



# CITY OF OAKLAND

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#LoveLife

REBECCA KAPLAN  
Vice Mayor

SHENG THAO  
President Pro Tem

CARROLL FIFE  
Councilmember D3

Date: April 7, 2022  
To: Members of City Council and Members of the Public  
From: Vice Mayor Kaplan, Pro Tem Thao, & Councilmember Fife  
Re: **Resolution To Authorize An Independent Investigation Into The Circumstances Of The Termination Of Dr. Sarai Crain, And Into Allegations Of The Recurrent Mistreatment Of Black Women By The City Administration**

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## **Recommendation:**

**Adopt a Resolution To Authorize An Independent Investigation Into The Circumstances Of The Termination Of Dr. Sarai Crain, And Into Allegations Of The Recurrent Mistreatment Of Black Women By The City Administration**

## **Executive Summary:**

According to a [letter](#) recently received by the City Council, Dr. Sarai Crain, Deputy Chief of the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP), was terminated after holding the position since June 29, 2020. Also within this letter, Dr. Crain alleges the City terminated her as an act of retaliation, after she raised an issue regarding a pay inequity between a male colleague and herself. In addition, following her termination, the DVP presented a new structure for DVP personnel which eliminated the Deputy Chief position from the organizational chart altogether.

Allegations of gender-based misconduct and pay disparity, in addition to alleged retaliation, are a serious matter which warrant a direct response, investigation, and remedy. In addition, the implications of the elimination of the Deputy Chief position from the DVP’s organizational chart necessitate further examination, and significant changes to the organizational structure of the department necessitate consultation with and approval by the City Council.

## **Background/ History:**

On July 4, 2017, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 13451, establishing the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP). This department is tasked with fostering a safer and thriving Oakland via community-led intervention strategies for families and communities most impacted by violence, including gender-based violence. One of the positions created within the DVP is the position of Deputy Chief, which includes leading efforts to reduce gender-based violence, sexual abuse, and intimate partner violence.

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According to a letter recently received by the City Council, Dr. Sarai Crain, Deputy Chief of the DVP, was terminated after holding the position since June 29, 2020. Also within this letter, Dr. Crain alleges the City terminated her as an act of retaliation, after she raised an issue regarding a pay inequity between a male colleague and herself. The letter further outlines allegations of other forms of gender discrimination, and harrassment such as, “grotesque statements and mistreatment of Dr. Crain.”

Following Dr. Crain’s termination, at the March 28, 2022 [Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Oversight Committee](#) (SSOC), the DVP presented a new structure for DVP personnel, described as the proposal of the Mayor and Administration, which eliminated the Deputy Chief position from the organizational chart altogether.

As outlined in the June 20, 2017 [agenda report](#) on establishing a Department of Violence Prevention, the original structure of the DVP included a Deputy Chief position, responsible for strategic planning and inter-agency coordination to improve the City of Oakland’s response to gender-based violence and the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

**Analysis and Policy Alternatives:**

Allegations of gender-based misconduct and pay disparity, in addition to alleged retaliation, are serious matters which warrant a direct response, investigation, and remedy. In addition, the elimination of the Deputy Chief position from the DVP’s organizational chart necessitates further examination, and significant changes to the organizational structure of the department require consultation with and approval by the City Council.

This resolution authorizes an independent investigation into the circumstances of the termination of Dr. Sarai Crain, and the underlying claims of inequity. Further, the investigation would include a probe of the grounds for eliminating the Deputy Chief position from the DVP organizational chart, and who initiated the elimination of the position. Finally, the resolution requires an examination into allegations of the recurrent mistreatment of Black Women by the City Administration.

In order to conduct a thorough and independent investigation into the allegations, the independent investigator is required to work at the direction of the Council President and the Chair of the Finance and Management Committee, and will report back to Council on their findings.

**Action Requested of the City Council:**

Adopt a Resolution To Authorize An Independent Investigation Into The Circumstances Of The Termination Of Dr. Sarai Crain, And Into Allegations Of The Recurrent Mistreatment Of Black Women By The City Administration

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