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COMMISSION ADOPTS DEPARTMENT OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY’S REVISIONS TO THE DISCIPLINARY MATRIX FOR POLICE MISCONDUCT

SAN FRANCISCO – On September 11, 2019, the San Francisco Police Commission adopted revisions to the disciplinary matrix that it uses to categorize officer misconduct and impose disciplinary consequences. This revision, the first since 1994, provides for more accountability and consistency in the discipline process. It also increases transparency by better identifying the nature and type of misconduct brought before the Commission.

President of the Police Commission Bob Hirsch oversaw the yearlong effort to negotiate these revisions and said, “I’m proud of the effort that went into creating this new disciplinary Matrix, which is tough on serious violations and allows for leniency when minor mistakes are made.”

DPA Director Paul Henderson supported the Commission’s efforts, saying, “this new matrix reflects the DPA’s current focus on biased policing, discrimination, and sexual misconduct, and it supports the DPA’s commitment to transparency. With more than 100 new violation codes to identify misconduct, the DPA will have more tools to demonstrate its work to the public.”

The new disciplinary matrix is a product of a year-long collaborative effort between the Police Commission, SFPD, and DPA. Under the new matrix, the Commission can consider up to seven years of an officer’s disciplinary history when considering aggravating factors in favor of additional discipline. In addition, the new matrix better identifies and prohibits biased policing and discrimination, and it allows DPA or SFPD to seek harsher discipline for improper discrimination or sexual misconduct.

Finally, the new disciplinary matrix expands transparency by allowing the public to better understand the nature and type of misconduct before the Commission. For the past twenty years, the SFPD and DPA used seven or less broad codes to identify misconduct. The new matrix uses over 100 codes. These new codes are far more specific about the nature and type of misconduct at issue and give the public more information about the types of cases being sustained by the SFPD and DPA.

The disciplinary matrix will now proceed to the meet and confer process with the San Francisco Police Officer’s Association for review and comment.