



Association for Multidisciplinary
Education and Research in
Substance use and Addiction

To Whom It May Concern:

Phone (401) 615-4047
www.amersa.org

AMERSA, Inc (Association for Multidisciplinary Education and Research in Substance Use and Addiction) is a non-profit professional organization founded in 1976 with a mission to improve health and well-being through leadership and advocacy in substance use education, research, clinical care, and policy. As an organization, we believe in equitable access to healthcare and evidence-based substance use disorder treatment for all who desire it. Furthermore, we believe that this care should be made easily accessible without unnecessary restrictions and free from stigma.

We support the San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF) in their opposition to the changes proposed to Chapter 20 of San Francisco's Administrative Code, which would threaten access to public assistance programs for individuals who do not comply with coerced screening, assessment, and treatment for substance use disorders. As an organization, AMERSA is committed to evidence-based, equitable, and compassionate care for people who use drugs. Coerced treatment is not an evidence-based practice and may actually increase the risk of overdose and death among people with substance use disorders. Furthermore, evidence shows that housing and social stability are key elements of promoting recovery from substance use disorders and that these supports should not be contingent on abstinence or participation in substance use disorder treatment. Finally, proposed changes that aim to remove critical social supports from vulnerable individuals will likely exacerbate inequity in access to substance use disorder care. For these reasons, AMERSA joins SFAF in their opposition to these proposed policy changes.

In solidarity with the excellent healthcare workforce and community-based advocates in San Francisco, AMERSA is committed to improving the health and well-being of all individuals whose lives have been negatively affected by substance use. We believe that the proposed changes to San Francisco's administrative code are incongruent with this mission, and we join SFAF in opposition to their enactment.

On behalf of the AMERSA Board of Directors,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rebecca M. Northup'.

Rebecca Northup
Executive Director, AMERSA

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