# NEWS RELEASE
## SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
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# SAN FRANCISCO SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES ENCOURAGE SAN FRANCISCANS TO APPLY FOR THE CIVIL GRAND JURY

**SAN FRANCISCO --** The San Francisco Superior Court is accepting applications for Civil Grand Jury service for the 2017-18 term, Judge Susan M. Breall announced today.

"San Franciscans who are eager to make a difference and want to be an agent of change in this great City should apply to become a member of the Civil Grand Jury," said Judge Breall, Chair of the Court's Civil Grand Jury Committee. "The Civil Grand Jury offers a unique and exciting opportunity to contribute to our community by examining City government to address inefficiencies in operations and hold officials accountable. This is an exceptional way to become involved in City affairs."

**The application deadline is May 31, 2017.** In order to serve, volunteers must be U.S. citizens; at least 18 years of age; have lived in San Francisco for at least the past 12 months; have no felony convictions; and be able to effectively communicate in English. Applications and more detailed information about the Civil Grand Jury are available at http://civilgrandjury.sfgov.org/.

This year, the Civil Grand Jury Committee Judges are attending various community events across the City to recruit Civil Grand Jury members in person. Through these recruitment efforts the San Francisco Superior Court Judges are committed to seeking a Civil Grand Jury that represents the City's rich diversity.

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A requirement of the California Constitution, the Civil Grand Jury provides a "watchdog" function and has broad latitude to examine City departments, agencies and officials. The Civil Grand Jury issues a report detailing its findings and recommendations. Each affected City department or official is required to formally respond to each recommendation contained in the reports. The reports are then presented in public hearings before the Board of Supervisors.

The Civil Grand Jury is independent and selects its own topics for investigation. Past Civil Grand Juries have investigated issues such as the City's Clean Power initiative; affordable housing; homelessness; disaster preparedness; and a variety of City Departments, including the Office of Assessor-Recorder, the City's Crime Lab, the Fire Department, and MUNI. To conduct its investigations, the Jury interviews City officials, department heads, staff and others who have information relevant to the investigation. The Jury also has the authority to request data, reports, statistics, and other records to assist in its work.

The Civil Grand Jury's term runs from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. After the initial screening, volunteers are interviewed by a panel of Superior Court Judges who select a pool of 30 jurors. From that pool, the 19 sworn jurors and 11 alternates are randomly selected.

Interested volunteers should be able to commit time consistently throughout the 1-year term. The Civil Grand Jury usually meets once per week, with additional meetings and interviews scheduled as necessary.

A combination of diverse backgrounds, skills, and interests makes for the most effective grand juries. "San Francisco is a vibrant and diverse City," Judge Breall said, "and we want our Civil Grand Jury to reflect that character." Volunteers who enjoy researching, learning about City government, writing, editing, analyzing data, or meeting people committed to making San Francisco a better place to live are strongly encouraged to apply.

The Civil Grand Jury Committee, appointed by Presiding Judge Teri L. Jackson, is comprised of Judge Breall; Judge Gail Dekreon; Judge Samuel K. Feng; Judge Christopher C. Hite; Judge Victor Hwang; Judge Stephen M. Murphy; Judge Edward A. Torpoco; and Commissioner Rebecca Wightman.

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