



Application for 2017-2018 Term

Do you have an opinion about how your City makes decisions that affect you and your friends?

Do you want to be involved with youth representation at City Hall?

Join the San Francisco Youth Commission!

Due Friday, April 21st by 6pm (if submitting in person)

Or Sunday, April 23rd (if submitting by email, fax, google form)

To complete this application electronically, use the following url:

<http://tinyurl.com/ycapp2017>

San Francisco Youth Commission

City Hall, Room 345

1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl

San Francisco, CA 94102

Phone: (415) 554-6446

Fax: (415) 554-6140

Email: youthcom@sfgov.org

www.sfgov.org/yc

Please refer questions to:

Adele Failes-Carpenter or Leah LaCroix, Youth Commission Staff

Phone: (415) 554-6446

Email: youthcom@sfgov.org

APPLICATION FOR 2017-2018 TERM

Who We Are:

The Youth Commission is a group of 17 San Franciscans between the ages of 12 and 23. Each member of the Board of Supervisors appoints one Youth Commissioner, and the Mayor appoints six more.



What We Do:

Our job, which was created by the voters of San Francisco and makes us accountable to the whole City, is to stand up for the needs of all young people in the policy and legislative debates at City Hall.



Whether it comes to MUNI, housing, education, juvenile justice or health and wellness, we serve as authentic advisors on youth issues to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor. (See the next page for some examples of our recent work.)

We read laws, talk to Supervisors and the Mayor Office, hold discussions with other young people in our communities, organize events and hearings, do research on policy and write resolutions.

How We Do It:

Youth Commissioners can influence government in a number of ways:

The Youth Commission must consider any proposed law that would affect young people and decide whether or not the proposed law would be good for young people. Youth Commissioners then have opportunity to convince lawmakers to pass or reject the proposed law.



Youth Commissioners can develop their own policies and laws relating to young people and try to convince the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to pass them.

When:

The Youth Commission is a serious time commitment and has a minimum time requirement of 15 hours per month.

There are full commission meetings that you are required to attend twice a month. Each commissioner also serves on an issue-based committee, which meets twice a month, and commissioners attend meetings and events in their communities as well.

Do I Need Previous Experience?

No! Anybody can be a Youth Commissioner! The only requirements are that you live in San Francisco and be between the ages of 12 and 23 when you are appointed. Youth commissioners should also be passionate about youth and community issues—about the decisions the City makes that affect you and your friends!

Do I Get Paid?

No—the City Charter doesn't allow Youth Commissioners to be paid. However, you can receive health care.

What Will I Learn?

All Youth Commissioners get the chance to develop their leadership and advocacy skills! Youth commissioners receive training on: legislative advocacy, community organizing, public speaking, power & oppression, social justice history, understanding City government and the City's budget. Being a youth commissioner is a great way to serve your community, learn about politics, and grow your leadership as a principled and effective community advocate.



RECENT EXAMPLES OF OUR WORK



Free MUNI Fast Passes for low- and moderate-income youth

In February 2010, MUNI planned to raise the price of the Youth Fast Pass to \$30/month at the same time as San Francisco students were experiencing cut-backs to yellow school bus service.

After first working to get a limited number of discounted passes approved, the Youth Commission worked with community-based organizations to advocate for Free MUNI for San Francisco Youth.

In 2012, MUNI's Board of Directors approved a 16-month pilot that would provide 40,000 eligible youth free bus passes beginning in March 2013. In 2014, the program was made permanent!

Over 35,000 low- and moderate-income San Francisco youth can now take transit for free!

Lowering the Voting Age to 16

Youth commissioners adopted a resolution calling for the voting age in municipal and school district elections to be lowered to 16 in San Francisco.

Youth ages 16 and 17 can drive cars, work, pay taxes, drive, and otherwise held to adult standards, but can't directly participate in the decisions that affect our lives by voting! As some in our country seek to limit the political participation of young people and communities of color, we want to expand the electorate in San Francisco and have the ideas of youth front and center when it comes to dreaming up solutions for our City!



Working for the rights of youth in the juvenile justice system



Members of the Youth Commission's youth justice committee have worked on several initiatives aimed at protecting the rights of justice-system involved youth.

Youth commissioners have promoted a restorative and rehabilitative approach to juvenile justice by advocating for full access to the recreation yard at juvenile hall.

They have advocated against the arming of juvenile probation officers with firearms and for police training on youth-police interactions to promote better understanding and the use of de-escalation techniques.

Working with youth with incarcerated parents

Since 2014, Youth Commissioners have partnered with youth advocates to highlight and address the needs of youth with incarcerated parents. In 2014, they helped hold a hearing at the Board of Supervisors Neighborhood Services and Safety committee. In 2015, they advocated to successfully change the visiting age in county jails so that 16 and 17 year olds can visit their incarcerated parents.

Standing up for the needs of undocumented youth

Since 2012, youth commissioners worked with City and community partners to expand workforce development programs for undocumented immigrant youth. In 2015, youth commissioners successfully advocated for City funding for a grant to cover application fees for youth applying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).

Advocating for Transitional Age Youth

Youth commissioners have consistently advocated for the needs of disconnected TAY ages 16-24, including TAY inclusion in the new Children & Youth Fund, and the establishment of a TAY housing plan and resources for homeless TAY.

HOW TO APPLY

The application process and timeline for the 2017-2018 term are as follows:

- Fill out the attached application (i.e., personal information, applicant agreement, and essay questions) and turn it in to the Youth Commission (by fax, email, regular mail or in person). **The application is due by Friday, April 21st by 6pm (for hard copies) or by Sunday, April 23rd (for electronically submitted copies).**
- Come in for an interview with Youth Commission staff and youth commissioners. **Exact dates and times will be announced after you turn in your application.**
- The Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office might ask you to come in and do their own interviews. **You are welcome to contact the Mayor and the Board yourself!** Just ask us how.
- The Youth Commission makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office of who to appoint to the commission. **Ultimately, the members of the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor choose who to appoint to the Youth Commission.**
- **In some cases, appointing officials may appoint a currently-sitting youth commissioner for a second term. We understand the process can be a bit confusing, and so we encourage you to contact our office if you have questions. We hope the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors make their appointments by mid-June 2017 (or soon thereafter).**
- The 2017-2018 Youth Commission term begins at the Beginning of the Year Retreat in September 2017.

IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE

The Youth Commission is a serious time commitment.

If appointed, in addition to the required 15 hours per month described on the "Basic Information" page above, youth commissioners are required:

(1) To attend a 2.5 day retreat Friday evening + all day Saturday and Sunday September 1-3, 2017 (Labor Day Weekend).

(2) To attend all of a full, two-day "mid year" retreat Saturday and Sunday, January 13-14, 2018 (Before the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday)

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name _____

Address _____

Zip Code _____ Supervisorial District (look it up [here](#)) _____

Email _____

Cell Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Birthday _____ Age _____

Additional optional information:

Ethnicity and/or Race:

Languages spoken: _____

Sexual orientation: _____

Gender: _____

If you are or will be in school, what school will you attend in the fall of 2017?

Please list all other schools you have gone to:

What communities do you feel connected to?

*(Examples: Gay, Lesbian, Transgender, Disabled, Homeless, Teen Parent, Low-Income, Irish American)
Remember: you are not limited to these choices. Feel free to add your own.*

How did you learn about the Youth Commission?

APPLICANT AGREEMENT

Please initial next to the statement(s) you agree with.

I, _____,
(Print name)

Certify that:

_____The information provided in this application is accurate and I have made every attempt to answer all questions truthfully and to the fullest extent possible.

_____I have reviewed the application and the required dates for the 2017-2018 Youth Commission term and understand that the 15 hour a month requirement is mandatory.

_____I understand that this year's Orientation Retreat will be held on Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday, September 1-3, 2017, and that my attendance is required on *all* days. I also understand that there will be additional days of training on Saturday and Sunday, January 14 & 15, 2018—and that all of these days are required.

_____I certify that I understand that the Youth Commission office only gathers applicant information, interviews applicants, and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office for appointment consideration, but does not make appointment decisions. Ultimately, the members of the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor will choose who they will appoint to the Youth Commission. (If you have any questions about the application and appointment process, please contact Youth Commission staff at 415.554.6446)

Print Name_____

Signature_____

Date_____

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Why do you want to be a Youth Commissioner? What is something unique about yourself that you want to bring to the Youth Commission?
 2. What are some issues that affect you or your community? If you had a meeting with the Mayor or a member of the Board of Supervisors tomorrow, what would you talk about with them and advise them on?
 3. What are some past accomplishments that you are proud of?
 4. The Youth Commission requires a commitment of at least 15 hours a month. In order to truly make an impact, it is often necessary to go beyond that minimum commitment. What other commitments do you have during the school year and in what ways are you prepared to dedicate time to meet the Commission's goals?
 5. What do you hope to learn while being on the Youth Commission?
 6. Please provide a letter of recommendation—a few paragraphs are sufficient—from someone not in your family (for example, a teacher, counselor, probation officer, etc.) regarding your work. *THIS IS OPTIONAL*. If you can't get or don't want to submit a letter of recommendation, please explain why.
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The application is due Friday, April 21st if dropping off in person, or

Sunday, April 23rd if sending via email, fax, or google form.

If submitting via email, PDF format is preferred.

Submit application in person, by fax, regular mail, email, or carrier pigeon to:

San Francisco Youth Commission
City Hall, room 345
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Pl.
San Francisco, CA 94102
Fax: (415) 554-6140
Phone: (415) 554-6446
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