

City of Sacramento

Legislation Text

File #: 2019-01807, **Version:** 1

Title:
(Pass for Publication) Ordinance Relating to Hotel Worker Protection

File ID: 2019-01807

Location: Citywide

Recommendation:

1) Review an ordinance adding Chapter 5.78 to the Sacramento City Code relating to hotel worker protection; and 2) pass for publication the ordinance title per Sacramento City Charter section 32(c) for consideration by City Council on January 14, 2020.

Contact: Consuelo Hernandez, Director of Government Affairs, (916) 808-7395, Office of the City Manager

Presenter: None

Attachments:

- 1-Description/Analysis
- 2-Ordinance

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: To address worker protections against sexual harassment, some hotel operators around the country are providing their housekeepers with panic buttons that they can use if they feel there is sexual harassment activity occurring in their presence. Panic buttons, when pressed, alert security personnel or other appropriate hotel staff to intervene if an employee feels threatened by any person.

Housekeepers in unionized, New York City hotels have been carrying panic buttons since 2013 and the Chicago City Council unanimously voted to require similar devices in 2017. Voters in Seattle approved legislation in 2016 which requires hotel housekeepers to carry electronic whistles, GPS-equipped buttons that alert security, or iPads with new emergency alert functions. In July 2018 the City of Miami Beach passed a law requiring hotels to arm housekeepers with panic buttons. On

February 6, 2018, Sacramento County passed an ordinance requiring hotel and motel operators in the unincorporated County to provide employees with a panic button or notification device which can be used to call for help if the employee reasonably believes that there is sexual harassment activity occurring in the employee's presence. Sacramento County's ordinance does not apply to hotels within the City of Sacramento.

Policy Considerations: There are approximately 80 hotels and motels operating within the City of Sacramento. As drafted, the proposed ordinance would apply to all hotels, as defined under section 3.28.020, within the City limits. If passed, the proposed ordinance would require hotel operators to provide employees who are assigned to work in a guest room or restroom panic buttons at no cost to the employee.

This proposed ordinance is intended to help protect hotel employees from sexual harassment and sexual assault. The panic button, carried by the employee, can be used if the employee needs urgent assistance.

Economic Impacts: Unknown.

Environmental Considerations: Not applicable.

Sustainability: Not applicable.

Commission/Committee Action: A proposed ordinance adding Chapter 5.78 to the Sacramento City Code relating to hotel worker protection was heard at the Law and Legislation Committee on June 18, 2019. A revised proposed ordinance was reviewed at the Law and Legislation Committee on December 3, 2019, and a motion was passed to forward the ordinance to City Council for approval.

Rationale for Recommendation: Upon request of the City Council, staff is proposing to add a section to the Sacramento City Code to provide protection to hotel workers working at specified hotels and motels within the city limits.

Financial Considerations: If the City chooses to conduct an outreach campaign to affected hotels, there may be future staffing costs including time for site visits and enforcement.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.