

# SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE®

## SAN FRANCISCO PRIDE ANNOUNCES CANCELLATION OF 2020 PARADE AND CELEBRATION

*Nonprofit event producers working to determine alternate ways to celebrate landmark 50<sup>TH</sup> anniversary via digital platforms*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### CONTACT

[media@sfpride.org](mailto:media@sfpride.org)

SAN FRANCISCO — Today, the Board of Directors of San Francisco Pride announced that this year's Parade and Celebration, originally scheduled for Saturday & Sunday, June 27-28, will not take place as planned. Uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified in recent weeks, and the organization has concluded that the risks to public health of a large-scale gathering such as Pride preclude this year's production of the annual event.

"This was not a decision we arrived at lightly," Executive Director Fred Lopez said. "Far from it: Our staff has been in frequent talks with our board, our production team, our partners at many departments of City Hall, officials at other Pride organizations worldwide — and most of all, our LGBTQ communities. We have heard from people who urged us to cancel, and from those who implored us not to."

"Since the coronavirus first emerged, we have held out hope that the situation would shift and we would be able to gather later this year," Lopez added. "Well before the first shelter-in-place order, our team began to balance our excitement for Pride 50 and evaluate possible alternatives. With heavy hearts, we have decided not to go forward with the Parade and Celebration in 2020."

"We know what Pride symbolizes for San Francisco — and to LGBTQ+ people around the world," Board President Carolyn Wysinger said. "We know our decision means disappointment, canceled plans, and one less thing for us all to look forward to. We also know that protecting the safety of all our communities is the most important. We look forward to gathering with all of you, our friends and our families and our allies. In the meantime, SF Pride will offer new and creative ways to commemorate LGBTQ+ Pride."

For decades, SF Pride's Parade and two-day Celebration have brought hundreds of thousands of LGBTQ revelers and allies to Downtown San Francisco. As 2020 is a historic 50th anniversary, upward of a million people were expected to attend, to witness more than 275 contingents march down Market Street toward Civic Center, where more

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than 20 community-programmed stages and gathering spaces highlight the diversity of all LGBTQ experiences.

"Pride is one of my favorite times of the year in San Francisco, and no one wants to celebrate with the entire community more than I do," Mayor London N. Breed said. "However, we are in an unprecedented public-health emergency with an uncertain future, and we must do everything we can to protect our entire community and put public health first. The City will continue to work with SF Pride to celebrate everything Pride stands for in the weeks and months to come, and San Francisco will emerge from this pandemic stronger than ever."

"SF Pride has made the right decision," said Sup. Rafael Mandelman, whose district includes the Castro. "While I am of course disappointed that we can't celebrate in person this year, I'm excited to see the virtual alternatives that our LGBTQ communities come up with. We know how many people Pride brings to San Francisco, and we hope to welcome everyone back soon."

"First and foremost, I want to thank SF Pride for making the right — albeit very tough — decision to cancel in-person pride events this year," said Senator Scott Wiener. "I have no doubt that SF Pride will put together a terrific slate of virtual events for this year's celebration. Pride is my favorite part of every year, and though it's disappointing that we can't be together in person, we will find creative ways to uplift and celebrate the LGBTQ community."

While the board and staff are disappointed not to showcase the physical celebration so many had hoped for, SF Pride plans to join a constellation of Pride organizations worldwide in a "Virtual Global Pride" on Saturday, June 27. SF Pride will be announcing additional collaborations, primarily in digital formats, to commemorate Pride throughout the summer. These alternate celebrations, presented alongside other community organizations and supporters, will roll out throughout the coming weeks and months.

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## ABOUT SF PRIDE

The San Francisco Pride Celebration Committee is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded to produce the SF Pride Celebration and Parade. The mission of the organization is to educate the world on LGBTQ issues, as well as commemorate the heritage, celebrate the culture, and liberate the people of all LGBTQ communities. A world leader in the Pride movement, SF Pride is also a grant-giving organization through its Community Partners Program. Since 1997, SF Pride has granted over \$3 million dollars in proceeds to local nonprofit LGBTQIA organizations and organizations working on issues related to HIV/AIDS, cancer, homelessness, housing rights, and animal welfare.

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