



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
**Inter-Departmental Correspondence**

**Board of Supervisors**

**DATE:** November 22, 2004

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** December 7, 2004

**TO:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson *RJG*  
**SUBJECT:** Body Art and Body Piercing Ordinance

**Recommendation**

Approve meetings with stakeholders led by the San Mateo County Division of Environmental Health to develop a countywide body art and body piercing ordinance for future consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

**Background**

The ever-growing popularity of body piercing, tattoos and permanent cosmetics has seen a tremendous increase over the past several years. The increasing rate of these activities has the opportunity to give rise to the transmission of various communicable diseases such as: Hepatitis B (HBV) and Hepatitis C (HCV); Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV); Clostridium-tetanus; and Staphylococcus.

The California State Legislature amended the Health and Safety Code in 1997 to regulate and provide standards for the body art industry (which includes tattooing, permanent cosmetics, and body piercing), and the California Conference of Local Health Officers submitted draft body art regulations in 1998. The State Department of Health Services, however, has yet to adopt regulations due to reduced resources at the department.

**Discussion**

In an effort to protect the public health of the residents of San Mateo County, I would like the Division of Environmental Health to work with my office, the local body art industry and interested citizens to develop a countywide health protection ordinance for body art, piercing and permanent makeup businesses. In other jurisdictions in California, local ordinances have been supported by the industry it will regulate.

Currently the division has registered 50 businesses in the incorporated and

unincorporated county areas in the county that would be subject to this ordinance. Under the existing fee ordinance, these businesses would be subject to an annual permit fee of \$122.

**Vision Alignment**

The development of a body art and body piercing ordinance keeps the commitment of ensuring basic health and safety for all and goal #7: maintain and enhance the public safety of all residents and visitors.

**Fiscal Impact**

It is anticipated that there will be no net fiscal impact to the county. The program could be performed without adding personnel.