



RESOLUTION NO. 2022-176

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, ESTABLISHING THE COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION POLICY

WHEREAS, Fresno City Charter § 500 provides the Council is the governing body of the City and, subject to the express limitations of the Charter, is vested with all powers of legislation in municipal affairs of the City; and

WHEREAS, Charter § 400 provides the Mayor shall recommend to the Council such measures and ordinances as the Mayor may deem necessary or expedient and to make such other recommendations to the Council concerning the affairs of the City as the Mayor finds desirable; and

WHEREAS, Charter § 803 provides the City Attorney represents and advises the Council, management, and City officials in all matters of law pertaining to their offices; and

WHEREAS, Charter § 803(g) provides the Council has control over all legal business and proceedings of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Attorney provides legal services to the Council, Mayor and all other City officials and staff; and to do so effectively, communications between the City Attorney and the Council, Mayor, other City officials and staff may under some circumstances be open and complete, yet in other communications be confidential and limited.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Fresno as follows:

1 of 4

Date Adopted: 07/21/2022  
Date Approved: 07/21/2022  
Effective Date: 07/21/2022

Resolution No. 2022-176



1. The City Attorney shall provide timely, complete information to the Council pertaining to all matters within the Council's jurisdiction, as provided herein.
2. The City Attorney shall be free to communicate with and preliminarily advise Councilmembers, the Mayor, City Manager, and staff on all City legal matters without the necessity of the City Attorney sharing the substance or fact of those communications and advice with the entire Council until such time as the City Attorney reasonably believes there is an immediate need for the Council to be informed, or such a matter may be brought before the Council for its consideration.
3. All City officials and staff shall immediately provide or communicate to the City Attorney documents and other forms of communication that state or indicate a claim, legal risk, or potential liability that exceeds the sum or value of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) affecting the City, including any new exposure on matters or projects the City has approved or has under consideration. This reporting requirement shall not include existing litigation, personnel complaints, or tort or civil rights claims that are processed through the claims procedures handled by the Risk Management Division or Personnel Department, until such time as a lawsuit is filed. The City Attorney then shall exercise discretion in sharing the documents or information with the Council, Mayor, City Manager, and other City officials. The City Attorney may discuss with the Council President, Mayor, and City Manager, the method and timing of communicating the information to Council or others.
4. In consideration of the acknowledgement by Council of the propriety of the City Attorney communicating with and advising the Mayor, City Manager, and staff without the immediate need to share those communications with Council, the Council encourages



the Mayor, City Manager, and staff to involve the City Attorney as early as possible in matters that may ultimately be brought before Council, so that legal issues may be resolved timely and effectively.

5. No Councilmember shall utilize the services of the City Attorney's Office or contract counsel for the City for purposes of investigating or obtaining legal opinions concerning other Councilmembers or their actions. Should any Councilmember believe an investigation of one or more other Councilmembers is warranted, a closed session may be held and the Council may provide direction to the City Attorney to hire independent counsel to research, investigate, and advise the Council on the matter. All requests for public documents by Councilmembers shall be timely and appropriately responded to by the City Attorney's Office; however, if in the judgement of the City Attorney the documents requested concern or affect other Councilmembers, the documents provided shall also be provided to all Councilmembers at the same time. This resolution shall not prohibit the City Attorney's Office from investigating matters such as harassment and hostile work environment in which investigations are legally required. ~~This paragraph shall be in effect only until July 21, 2022, and shall have no effect thereafter without Council approval.~~

6. This resolution shall be effective upon final approval, and shall supersede all prior versions of this resolution.

\* \* \* \* \*



STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
COUNTY OF FRESNO ) ss.  
CITY OF FRESNO )

I, TODD STERMER, City Clerk of the City of Fresno, certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Council of the City of Fresno, at a regular meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of July 2022.

AYES :Soria, Arias, Maxwell, Chavez, Bredefeld, Esparza  
NOES :Karbassi  
ABSENT :None  
ABSTAIN :None

TODD STERMER, CMC  
City Clerk

By: *Todd Stermer* 7-26-2022  
Deputy Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
RINA M. GONZALES  
Interim City Attorney

By: *Katie Doerr* 7/26/22  
Katie Doerr Date  
Chief Assistant City Attorney