

# JUSTICE IS CALLING

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THE FINANCIAL  
JUSTICE PROJECT  
SAN FRANCISCO

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*How San Francisco Made Jail Phone Calls Free,  
Ended Commissary Markups, and Stopped Generating  
Revenue From Incarcerated People and Their Families*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**On June 12, 2019, San Francisco Mayor London Breed announced that San Francisco would become the first county in the United States to make county jail phone calls free and end the markup of commissary items in the jail store.** San Francisco came to this decision after examining the [significant financial drain on low-income families](#) of high-cost phone calls and store items, and the effect of this financial drain on family connectedness and reentry. The majority of people who exit the criminal justice system will reside with family after their release, and [families play a major role in determining success during reentry](#). The high cost of jail phone calls and store items is an impediment to maintaining meaningful contact between family members, and [research](#) has shown that incarcerated individuals who maintain contact with their families have lower recidivism rates.

The revenues collected from phone calls and commissary items support jail programs and services in San Francisco. But these revenues are unreliable, unsustainable, and unethical. Furthermore, revenue from phone calls was declining and unstable, and the Sheriff's Office concluded that there were more cost-effective ways to contract with communications providers. The San Francisco Mayor's Office, Sheriff's Office, The Financial Justice Project, and the San Francisco Jail Justice Coalition worked together to explore ways to stop generating revenue for jail operations off the backs of low-income individuals and families. Together, we concluded that:

- Phone call and jail store commissary costs are a significant economic drain on low-income people and people of color. In San Francisco, if someone made two 15-minute phone calls a day, it would have typically cost \$300 over 70 days (the average jail stay) or \$1,500 over the course of the year. Commissary items—such as toothpaste, deodorant, and ramen—were marked

up an average of 43%.

- San Francisco's marked up prices for jail phone calls and jail store items extracted \$1.7 million from local low-income communities.
- Phone calls and commissary costs disproportionately drained resources from communities of color, particularly women of color.
- Research shows that increased communication between incarcerated people and their loved ones improves reentry outcomes after release.
- By requiring incarcerated people's support networks to generate funding for reentry services, the City was shifting core operational responsibilities onto low-income communities.

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**“ What hurt me most was the burden that fell on my family. I'm the bread giver for my family but my pride made it difficult to call home simply because I knew they would have to pay for the call.”**

**– Paul Briley, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children and All of Us or None**

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To make these initial reforms permanent, and ensure San Francisco never generates revenue from other products and services for incarcerated people, in June 2020, San Francisco Supervisors Sandra Lee Fewer and Shamann Walton introduced the [People Over Profits ordinance](#). This first-in-the-nation ordinance was passed unanimously by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and ensures San Francisco cannot generate revenue on future products and services for incarcerated people and their families.

All jail phone calls became free on August 10, 2020. Overnight, there was a 41 percent increase in the number of phone calls per person. Compared to August 2019, incarcerated people are now spending 81 percent more time in communication with their support networks, and incarcerated people and their families are now saving more than \$1.1 million annually. To provide free phone calls, the Sheriff's Office negotiated a first-in-the-nation fixed rate contract with GTL, a jail phone service contractor, to ensure the lowest possible cost to the City and taxpayers.

We are proud of the reform that we have achieved in San Francisco. We believe that county governments should not raise money for jail operations from incarcerated people and their families. We hope that

this report will be helpful for other jurisdictions that are considering eliminating high-cost phone calls and store items in county jails.

**“ Equity across the board is a great accomplishment. We look forward to making sure we operate without placing a burden on the backs of incarcerated people and their loved ones.”**

**– Sheriff Paul Miyamoto,  
San Francisco Sheriff's Office**

# BIG PICTURE:

## How Corporations and Government Partners Generate Profits from Jail Phone Calls, Commissary, and Other Products and Services



Presently, local California governments contract with private companies to provide phone services and commissary items to individuals in county jails. Charging high fees for jail phone calls and commissary items is common across the country. This practice generates funds for county jail operations and nets large profits for the corporations that jails contract with. In addition to

marking up the price of phone calls, county jails also charge incarcerated individuals for key necessities, such as toothpaste, soap, and deodorant, that are sold in jail stores, called commissaries. The county jails set the price for these items higher than the purchase price from the vendor, taking a commission on each product sold.

### How Government and Corporations Profit from Jail Phone Calls and Commissary



The jail and prison communications industry has grown to a [\\$1.2 billion](#) a year business, dominated by a few corporations and has come under increased scrutiny in recent years by the criminal justice reform community. This predatory industry offers an array of other communications services to jails and prisons—including video conferencing, tablets, and other services.

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**“It’s horrible. Not being able to call your children, or not being able to have the support of your parents—my father died when I was in jail. I couldn’t call. It makes you feel lonely, it makes you feel isolated... It’s a horrible feeling—you feel like you have no support.”**

**– Mary Vandigriff, Community Housing Partnership**

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# HOW THIS PRACTICE SHOWS UP IN CALIFORNIA:

## Counties’ Use of Inmate Welfare Funds



As mandated by [Penal Code Section 4025](#), funds collected from commissary store sales, phone, and video communications in California jails are deposited into county “Inmate Welfare Funds” (IWF). IWFs were originally required to be used solely for the benefit, education, and welfare of incarcerated individuals. Amendments to statutory language governing the expenditure of inmate welfare funds have expanded the permissible use of these funds by changing “solely” to “primarily,” opening up the opportunity for Sheriffs to use the funds for purposes beyond the scope of the fund’s original intent.

Some Sheriff’s departments argue that decreasing the amount of money in the Inmate Welfare Funds (IWFs) will hurt incarcerated people because it could reduce funding for jail services, such as religious, educational, skills development, and other programs. In San Francisco, county and community stakeholders concluded that relying on incarcerated people and their families, almost all of whom have low incomes, to fund any jail services was unethical and counterproductive.

Furthermore, an analysis of County Inmate Welfare Funds across the state conducted by California advocacy organizations showed that:

- **Many county IWFs are operating with surplus, which suggests that many counties can actually reduce funding into these accounts without cutting programs in their jails.** At the end of FY 2016, the Los Angeles County IWF had a balance of \$29,908,212. Revenue Sources were reported as: 39 percent from phone commissions (PCS as the contracted vendor providing services) and 49 percent from Commissary (Keefe as the contracted vendor providing services).
- **Counties are spending IWF funds on expenses that don’t appear to be primarily for the benefit and welfare of incarcerated people.** For example, expenditure reports from the San Bernardino County IWF for FY 2018 showed that the largest expenditure from the fund during the fiscal year was for salaries, totaling \$2,644,252.

Expenditures on education, training, health, and welfare for incarcerated people totaled \$240,663. At the end of the FY 2018, the Kern County IWF had a balance of \$5,416,949. The

itemized expenditures from this fund showed negligible spending for the benefit or welfare of incarcerated individuals.

# THE PRE-REFORM PICTURE IN SAN FRANCISCO



**Payments for jail phone calls and commissary markups funded jail services—but at high costs to incarcerated people and their families.**

## Cost of Phone Calls

Previously, for an incarcerated person who made two calls daily at \$2.10 per 15-minute call, the total cost over a 70-day period (the average length of stay in FY 2017–2018) was typically \$294. For people whose incarceration exceeded one year, the annual cost of two daily calls was approximately \$1,500.

In 2016, the Sheriff’s Office had negotiated a contract to reduce the price of a 15-minute call from \$2.75 to \$2.10. Prior to this change, an incarcerated person and their family paid \$385 for two calls daily over a 70-day period. Based on a survey of phone rates by the [Prison Policy Institute](#), San Francisco’s rates and commissions are significantly lower than those in other counties.

## Cost of Commissary

Incarcerated people often purchase items in the commissary jail store, such as stationary, stamps, soup, coffee, rice and beans, and hygiene items. Items in the San Francisco jail store were marked up an average of 43%, and incarcerated people have stated they often have to choose between paying for phone calls and purchasing items in the jail store. For example, previously:

- Reading glasses cost \$8.00
- Shoes cost \$30.00
- Deodorant cost \$3.50
- Instant coffee cost \$5.25
- Refried beans cost \$3.00
- Top Ramen cost \$1.08
- Tuna cost \$3.10
- Sausage cost \$1.65



**“ As a formerly incarcerated woman, I often had to make the choice of whether I could afford a phone call home that month or whether I wouldn’t call and make sure that my family had enough to pay the bills while taking care of my children. This is a huge win for SF.”**

– Amika Mota, Young Women’s Freedom Center

The price markups were generated as revenue for the Sheriff's Office, through the Inmate Welfare Fund. In San Francisco, the Inmate Welfare Fund provided funding for jail services, including legal services, programming, and other goods and services for incarcerated people. At the end of FY 2016, the San Francisco Inmate Welfare Fund had a balance of \$2,155,848.

### Earlier Reforms in San Francisco

San Francisco Sheriff's Office is a national leader in innovative efforts to ease the reentry of people who are released from jail into their communities and is committed to reentry services that reduce recidivism. Since 2014, the Sheriff's Office has reduced the cost of phone calls by 52 percent.

The San Francisco Sheriff Office's own experience shows that when the cost of calling decreases, call volumes increase. In 2016, the Sheriff's Office

negotiated a contract to reduce the price of a 15-minute call from \$2.75 to \$2.10. Following this reduction in cost, as expected, call volumes increased by 30 percent.

**“ These practices are predatory and disproportionately affect poor people. Reducing the financial burdens of phone fees for incarcerated people will allow them to stay better connected with their loved ones and gives them a better chance going forward after their release.”**

**San Francisco Public Defender Mano Raju**

## WHY DID SAN FRANCISCO DECIDE TO STOP GENERATING REVENUE FROM INCARCERATED PEOPLE AND THEIR SUPPORT NETWORKS?

A broad coalition of community groups in the San Francisco Jail Justice Coalition came together to push for free phone calls and an end to commissary markups in San Francisco. The San Francisco Mayor's Budget Office, Sheriff's Office, and The Financial Justice Project, evaluated the impact of these reforms and found:

- **Phone call and commissary/jail store costs are a significant economic drain on low-income people.** In San Francisco, if someone made two 15-minute phone calls a



day, it would have typically cost \$300 over 70 days (the average jail stay) or \$1,500 over the course of the year. That is a significant cost for low-income families. Incarcerated people and their families often make choices between paying their bills and staying in touch with their families.

- **San Francisco's marked up prices for jail phone calls and jail store items extracted \$1.7 million from local low-income communities.** In total, people in the San Francisco county jails and their families paid more than \$1.7 million each year in phone call costs and

commissary markups. Incarcerated people and their families paid approximately \$1.1 million to place phone calls from the San Francisco jails last year. The City and County of San Francisco received approximately 53% of this revenue as commission. In FY 2018, less than \$500,000 in revenue from phone calls went to a GTL, a corporate vendor which contracts with the Sheriff's Office to provide phone call services. The remaining \$600,000 went to the Sheriff Office's Inmate Welfare Fund. Items in the commissary/jail store were marked up 43% and generated \$644,000 for the San Francisco Inmate Welfare Fund.

- **Phone calls and commissary costs disproportionately burden communities of color.** The economic burden of phone calls and commissary costs primarily falls on low-income women of color who are supporting loved ones inside. In San Francisco, we estimate that 80% of phone call costs were paid by incarcerated people's support networks. A report by the Ella Baker Center shows that [women of color](#) are often the people who pay for phone calls and commissary costs.

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**“ We view this as a wealth extraction from our communities that just isn't just,” according to *The Color of Change*. “Cities should just not be profiting off of people in jail.”**

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- **Research shows that increased communication between incarcerated people and their loved ones improves reentry outcomes after release.** Charging incarcerated people and their families premium prices for phone calls makes it [harder](#) for incarcerated people to stay in touch with family members, and therefore creates barriers to their reentry. Phone calls are people's lifelines to their support networks. Staying in touch with family and support networks helps people get through their time in jail; maintain families ties that they'll need to rely on when they get out; plan for a place to live and find work.

A growing body of research confirms these benefits. [Studies](#) show that people who maintain contact with their families while incarcerated are more likely to successfully re-enter society when they are released. [Research](#) shows that the majority of people who exit the criminal justice system end up residing with a relative or spouse after their release, and families play a major role in determining success during reentry. Staying connected with family while incarcerated helps build those relationships. For incarcerated people who are functionally illiterate or suffer from mental illness and cannot rely on written correspondence, phone calls are the primary means of maintaining family ties and parental relationships.

Additionally, many people who are currently paying these fees are waiting for their trial. Approximately 85% of San Francisco's county jail population is pretrial and have not yet been convicted of the crime(s) for which they are charged.

- **By requiring incarcerated people's support networks to generate funding for jail services, the city was shifting core operational responsibilities onto low-income communities.** In San Francisco, money from phone calls and commissary primarily supports staff positions that coordinate nonprofit services and legal services. More than 90 percent of the funding for the inmate welfare fund comes from phone call and commissary costs, generated from incarcerated people and their loved ones. These services should be maintained, but the way they were funded, on the backs of incarcerated people, was unethical and counterproductive.

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**“ When we drain the bank accounts of incarcerated people's families, we're punishing people who are only trying to support their loved ones. That should be celebrated, not penalized.”**

**- San Francisco Treasurer José Cisneros**

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# REVENUE FROM PHONE CALLS IN THE COUNTY JAIL IS AN UNSUSTAINABLE SOURCE OF REVENUE

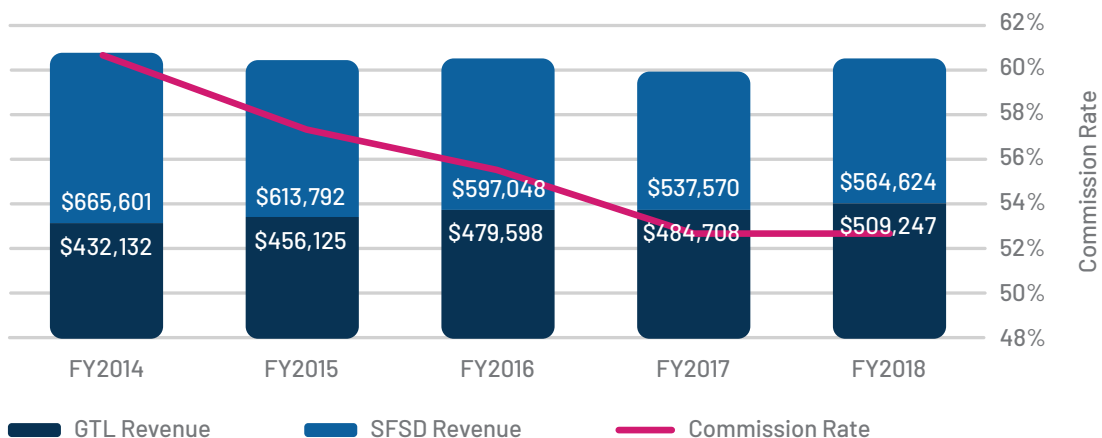
To understand the connection between jail phone calls, commissary, and revenue for the San Francisco Sheriff's Office, [Worth Rises](#) and The Financial Justice Project reviewed the Sheriff's Office's contract with GTL and analyzed call revenues and commissions, call volume by call type, and the Sheriff's budget (FY 2014-2018). This analysis concluded:

1. Revenue from phone calls is declining, unreliable, and may soon be eliminated completely by federal regulation.
2. While the City and County of San Francisco generates some revenue in the short-term, this can lead to larger long-term fiscal and societal costs from potential increases in recidivism and increased barriers to reentry.
3. A fixed rate contract with a vendor to provide free phone calls from jail is more cost-effective for the City.
4. The cost of free phone calls is less than one

percent of the Sheriff Office's budget.

**Revenue from jail phone calls was declining for the City but increasing for GTL.** While total revenue from phone calls remained steady, San Francisco's portion or commission has decreased by 15% over the last five years and was anticipated to continue to fall, given trends in call types. This is primarily due to a cap on interstate calls by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 2016. This regulation has made out-of-state phone calls non-commissionable in practice, and analysis shows that the percentage of calls out-of-state is growing as people increasingly use cell phones over landlines. This results in less revenue to the City. Additional federal legislation is anticipated that would allow the FCC to regulate in-state calls and is expected to dramatically drop phone call rates. Federal regulation is also in development which would further decrease interstate calling rates.

## San Francisco County's commission revenue from phone calls fell 15% over the last 5 years



**A fixed rate contract would be more cost-effective for the City.** Once the San Francisco Mayor and Sheriff committed to make phone calls free, the San

Francisco Sheriff's Office decided to select a new phone services provider.



Worth Rises recommended that the Sheriff's Office pursue a "fixed rate" contract for jail phone service, allowing the San Francisco Sheriff's Office to negotiate a price up front to pay the phone services provider. A fixed rate contract, as opposed to a "variable rate" contract, caps the cost to be paid by the City and better reflects the costs assumed by the vendor to provide access to phones in all county jails. Since the actual hard costs of providing individual phone calls with current technology is next to nothing, a fixed rate contract made more sense than one where the phone service provider's compensation was tied to how many calls were made or call minutes used. At the time, however, every jail phone services contract in the country was a variable rate contract.

Nevertheless, the San Francisco Sheriff's Office issued a [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) for a fixed rate contract. Five jail phones service providers bid on the contract, and GTL was selected as the provider. The contract specifically describes that, "incarcerated persons and end-users shall not be charged for any communications." Under the [new contract](#), rather than paying the vendor per call minute as families did, the City will pay the vendor a fixed monthly rate per phone device. The new contract also allows for free video calls.

The contract is a win-win for incarcerated people and the City of San Francisco. In 2018, incarcerated people and their families paid over a million dollars

for phone calls from San Francisco jails. In 2020, incarcerated people will pay nothing for calls. For the City, the contract is also a good deal. The City can provide more cost effective, unfettered phone access to increase incarcerated people's connection to their support networks. On the whole, San Francisco taxpayers will pay less to for jail communications than incarcerated families previously paid to the phone provider. The cost burden will be widely shared, and not just fall on economically distressed family members.

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**“ San Francisco’s new jail phone contract is an innovative breakthrough for the prison phone justice movement that protects incarcerated people, their families, and all taxpayers from exploitation at the hands of the predatory prison telecom industry. All prison and jail administrators should consider adopting a similar contract.”**

**- Bianca Tylek,  
Executive Director of Worth Rises**

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# SURVEY RESULTS:

## WHAT INCARCERATED PEOPLE IN SAN FRANCISCO JAILS SAID ABOUT NEED FOR THESE REFORMS



### Survey Methodology

The San Francisco Jail Justice Coalition, composed of 11 local community groups, drafted a survey to get

feedback from incarcerated people on the impact of the cost of phone calls and commissary items in San Francisco County Jails. The survey was an

important tool and gathered information about the needs, preferences, and experiences of incarcerated people to shape the implementation of reforms.

This [survey](#) is the largest known one of its kind and expanded on similar surveys in other jurisdictions. The San Francisco Sheriff's Office distributed and collected paper surveys across all jails between July 22 and August 1, 2019. There were more than 750 surveys collected: 637 completed the survey and 100+ declined to answer.



**FOR A FULL SUMMARY OF  
THIS SURVEY, PLEASE SEE:**

**[Survey for People Incarcerated in San Francisco County Jails: The Impact of the Cost of Phone Calls and Commissary Items](#), a complementary issue brief from The Financial Justice Project.**

### Key Findings from the Survey

- **Phone Cost:** Incarcerated people and their loved ones spent an average of \$50-100 per week on phone costs. On average, incarcerated women and their loved ones spent \$20-\$50 per week compared to incarcerated males and their loved

ones spent \$50-100 per week. Community advocates at Young Women's Freedom Center stated that this finding confirmed their sense that incarcerated women receive less financial support while in jail than incarcerated men.



- **Phone Usage:** Most incarcerated people made two calls or less per day, most frequently calling children, parents, and significant others. Incarcerated people requested an average of 30-100 minutes of phone time per day.
- **Commissary Cost:** 96% of incarcerated people believed commissary items were expensive. On average, incarcerated people and their loved ones spend \$70-\$100 per week on commissary items. Incarcerated men and their loved ones spent more (\$71-\$100 on average) than incarcerated women and their loved ones (\$50-\$100 on average). Many stated that with limited funds, they were choosing between staying in touch with their families (paying for phone calls and stationary), eating enough (paying for protein and food items), and staying clean (paying for personal hygiene and cleaning supplies).
- **Visits:** 60% of incarcerated people stated they had trouble getting visit slots. Many believed free phone calls would increase the number of visits due to increased connection and increased ability to coordinate with loved ones. Many incarcerated people surveyed noted the lack of contact during visits.



# THE TIMELINE AND PROCESS OF REFORM IN SAN FRANCISCO

In June 2019, Mayor London Breed, Sheriff Vicki Hennessy, and Treasurer José Cisneros [announced](#) that San Francisco would become the first county in the nation to make phone calls free and stop generating revenue for the city from items sold in the jail store. The Sheriff's Office set a deadline to implement these reforms by the summer of 2020.

The Sheriff's Office immediately cut the price of phone calls by 50% and then issued an [RFP](#) for a fixed rate contract. GTL was selected as the phone service provider, and the [contract](#) went into effect in August 2020. When free phone calls were implemented, overnight, there was a 41 percent increase in the number of phone calls per person. Compared to August 2019, incarcerated people are now spending 81 percent more time in communication with their support networks, and incarcerated people and their families are now saving more than \$1.1 million annually.

In addition, the Sheriff's Office worked with the commissary vendor, Keefe Commissary Network, to remove mark ups on commissary items. The price of items in the jail dropped by an average of 43%. For example:



- Reading glasses were \$8.00, and now cost \$4.55, a reduction of 43%
- Shoes were \$30, and now cost \$19.00, a reduction of 37%
- Deodorant was \$3.50, and now costs \$2.20, a reduction of 37%
- Refried beans were \$3.00, and now cost \$1.30, a reduction of 57%
- Top Ramen was \$1.08, and is now costs \$.50, a difference of 54%
- Tuna was \$3.10 and is now costs \$1.10, a difference of 65%
- Sausage was \$1.65 and is now costs \$.75, a difference of 55%

**“ It’s something that has never sat well with me, from personal experience of the collect calls, and the amount of money that my grandma had to spend on our phone bill, and at times our phone getting cut off because we couldn’t pay the bill. Not being able to provide support to family members who were behind bars – it can be quite depressing and frustrating ... this was something I thought was an important issue, to address equity and fairness in our criminal justice system.”**

**- Mayor London Breed**

**“ This is a racial and economic justice issue. This legislation ensures we never go back to high prices to generate revenue. SF should not be the exception, and this legislation will help pave the way for others across the country to do the same.”**

**- San Francisco Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer, who introduced the People Over Profits Ordinance**

# Timeline of Reform in San Francisco

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>June 2018</b>     | Community advocates reach out to the San Francisco Financial Justice Project about their concern about the high cost of jail phone calls and commissary items.  |
| <b>July 2018</b>     | The Financial Justice Project and community advocates begin to work with the Sheriff's Office and Mayor's Budget Office on potential reforms.   |
| <b>January 2019</b>  | The Financial Justice Project and Mayor's Budget Office conduct a listening session with incarcerated people and their support networks.  |
| <b>Spring 2019</b>   | San Francisco officials work with Worth Rises to examine the revenue implications of making phone calls free and ending markups.  |
| <b>June 2019</b>     | Mayor London Breed, Sheriff Vicki Hennessy, and Treasurer José Cisneros announce reforms committing to make jail phone calls free and end commissary markups. The Sheriff's Office immediately cuts phone call rates by 50 percent.   |
| <b>August 2019</b>   | The San Francisco Jail Justice Coalition, Sheriff's Office, and The Financial Justice Project conduct a survey of incarcerated people about phone calls and commissary, to inform implementation.   |
| <b>December 2019</b> | The Sheriff Office issues a <a href="#">Request for Proposals</a> for vendors to provide jail phone calls at a fixed rate.  |
| <b>March 2020</b>    | The Sheriff's Office contracts with Keefe Commissary Network to provide commissary services with no county commissions.   |
| <b>May 2020</b>      | The Sheriff's Office makes 60 minutes of phone calls free per week during the COVID-19 health crisis and makes video calls free and available on a limited basis.   |
| <b>June 2020</b>     | Supervisors Sandra Lee Fewer and Shamann Walton introduce the <a href="#">People Over Profits ordinance</a> . This first-in-the-nation ordinance ends commissary markups and ensures San Francisco cannot generate revenue on future products and services for incarcerated people and their families. The ordinance passed unanimously in July 2020. |
| <b>August 2020</b>   | <a href="#">Fixed rate contract</a> with GTL providing phone services goes into effect. On August 10, all jail phone calls become free.   |

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER LOCALITIES CONSIDERING THESE REFORMS



**1. Engage community groups to understand the impacts on incarcerated people and their support networks.** In San Francisco, reform could not have been achieved without a broad coalition of local community groups. Formerly incarcerated individuals, their families, and community advocates clearly made the case as to why these reforms were important by sharing their experiences and the financial and emotional impact of high cost jail phone calls and commissary items. The Financial Justice Project worked closely with these groups to conduct a survey to understand the impacts of phone calls and commissary on incarcerated people and their support networks. These survey findings and conversation with the community were invaluable in advancing these reforms.

**2. Work with government and community stakeholders to assess the financial and human costs of generating revenue through phone calls and commissary items and explore ways to cost effectively reform these practices that advance public and community interests.** The San Francisco Sheriff's Office was committed to reducing or eliminating the cost of phone calls from jail. With the Mayor's Budget Office and The Financial Justice Project, the Sheriff's Office conducted an analysis of generating revenue for jail operations. They explored options to negotiate new phone service rates, identified sources to replace current streams of funding when the price of phone calls was reduced or eliminated, and explored long-term options to provide phone calls and other communications services which reduce cost and meet public safety needs. In addition, San Francisco worked with [Worth Rises](#), a national non-profit advocacy organization working to make jail phone calls free, to analyze current communications contracts, the Sheriff Office's budget, as well as five years of data on call volumes

and revenues. These findings were the basis of several recommendations that drove reform.

**3. Engage national experts to understand your options.** In addition to developing a partnership with other City agencies, engage national experts to understand the national context and pathways to reform. [Worth Rises](#) conducted an analysis on San Francisco phone call rates, revenues, and developed recommendations for reform that were critical. Organizations such as the [Human Rights Defense Center](#), [Prison Policy Initiative](#), and [Worth Rises](#) can provide research and best practices on model reforms to help shape recommendations for reform.

**4. Find more equitable and just ways to fund jail operations.** Raising revenue to fund jail operations that relies on incarcerated individuals and their networks, primarily low-income people and communities of color is fundamentally unjust. Central to this reform effort was finding more equitable and just ways to fund jail operations. Reentry services are a core part of the Sheriff's Office and must be funded out of the agency's core budget.

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**“ That free phone call is going to spark some people's hearts. You can call home and laugh or cry for 15 minutes and figure out who's sick, who's not sick. You can actually have full access to what's going on on the outside.”**

**- Kandy “K.I.” Ifopo,  
Young Women's Freedom Center**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**The San Francisco Jail Justice Coalition called for these reforms and advocated for them every step of the way. The organizations include:**

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|--|--|
| All of Us or None                          | San Francisco Public Defender's Office |
| Coalition on Homelessness                  | Taxpayers for Public Safety            |
| Community Housing Partnership              | Young Community Developers             |
| Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights        | Young Women's Freedom Center           |
| Legal Services for Prisoners with Children |  |

**Many City and County agencies and officials advocated for these reforms and worked through challenges to make them happen, including:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| San Francisco Sheriff's Office          | San Francisco Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer |
| San Francisco Mayor London Breed        | San Francisco Supervisor Shamann Walton   |
| San Francisco Mayor's Budget Office     | San Francisco Treasurer José Cisneros     |
| San Francisco Public Defender Mano Raju |   |

Worth Rises provided extensive advisory services to the San Francisco Sheriff's Office and the Financial Justice Project throughout the process of reform.

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