



## SAN FRANCISCO PRETRIAL DIVERSION PROJECT

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **San Francisco Moves to Dissolve One of the Country's Most Effective and Innovative Community-Based Pretrial Programs**

*50-year-old nonprofit that maintains a 93% public safety rate and more than doubles every city dollar faces July 1 dissolution; cases to be transferred to armed law enforcement agency. A public campaign to preserve SF Pretrial is underway at [dontdismantlesf.org](https://dontdismantlesf.org).*

**SAN FRANCISCO** — The San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project, one of the country's longest-running, most innovative, and most effective community-based pretrial programs, is set to be dissolved on July 1, 2026. Its work will be transferred to the San Francisco Adult Probation Department (APD), an armed law enforcement agency. The decision was reached through informal channels by the Superior Court of San Francisco in coordination with Adult Probation and the Mayor's Office, without substantive input from SF Pretrial. Outside of a brief meeting with the Budget Office and a partial tour of its operations, SF Pretrial has not been invited to participate in any discussions about the transition. Weeks before moving to dissolve the program, the City had awarded SF Pretrial a new five-year contract through its own competitive RFP process.

The dissolution would end a 50-year proof of concept: in 2023, SF Pretrial produced a 93% public safety rate (no new filed charges while enrolled) and a 96% court appearance rate across more than 19,000 scheduled dates, saving the city 630,394 jail bed days. At other pretrial pilot programs run by probation departments throughout California, the figures in recent years reflect an average public safety rate of 65%. Even with variances in how counties measure outcomes, a gap of 28 percentage points is significant. The program has been NAPSA-accredited and recognized as one of only a small handful of community-based pretrial programs operating at this scale in the United States. SF Pretrial currently serves roughly 1,800 presumed-innocent people daily — about 70% of all releases from San Francisco County Jail.

As part of this transition, the Adult Probation Department has submitted a budget request to stand up its new pretrial services division. The request is fiscally indefensible and it will balloon in future years. The city's principal investment in SF Pretrial is \$7.5 million — which SF Pretrial more than doubles into \$15.5 million of total annual programming through federal grants, Medi-Cal revenue, and philanthropic funding, delivered by 105 staff around the clock. Adult

Probation is requesting \$12.7 million to stand up just 27 positions, with none of that leverage. Comparable probation supervision for the same population would cost the city an estimated \$58 million annually. As acknowledged by the Mayor's Office, that \$12.7 million is a floor, not a ceiling: as caseloads grow under expanded pretrial release law, the cost to taxpayers will too. The more than \$8 million in grants and Medi-Cal revenue that SF Pretrial generates every year — money that costs the city nothing — terminates the moment services transfer to a government agency.

This is happening in a budget cycle where more than 150 community-based organizations across San Francisco — providing housing support, public health services, harm reduction, immigrant services, and senior care — are facing cuts, all while law enforcement contracts grow. SF Pretrial is the criminal justice chapter of that story: a community-based program that more than doubles every city dollar and serves the city's most vulnerable residents, being eliminated without a public process when its clients need it most.

For additional context: The Adult Probation Department's budget grew from \$12 million in 2011 to \$58 million in 2024 — nearly a fivefold increase — while its active probation caseload shrank by 78% over the same period. A 2023 investigation by the SF Standard found that APD had failed to close an estimated 2,700 defunct cases, including deceased individuals, and that the department does not proactively monitor all clients, engaging many only when flagged by other law enforcement agencies. This is the agency now proposing to absorb 1,800 presumed-innocent people.

### **State law being cited explicitly exempts San Francisco**

The transfer has been justified at various points under SB 129 (2021) and AB 102 (2025), both of which govern pretrial services statewide. Neither requires this in San Francisco. AB 102, Section 4, Provision 9 explicitly preserves San Francisco's right to contract with SF Pretrial directly. And the Judicial Council's Year 4 Report to the Legislature (April 24, 2026, footnote 7, p. 8) separately confirms that San Francisco is excluded from SB 129's statewide transition requirements. SF Pretrial has not ignored any requests by the Superior Court related to AB 102 since it was adopted in 2025.

This is not the first attempt to absorb SF Pretrial — over the past eight years, Adult Probation has made multiple efforts to take over its work. In 2019, when California set aside funding for probation-run pretrial pilot programs, the city's entire political establishment opposed the transfer: the mayor, the full Board of Supervisors, the DA, the Public Defender, and the Sheriff all went on record against it. Adult Probation was not selected.

### **What dissolves on July 1**

- SF Pretrial as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit — dissolved after 50 years
- Over 100 staff positions providing outreach, support and customized services, many filled by people with lived experience in the criminal legal system
- J:HUB, the only community-based walk-in center in San Francisco exclusively for justice-involved people
- Hundreds of hours of clinical and behavioral health services per year, facilitated by SF Pretrial staff

- The OpenJustice software platform, a custom-built case management system designed to support the full range of pretrial services, from risk assessment to client programming to housing referrals, and presented to pretrial agencies nationally as a model for the field
- Primary Caregiver Diversion · Medi-Cal Enhanced Care Management and associated revenue · Justice Involved Housing Access Point · Neighborhood Courts restorative-justice program
- Over \$4 million in federal, state and private grants — including local private funding and MacArthur-funded housing initiatives — which terminate on transfer of services
- 24/7/365 coverage — replaced with "TBD" business hours under the APD plan

## Statements

*"San Francisco is not under any state mandate to do this. We are one of the most effective public safety programs in this city, by every metric the city itself uses to measure success. We are also the most affordable. To dissolve us in the name of a law that explicitly does not apply to San Francisco — without ever sitting us at the table — is not a budget decision. It is a political and it will cost the city in safety and in money for years."*

— David Mauroff, CEO, San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project

*"For four years I chaired the Board of Supervisors Budget and Finance Committee. I voted on this contract. The data on SF Pretrial is unchallenged. The legal premise being cited is, by the state's own reading, inapplicable here. There is no version of this decision that survives scrutiny on the merits."*

— Sandra Fewer, former Chair, SF Board of Supervisors Budget & Finance Committee

*"[SF Pretrial is] the greatest thing no one's ever really heard of."*

— Toney Chaplin, former Assistant Chief, San Francisco Police Department

## Timeline

- **Coming Days** — Mayor expected to submit final FY2026 budget to the Board of Supervisors
- **May 27, 2026** — Budget & Finance Committee hearing on the SF Pretrial contract; public comment on the record
- **June 2 or 9, 2026** — Full Board of Supervisors Vote; public comment still on the record
- **July 1, 2026** — Transition takes effect; SF Pretrial dissolves and cases transfer to Adult Probation

## About San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project

Founded in 1976 through the joint efforts of community members and the San Francisco Bar Association, San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit and the longest-running community-based pretrial program in the United States. SF Pretrial is a nationally recognized innovator in pretrial services, and serves roughly 1,800 people each day across San Francisco, with offices and a walk-in center (the J:HUB) at 1200 Folsom Street.

**Press materials available**

- Campaign site: [dontdismantlesf.org](https://dontdismantlesf.org)
- 2024 Impact Report (PDF)
- Pretrial Services Program: Year 4 Report to the Legislature, Judicial Council of California, April 24, 2026 — footnote 7, p. 8 flagged (PDF)
- Internal transition memo from the Superior Court (PDF, on request)
- Letters of support from ACLU and Bar Association of San Francisco (PDF, on request)
- Spokesperson availability: David Mauroff (CEO), Sandra Fewer, Toney Chaplin