



Emily M. Murase, PhD
Executive Director

City and County of San Francisco
Department on the Status of Women



Edwin M. Lee
Mayor

**Gender Analysis of Nontraditional Occupations in the City and County of San Francisco Workforce
January 2017**

Highlights: Public Safety

Background:

- In the 1970s, a lawsuit brought by Officers for Justice, later joined by the U.S. Department of Justice, alleged that the San Francisco Police Department engaged in a pattern of employment discrimination based on race, sex, and national origin.
 - The lawsuit was settled by a consent decree in 1979, which required the City to employ good faith efforts to achieve particular goals for the employment of women and minorities in the Police Department and prohibited the use of hiring practices that had an adverse impact on women and minorities unless the City proved they were valid.
 - During the consent decree period, 1979-1998, the percentage of minorities nearly tripled, and the percentage of women quadrupled in the City police force.
- Citing unlawful discrimination on the basis of race in the Fire Department, there were multiple class-action suits filed against the City and County of San Francisco beginning in the 1970s that culminated in a 1988 lawsuit. Additional individuals and organizations later joined as plaintiffs, adding claims for unlawful discrimination on the basis of gender.
 - As a result of the lawsuit, a consent decree was imposed on the Fire Department in 1988 that mandated a 40% minority and 10% female workforce.
 - The Fire Department then embarked on a major overhaul of entrance and promotional exams, and women entered the ranks of lieutenant, captain, and battalion chief.

City Progress:

- Women comprise 24% of all employment in San Francisco public safety departments. Although 24% is far from parity, many women and minorities have entered public safety occupations within the last 30 years.
- Currently, women hold or recently held chief positions in most of San Francisco's public safety departments including Adult Probation, Fire, Emergency Management, Police, and Sheriff. There is also at least one woman at the command level in each of these public safety departments.
- Given efforts to implement community-policing models around the country, female applicants may be more successful when measures of interpersonal, communication, and dispute resolution skills play a central role in evaluating a potential officer's effectiveness.
- Fire Chief Joanne Hayes-White reported in 2014 that the Fire Department was 52% minorities and 16% women, a marked improvement from 20 years ago and one of the highest proportions of women nationally. By comparison, New York Fire Department is less than 1% and the national average is just 5%.
- The U.S. Department of Labor selected the San Francisco Fire Department to participate in the study "Promising Practices for Increasing Diversity Among First Responders." The Fire Department's selection was attributed to its noteworthy diversity statistics, which are among the top 5 in the nation.

Recommendations:

- Publicly acknowledge women who perform strongly on academy and promotional exams.
- Schedule more than one woman on a shift at a time rather than spreading them out to avoid isolation.
- Expand cross unit training and rotations for female officers so they are exposed to different fields and become more competitive in promotions.
- Develop childcare options for overnight and weekend shifts.