



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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

**SAN FRANCISCO OPENS LINKAGE CENTER AS PART OF
TENDERLOIN EMERGENCY INITIATIVE**

Once fully staffed, the Center will serve up to 100 guests at a time connecting people to short- and long-term services, care, and programs

San Francisco, CA — Today, initial operations commenced at the Tenderloin Linkage Center. The newly opened Tenderloin Linkage Center is an essential component of San Francisco's Tenderloin Emergency Initiative that is forging a path to promote a thriving community and save lives through overdose prevention and connecting people to care and services.

“Our work in the Tenderloin requires all of our City departments and community partners working together to address the major challenges we know exist,” said Mayor Breed. “As part of that work, this Linkage Center will help us create a space for people who are struggling with addiction and other challenges to get immediate support, and then transition into longer term care and housing. This is hard work, and I appreciate everyone joining in partnership to make a difference for the people of the Tenderloin.”

The Center, located at 1172 Market Street, will initially operate seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and have reduced capacity due to the impacts of COVID-19 on staffing availability. The Center will expand to operate 24 hours-a-day and 7 days-a-week and have the capacity to serve 100 guests at a time.

The Tenderloin Linkage Center is a services-focused location designed to provide a safe, welcoming space for those ready to access San Francisco's health and human service resources easily and quickly. Basic services such as hot food; water; hygiene services such as laundry, bathrooms, and showers; personal protective equipment (PPE); and more are available at the Center. Weekly wellness programs will also be hosted here to provide services like COVID-19 vaccination and testing as well as HIV and Hepatitis C testing. Additionally, the new Tenderloin Linkage Center will connect people to short- and long-term services, care, and programs. Programs and services include, but are not limited to:

- Behavioral health care
- Shelter
- Transitional housing
- Housing assistance
- Homeward bound
- Sobering, detox and respite
- Substance use treatment



- Food coordination
- Vocational support
- Therapy and mentoring
- Child and family care
- Veteran support

People can self-present to the Center or arrive via vehicle or foot escort from a community partner, if requested. If City outreach teams, first responders or community service providers encounter people on the street who may benefit from this Center, they can call upon a health or social services partner to provide more information and an escort to the site, if desired. People may come and go freely to and from the Center.

“A drop-in center where people can get off the streets and immediately linked to services, placements and care, without delay or bureaucracy is something we desperately need,” said Supervisor Matt Haney. “The City is facing a deadly, devastating drug epidemic, and we must do everything we can to save lives and provide relief and healing to a part of the city that has been so heavily impacted. The Tenderloin Linkage Center will absolutely support us in doing that.”

“I am optimistic that the new linkage center will provide new and useful services for Tenderloin residents who are battling mental illness and drug addiction. I am also watching its success closely to see if it could be converted into a Citywide resource as the permanent site of the upcoming Mental Health SF Service Center,” said Supervisor Hillary Ronen.

“Trying to move forward on the road to recovery is difficult and is even more challenging without support. The people and programs at the Tenderloin Linkage Center can help a person suffering with addiction, mental health challenges and homelessness take that next step,” said Mary Ellen Carroll, Executive Director, San Francisco Department of Emergency Management. “San Francisco’s emergency declaration made it possible to open this life-saving resource so quickly but it was the tireless work and commitment of community partners and City staff that made it a reality. As we progress on the Tenderloin Emergency Initiative, we must continue to work together to promote a thriving Tenderloin.”

Tenderloin Linkage Center staff, including escorts, are provided by community-based organizations including HealthRIGHT 360, Urban Alchemy and Project Homeless Connect.

“We are proud to join community partners and City agencies today as we open the doors of the Linkage Center and welcome our Tenderloin neighbors indoors to a safe space with access to an array of services,” said Grant Colfax, Director of Health. “The Linkage Center offers a form of radical hospitality so that those who use substances do not face judgement or stigma and instead are welcomed with warm meals, showers, social activities, and much more. Trained site staff will provide overdose prevention supplies, connections to treatment and care, and meet clients where they are in their path to wellness.”



“The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing is proud to partner with City agencies and community organizations to provide a much-needed space for people in the community to rapidly connect to public services,” said Shireen McSpadden, Executive Director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing. “Access to shelter, treatment, and care is essential to address the crisis on the streets of the Tenderloin.”

“The Mayor has recognized the overdose crisis we are facing as a city,” said Dr. Vitka Eisen, CEO, HealthRIGHT 360. “We are committed to doing everything we can to help stem the tide and tragedy of these deaths, and connect people to care, with love and compassion.”

In addition to the launch of the Center, the City has continued to prioritize and coordinate resources to address the challenges facing the Tenderloin as part of the broader intervention. Since December 13, 2021, joint operations from City and non-City staff have:

- Placed 114 people living on the streets into shelter including hotels, congregate, navigation center and emergency shelter.
- Referred or transported 378 people from the Tenderloin to medical, mental health, or substance use disorder treatment through street crisis and outreach teams.
- Made 52 arrests for drug dealing related offenses including over 5,267 grams of fentanyl seized.
- Assessed, repaired, and hardened 26 different street light locations in the Tenderloin in the last month, including at the intersection of Turk and Hyde.
- Responded to 2,373 requests for service in the Tenderloin, including removing 1,147 tons of waste and power washing 758 locations.

For more information on the Tenderloin Emergency Initiative, including weekly situation reports, visit sf.gov/TenderloinInitiative.

ABOUT OUR SERVICE PROVIDERS

HealthRIGHT 360 is a non-profit provider of substance use disorder treatment, mental health services, and primary care to over 49,000 Californians annually, including more than 15,000 San Franciscans. HealthRIGHT 360 provides care that is compassionate, non-judgmental, and science-based. We provide services, regardless of one's ability to pay; inspired by our belief that healthcare is a right, not a privilege.

Urban Alchemy is a local social enterprise that works at the intersection of extreme poverty, homelessness, mental illness and substance use disorders. They provide a peaceful and supportive presence throughout the neighborhood and will be responsible for site operations and service coordination at the Tenderloin Linkage Center.

Project Homeless Connect (PHC), a San Francisco based non-profit homeless service provider has long been a leader in creating one-stop-shop service experiences for people experiencing



homelessness. PHC will work in partnership with Urban Alchemy and HealthRIGHT 360 to coordinate services and resources for the guests at the Tenderloin Linkage Center.

TENDERLOIN LINKAGE CENTER B-ROLL AND PHOTOGRAPHY

To respect guest privacy at the Tenderloin Linkage Center, San Francisco will not provide media tours of the center. As a courtesy, we are providing b-roll and photography of the center.

Tenderloin Linkage Center B-Roll and Photography:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/xad365zjgvyk6yv/AACMf2OOQwdZcOubWXpnDoe4a?dl=0>

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