



## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 1/27/2026

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Human Resources Department

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Janell Crane, 707-565-2885; Meira Bowcut, 707-565-1851

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisory District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Commission on the Status of Women Ordinance Amendments

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a Resolution introducing, reading the title of, and waiving further reading of an Ordinance to amend Chapter 2 Article IX of the Sonoma County Code governing the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women to clarify authorized approvers of the Commission's bylaws, budget, and work plan. (First Reading)

**Executive Summary:**

The Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women Ordinance refers to Ordinance No. 1850, passed in 1975, which established the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to fight gender discrimination and promote equal rights for women and girls in areas like housing, education, and services. This ordinance created an official county body that advises the Board of Supervisors, advocates for policies to enhance women's lives. With this item the Commission seeks approval to revise their ordinance to align regular meetings with current practice of not holding a meeting in December, modify what constitutes a quorum to facilitate Commission business, clarify approval of the work plan and budget, and authorize approval of amendments to the bylaws to the Commission, with review and approval by the Director of Human Resources and the County Executive.

**Discussion:**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma declared, in 1975, its policy to take affirmative action to eliminate the practice of discrimination and prejudice on account of sex. In accordance with this policy, the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women was established. The purpose of the Commission is to promote equal rights and opportunities that enhance the quality of life for all women and girls and to address issues of discrimination and prejudice that negatively affect women in Sonoma County. The Commission uses their collective voice to influence decision-makers and empower the community to eliminate systemic barriers to equity. They work to ensure women have social mobility, economic autonomy, reproductive freedom, and equitable representation in leadership roles. They are advisors to the County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors and work to ensure that the issues impacting women and girls are given the necessary visibility to affect positive changes in public policy.

To carry out the Commission's mission, they are requesting the following changes in their ordinance:

- Amend attendance requirements to be at least 7 of 11 regular meetings, with no regular meetings held in December. This aligns with current practice as the Commission generally does not hold meetings in December. Clarifying the attendance requirements is important to have clear consistent expectations for commissioners.
- Modify the definition of quorum to not include members on an extended leave of absence and clarify the vote requirement to be a majority of those present. This will help ensure that the Commission achieves a quorum at its regular meetings and is able to conduct Commission business.
- Clarify that the Director of Human Resources must approve all contracts entered into by the Commission to ensure they comply with County policy, including purchasing requirements.
- Clarify that the Commission work plan and budget must be approved by the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors prior to start of each fiscal year.
- Delegate approval of amendments to the bylaw to the Commission, with review and approval by the Director of Human Resources and the County Executive.

Concurrent with its efforts to revise the Ordinance, the Commission has been working on amendments to its bylaws. If approval is received on the proposed amendments to the Ordinance, the Commission will finalize updates to its bylaws to ensure they remain consistent with County Code and provide greater clarity around the procedural elements of the Commission's work. Some examples of the proposed edits to the bylaws include, providing clarification on attendance at commission meetings, removal from the commission, explanation of conflicts of interest, nominations and elections procedures, program budget procedures, meetings structure including agenda submissions, and more detail about the annual work plans. These changes will increase operational efficiency and compliance with regulations such as the Political Reform Act and the Brown Act. It is the intent of the Commission to retain flexibility in the conduct of its affairs.

Following adoption of the resolution introducing, reading the title of, and waiving further reading of the proposed ordinance, the ordinance will return to the Board for final approval, which is expected to be on March 10, 2026. The ordinance would go into effect 30 days after adoption.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

**Racial Equity:**

**Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?**

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

Board Item 12/8/2009 - CHR & CSW Co. Code Changes

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

N/A

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**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

N/A

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

1. Ordinance (redline)
2. Resolution introducing, reading the title of, and waiving further reading of an Ordinance to amend Chapter 2 Article IX

**Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:**

N/A