Resolution supporting California State Assembly Bill No. 990, “Family Unity - Incarcerated Persons' Visiting Rights,” authored by Assembly Member Miguel Santiago (AD-53), to establish personal visits for incarcerated people as a right.

WHEREAS, There are many barriers to maintaining family bonds during incarceration; and

WHEREAS, Visits are treated as a privilege rather than a right and can be denied for disciplinary reasons unrelated to visiting or for simple mistakes on paperwork; and

WHEREAS, Family members can be excluded based on arrest or conviction histories unrelated to visiting security, which further divides families who live in communities that are heavily policed and impacted by mass incarceration; and

WHEREAS, Visits can be very expensive and time-consuming, as many people in California are incarcerated hundreds of miles from their homes; and

WHEREAS, After taking the long, costly trip to visit a loved one, visitors often face long waiting times that use up limited visiting hours, or are turned away or removed for petty reasons such as wearing a V-neck shirt, having inadequate documentation, or holding hands too long; and

WHEREAS, Screening process can be disrespectful and intimidating to children, such as contraband searches of minors and strip searches of women by correctional staff; and

WHEREAS, Family members of loved ones who get seriously sick in custody, including those who have died of COVID, often receive no notice or opportunity to call or visit; and

WHEREAS, Phone and video calling access is limited and has historically been grossly overpriced and while the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
recently took steps to increase such access and reduce costs, those gains need to be
guaranteed by law with a commitment that they supplement rather than supplant in-person
visiting; and

WHEREAS, The loss of family connections has received renewed attention due to the
COVID pandemic, which has led to the wholesale cancellation of in-person visits and only
minimal increases in phone communications in our state prisons; and

WHEREAS, Significant barriers to visitations and phone contact existed before the
pandemic and have only been exasperated since; and

WHEREAS, California State Assembly Bill No. 990 (AB 990), the Family Unity –
Incarcerated Persons’ Visiting Rights, introduced by Assembly Member Miguel Santiago (AD-
53), establishes personal visits for incarcerated people as a right, rather than a privilege, and
ensures that revoking the visitation right is limited to special circumstances; and

WHEREAS, AB 990 addresses the current problems with limited visiting in prisons by
removing barriers to visits in order to ensure families remain connected; and

WHEREAS, Specifically, AB 990 will reinstate incarcerated persons’ right to receive
visits in the Prisoners’ Bill of Rights and the prior legal standard for enforcement of that right;
and

WHEREAS, AB 990 will prohibit denial of visits as discipline for conduct unrelated to
visiting, prohibit denial of visits based on mistakes on a visitors’ application where the correct
information is in the visitor’s criminal background report, and prohibit denial of visits based on
the visitor’s or incarcerated person’s law enforcement history unless related to serious abuses
of visiting rules; and

WHEREAS, By establishing incarcerated persons’ right to personal visits, AB 990 will
support families with incarcerated persons, improve emotional connections during
incarceration, and ultimately help incarcerated people thrive once they return to their community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby supports California Assembly Bill No. 990, The Family Unity – Incarcerated Persons’ Visiting Rights” and urges the California State Legislature to pass this bill in order to ensure families with incarcerated persons remain connected by improving emotional connections during incarceration and ultimately help incarcerated people thrive once they return to their community; and, be it,

RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges Governor Gavin Newsom to pass AB 990; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a copy of this Resolution to Governor Gavin Newsom and the Bill’s primary sponsor, Assembly Member Miguel Santiago.
Resolution supporting California State Assembly Bill No. 990, “Family Unity - Incarcerated Persons’ Visiting Rights,” authored by Assembly Member Miguel Santiago (AD-53), to establish personal visits for incarcerated people as a right.

July 20, 2021 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 7/20/2021 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, or time waived pursuant to Board Rule 2.14.2, became effective without her approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter or Board Rule 2.14.2.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board