive section in English and Spanish and other necessary languages on LGBT, in particular transgender, cultural competency.

6. The Board of Supervisors should amend Chapter 20 of the SF Administrative Code to require all city funded shelters to post signs in the general shelter area that indicate that Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender people are welcome and that mistreatment/harassment based on LGBT status will not be tolerated.

7. Shelters should increase efforts to raise transgender awareness with residents without using discipline. During orientation shelter staff must verbally tell all

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1 Chapter 20 of the Administrative Code already requires annual mandatory training. “In consultation with the San Francisco department of Public Health, provide annual all-staff mandatory trainings, appropriate for each shelter position, that address ... the following topics: cultural humility, including sensitivity training regarding homelessness, the lesbian, bisexual gay, and transgender communities, people with visible and invisible disabilities, youth, women, and trauma victims.” Note that this training is mixed together with training regarding, disaster emergency, disease prevention, job burnout, so it’s unlikely that much time is spent on LGBT issues.
incoming clients the following: “This shelter respects transgender, lesbian, gay and bisexual residents. No harassment of other residents is allowed.” Shelter residents should be encouraged to watch videos on transgender cultural competency currently used to train shelter staff.

8. Shelter Monitoring Committee should devise tools for tracking complaints based on demographics, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

9. Amend Shelter Monitoring Committee Complaint Form to include the following question
   Is your complaint related to being discriminated against because of your (check all that apply)
   - Age
   - Disability
   - Gender
   - National Origin
   - Race
   - Religion
   - Sexual Orientation (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual)
   - Transgender status

10. Add the following question to the Shelter Monitoring Committee written survey

    Do you feel discriminated against because of your age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or transgender status?

11. Shelter Monitoring Committee should modify inspection forms to ensure that staff is in compliance with Chapter 20 Standards of Care.

12. Add the following question to the Shelter Monitoring Committee’s Staff Interview Form

    Has staff received training on creating safety for transgender, lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients?

13. Add the following question to the Shelter Monitoring Inspection Form

    Is there a sign that states that the shelter respects LGBT residents?

14. HSA and DPH should take all steps necessary to ensure that transgender people have shelter beds, showers, bathrooms which correspond to their gender identity.