



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**MAYOR LONDON BREED ANNOUNCES \$9 MILLION IN
STATE FUNDING TO SERVE SURVIVORS OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**

San Francisco is the only recipient of a grant from the California Department of Social Services to provide services to youth survivors of commercial sexual exploitation

San Francisco, CA — Mayor London N. Breed, along with service providers, today announced that San Francisco has received a \$9.3 million grant from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide housing and services for San Francisco youth who are survivors or at risk of human trafficking, specifically commercial sexual exploitation (CSE). Youth at risk of CSE can include youth who are homeless or who are involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. The grant will allow several organizations to develop a model of care that offers a continuum of housing placement options and services for those youth. San Francisco is the only county in the State to receive funding for the 3-year pilot program.

“Any young person who is homeless or experiencing exploitation in our streets is one too many. We must do better in San Francisco,” said Mayor Breed. “This funding will allow us to develop programs and provide services that help our most vulnerable residents and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation, and prevent chronic homelessness in our City.”

Human trafficking is a serious issue throughout California and in San Francisco. In 2017, 22 public and non-profit agencies in the Mayor's Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking identified 673 cases of human trafficking in San Francisco. 55% of those trafficking cases were in commercial sex. The Task Force determined that at least 307 youth reported experiencing exploitation in the commercial sex industries in San Francisco. 33% of all persons trafficked in commercial sex were minors and 50% were youth between 18 and 24 years old. 70% of survivors of human trafficking in San Francisco are people of color.

The San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, Freedom Forward, and Huckleberry co-authored the grant application to the CDSS. The other grant partners include the San Francisco Human Services Agency (HSA), Larkin Street Youth Services, Family Builders, WestCoast Children's Clinic, Edgewood Center for Children and Families, Claire's House, Learning for Action, and the UC Berkeley Human Rights Center.

Senator Scott Wiener and Assemblymember Phil Ting authored letters of support for the grant, and Assemblymember David Chiu was part of San Francisco's efforts to establish the Mayor's Task Force on Anti-Human Trafficking.



“This grant will ensure that our homeless youth can receive additional support so they can be housed and access vital services,” said Senator Scott Wiener (D-San Francisco). “It is shameful to see so many of our youth struggling. LGBTQ homeless youth also make up 40% of homeless youth, making our community more susceptible to commercial sexual exploitation. I am thankful to Mayor Breed and the coalition of service providers for coming together to address this critical issue.”

“Supportive services are key to helping young victims of human trafficking heal from their trauma and move on with their lives. This State and local partnership aims to strengthen that care system, and it is my hope that successes from San Francisco’s pilot program help us determine how else to direct State funding to make the most impact on survivors,” said Assemblymember Phil Ting (D-San Francisco), Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee.

“Commercial sexual exploitation is a devastating reality for hundreds of youth in San Francisco,” said Assemblymember David Chiu (D-San Francisco). “With this new funding, we can break this heartbreaking cycle of exploitation and poverty and give youth safe and stable homes with wrap around services.”

Over the past several years, this group of partner organizations has laid the groundwork for serving youth in San Francisco. The Huckleberry Advocacy and Response Team, funded by HSA, has provided crucial crisis response and case management to youth since 2016. Other organizations have provided necessary emergency shelter, case management, healthcare services, and job training. This grant will allow San Francisco to build off this existing network of service providers and expand housing options and other services available to youth who have experienced or are at risk of CSE.

As part of the collaborative, Larkin Street Youth Services and Huckleberry Youth Programs will provide youth with immediate safety from the streets and will help them explore their options for a more stable housing situation. This grant will also create a youth-designed drop-in center, hosted by Freedom Forward, so that youth can access services in a user-friendly and welcoming environment.

“From our pioneering Huckleberry Advocacy and Response Team, we know youth do best when they define safety, healing, and success on their own terms. This grant will allow us to meet youth where they are,” said Douglas Styles, Executive Director of Huckleberry Youth Programs.

Claire’s House in Oakland and Edgewood Center for Children and Families in San Francisco will provide housing to youth who are ready for a longer-term housing situation, but not yet ready for a foster family placement. Freedom Forward, in partnership with Family Builders, WestCoast Children’s Clinic, and Huckleberry Youth Programs, will create a new model of family-based foster care for teens that nurtures connections with loved ones and provides mental health services.

“We know youth—like everyone else—thrive when they are connected to the people and community they care most about, something our City has struggled to create for the youth in our



foster system,” said Alia Whitney-Johnson, Executive Director of Freedom Forward. “This grant will enable us to reimagine the way we support these teens and the adults in their lives, so they can maintain loving relationships, access the professional services they choose, and pursue a life that brings them joy.”

Learning for Action will conduct an evaluation of all the elements of the placement and service programs, except for the family-based foster care pilot. The UC Berkeley Human Rights Center will evaluate the family-based foster care pilot program.

“San Francisco is proud to be a statewide pioneer in this work,” said Dr. Emily Murase, Director of the Department on the Status of Women. “With a rigorous evaluation, this pilot can be replicated across the state and the nation.”

Grant partners will begin providing housing placement and services in winter 2019.

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