

**County of Santa Cruz  
Human Services Department  
FY 2015-16 Annual Report**



*Serving people in need in Santa Cruz County*

## ***Our Vision***

*Every child, adult, and family in Santa Cruz County is safe, healthy, and financially secure.*

## **Our Mission**

We strengthen our community by protecting the vulnerable, promoting self-sufficiency, alleviating poverty, and improving the quality of life.

## **We Value:**

- ◆ Excellent Service
- ◆ Compassion
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Partnerships
- ◆ Effective Practice

***We Are:*** *Dedicated to making a difference.*

# Human Services Department

## FY 2015-16 Accomplishments

### Increased Access to Health Coverage

- ◆ Doubled the number of Medi-Cal beneficiaries since 2013

### Increased Access to Food Support

- ◆ Continued to increase the number of individuals receiving CalFresh benefits

### Strengthened Community Supports

- ◆ Received a 70% increase in funding to continue implementation of the CalWORKs Housing Support Program which provides housing and support services to homeless CalWORKs families
- ◆ Increased the number of Veterans assisted with attaining benefits and services by more than 30%

### Facilitated Children's Success

- ◆ Initiated the planning process for the landmark Statewide Continuum of Care Reform initiative

### Protected Residents

- ◆ Increased the rapidity in which Adult Protective Services referrals were assessed
- ◆ Implemented a community protocol, in collaboration with Monterey and San Benito Counties, for the provision of services to commercially sexually exploited children

### Improved Customer Service

- ◆ Implemented telephonic signatures to streamline the CalFresh application and recertification processes

### Created New Paths to Employment

- ◆ Created an in-demand scholarship pilot program that enables jobseekers to pursue two-year degrees in hard to fill jobs
- ◆ Provided additional subsidized employment opportunities for CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work participants



# Human Services Department

## Our Goals

**Increase economic potential and decrease poverty**

**Reduce abuse and neglect**

**Improve well being and quality of life**

**Improve physical and mental health**

### FY 2015-16: Serving Our Community



**89,000**

Provided Medi-Cal benefits to 89,000 unique county residents



**38,000**

Provided CalFresh benefits to 38,000 unique county residents



**4,400**

Served 4,400 unique customers at three Career Centers



**240**

Served 240 children in out-of-home placements every month



**740**

Served 740 unique individuals through Adult Protective Services



**2,730**

Provided In-Home Supportive Services to 2,730 unique seniors & dependent adults



**40**

Gave 40 children a permanent home through adoptions

## Relevant Legislation and Policy Changes

### ◆ **SB 75 — Full Scope Medi-Cal for All Children**

- ◆ Effective May 2016, individuals under age 19 who do not have or are unable to establish satisfactory immigration status are eligible for full scope Medi-Cal benefits

### ◆ **Elimination of Change Reporting in CalFresh**

- ◆ Effective June 1, 2016, all CalFresh households will be subject to semi-annual reporting (SAR). Previously, households that consisted of homeless, migrant or seasonal farm workers, or elderly or disabled members were required to report certain changes to the county within 10 business days

### ◆ **Implementation of the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool**

- ◆ Effective October 1, 2015, all California counties are required to utilize the Online CalWORKs Appraisal Tool (OCAT) to assess the strengths and barriers of CalWORKs participants

### ◆ **Fair Labor Standards Act Overtime for In-Home Supportive Services Providers**

- ◆ Effective February 1, 2016, California State law began requiring all counties to administer Fair Labor Standards Act regulations with respect to overtime payments to In-Home Supportive Services providers, under certain conditions and within specific limits

### ◆ **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Requirements**

- ◆ **The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires that all existing Workforce Investment Board's sunset and a new Workforce Development Board be created by June 30, 2016.** As part of this change, the number of required board members must be reduced from 41 to 25 members
- ◆ By June 30, 2016, local Workforce Investment Boards are required to create a new Memorandum of Understanding with local workforce development providers. This agreement, which has not been updated since 2000, will provide the basis for new collaborations and resource sharing between workforce development agencies

## **Employment & Benefit Services Division**

### **FY 2015-16 Program Highlights**

- ◆ Implemented telephonic signatures to streamline the CalFresh application and recertification process; the approval rate of applications using a telephonic signature was higher than the overall CalFresh approval rate
- ◆ Expanded the CalFresh reverse certification program from two to four school districts. CalFresh reverse certification is the process by which school districts refer families who qualify for free and reduced lunch to apply for CalFresh
- ◆ Provided additional subsidized employment opportunities for CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work (WTW) participants through Work Study and temporary employment opportunities
- ◆ **Implemented a standard customer service interaction model known as WE CARE to improve customers' experience with Employment and Benefit Services Division programs**

### **Strategic Priorities for FY 2016-17**

- ◆ Increase participation in the CalFresh program through the expanded use of telephonic signatures, improved business processes for conducting in-reach, geo-mapping, and use of The Work Number, an online employment verification service that provides instant employment verification information such as employee earnings and hours worked
- ◆ Provide work activities, such as subsidized employment, to CalWORKs youth to increase family income and provide access to employment opportunities
- ◆ Re-envision the local CalWORKs WTW program to align with the statewide CalWORKs 2.0 effort which uses evidence-based best practices to create a comprehensive and integrated program that is whole family-focused, customized to meet the evolving needs of each family, keeps children out of poverty, and supports parents in reaching self-sufficiency

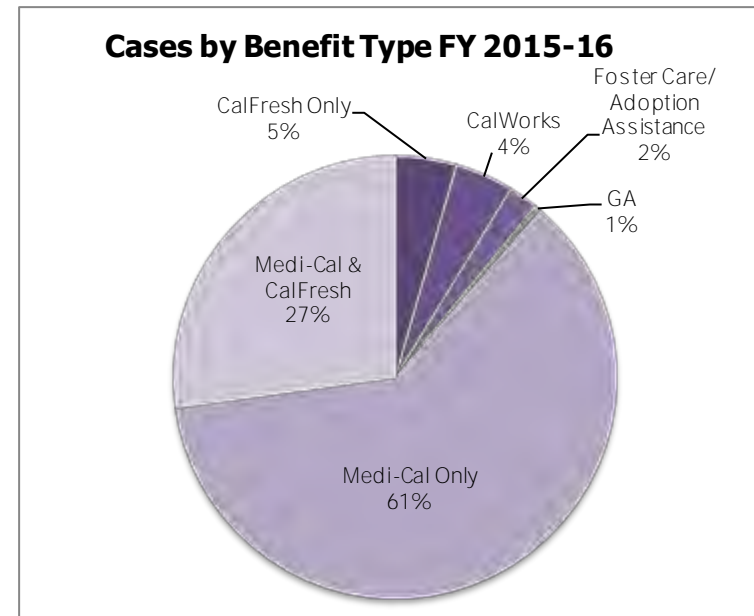
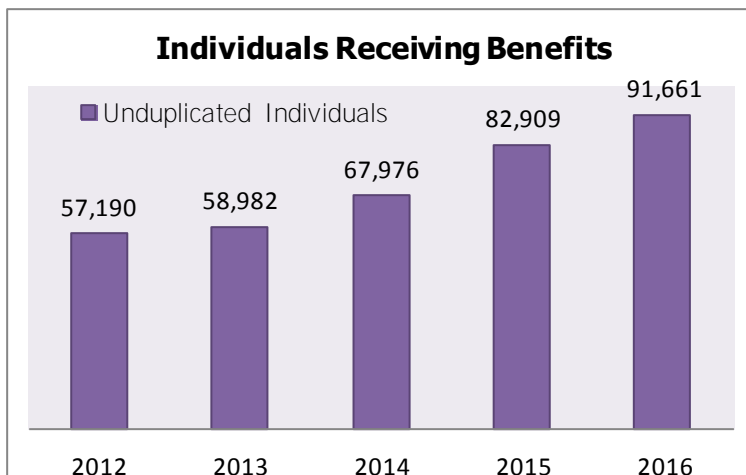
## Employment & Benefits Services Division

In FY 2015-16, the **Employment & Benefit Services Division** (EBS) provided public benefit assistance to approximately 92,000 unique individuals representing almost 49,000 households served through:

- ◆ Medi-Cal
- ◆ CalFresh
- ◆ CalWORKs
- ◆ General Assistance
- ◆ Foster Care/Adoption Assistance

In FY 2015-16, approximately 97% of persons receiving benefits received Medi-Cal.

*Over the course of FY 2015-16, approximately one-third of Santa Cruz County residents received benefits from one or more of HSD's public assistance programs.*

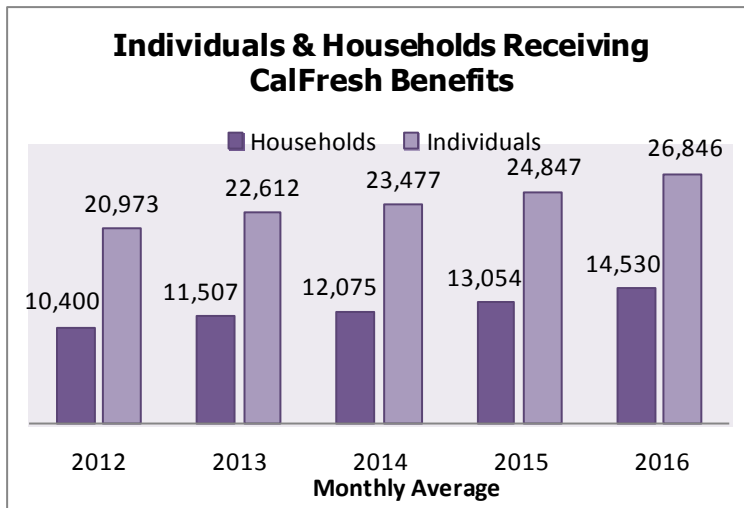


## Employment & Benefits Services Division: CalFresh & Medi-Cal

**CalFresh**, formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, and nationally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), serves as Santa Cruz County residents' first line of defense against hunger and poor nutrition.

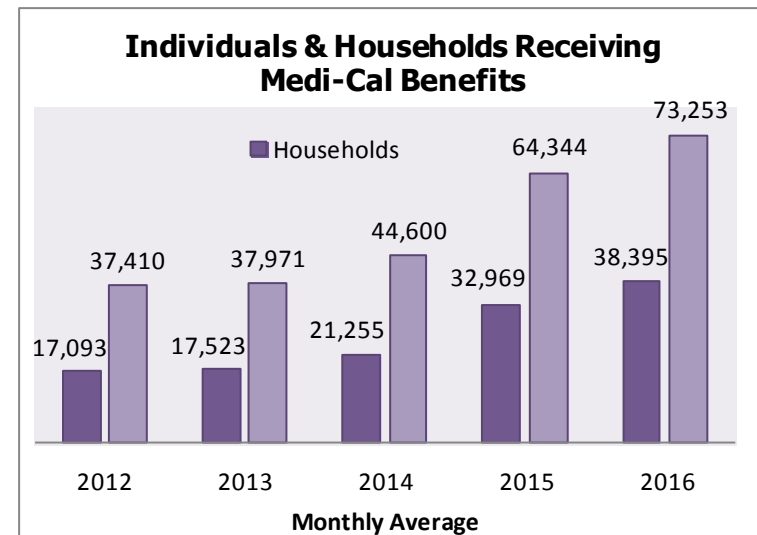
In FY 2015-16, the number of persons receiving CalFresh benefits continued to increase; a monthly average of 26,846 persons received CalFresh food assistance.

*In FY 2015-16, the County issued **\$3.6 million** in CalFresh benefits every month or approximately **\$44 million** over the course of the year*



Historically, the **Medi-Cal** program has provided health coverage for low-income families and disabled and aged adults. In 2014, under Health Care Reform, Medi-Cal became available for childless adults ages 19-64.

- ◆ On a monthly basis **more than twice the number of households** have access to health care via Medi-Cal than in 2013





## Employment & Benefits Services Division: CalWORKs & Welfare-to-Work

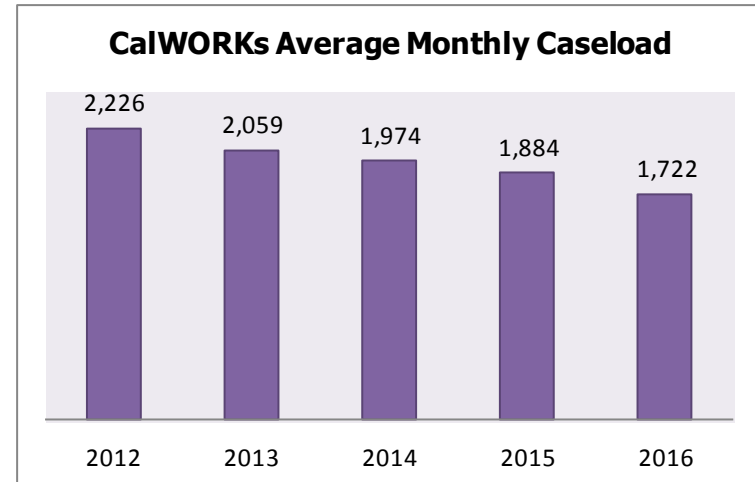
The **California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)** program offers temporary cash assistance and employment services, known as **Welfare to Work**, to needy families with children under 19 years of age.

Welfare to Work services that assist families to become self-reliant include:

- ◆ Child care
- ◆ Substance use and mental health services
- ◆ Transportation reimbursement
- ◆ Job training
- ◆ Educational assistance

In FY 2015-16:

- ◆ An average of 1,722 households were assisted by CalWORKs on a monthly basis
- ◆ 76% of the persons assisted through the CalWORKs program were children under the age of 18
- ◆ 87% of CalWORKs households were headed by women



*In FY 2015-16 approximately **\$11 million** in CalWORKs cash aid benefits and **\$2.5 million** in child care benefits were disbursed, resulting in **\$13.5 million** going into the Santa Cruz economy.*

### General Assistance

The County funded **General Assistance (GA)** program assists indigent adults who are incapacitated, unemployed, or homeless, and ineligible or awaiting other assistance, to meet their basic needs.

- ◆ In FY 2015-16, the average monthly GA caseload was 212

## **Family and Children's Services Division**

### **FY 2015-16 Program Highlights**

- ◆ Developed and initiated a collaborative planning process to implement the Statewide Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) initiative which is designed to reduce the use of group home care, increase the use of family-based care, and enhance the engagement of children and families in child welfare and probation services
- ◆ Implemented State-mandated **child welfare services' quality assurance case reviews**
- ◆ In collaboration with Monterey and San Benito Counties, implemented a community protocol for the provision of services to commercially sexually exploited children
- ◆ Redistributed social worker tasks, resulting in separate social work units to provide Family Maintenance/Family Reunification and Permanency/Adoptions services. The redistribution is designed to streamline social worker functions and improve permanency outcomes for families
- ◆ Increased recruitment efforts to address social worker turnover and vacancies

### **Strategic Priorities for FY 2016-17**

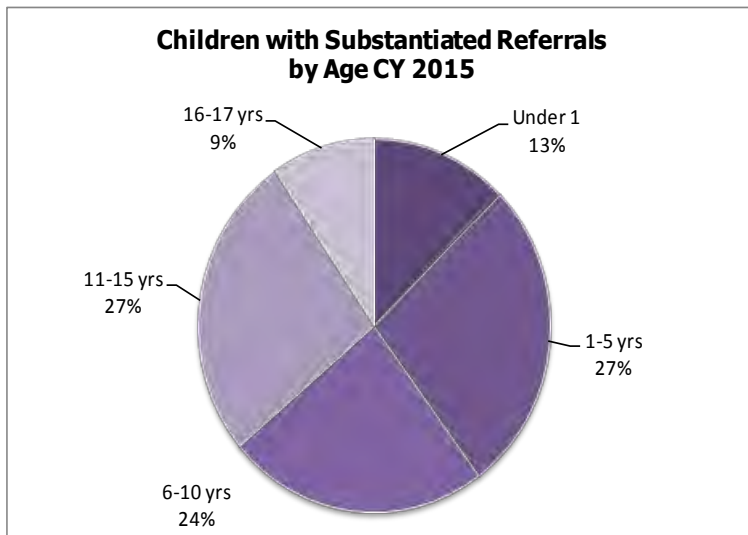
- ◆ Begin implementation of Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) requirements on January 1, 2017. Full implementation of this far-reaching initiative will take place over the next two to three years
- ◆ As part of CCR, implement a new Resource Family Approval process which uses a single process that simultaneously approves families for foster care, relative care, and adoptions
- ◆ In collaboration with Monterey and San Benito Counties, conduct a study of the prevalence of commercially sexually exploited children in the three counties
- ◆ Continue to implement improvement strategies based on the 2015-2020 Child Welfare and Juvenile Probation System Improvement Plan, and provide quarterly updates to the SIP Steering Committee

## Family and Children's Services Division: Child Welfare Services

### Child Welfare Services

**Family & Children's Services** (FCS) provides child welfare services to children who have been abused, neglected, or who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

- ◆ In FY 2015-16, FCS received referrals regarding potential abuse or neglect for an estimated 2,980 children.



### *Types of Child Welfare Services*

- ◆ *Emergency Response & Dependency Investigations*
- ◆ *Family Maintenance*
- ◆ *Family Reunification & Permanency Planning*
- ◆ *Licensing & Adoptions*

### Child and Family Outcomes

FCS continues to perform well on national and State outcome measures, including:

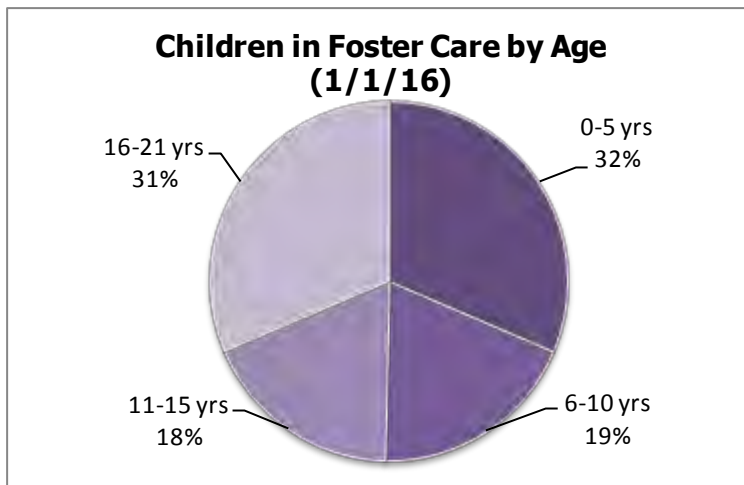
- ◆ More than 95% of children who experienced maltreatment did not experience a second incident of substantiated maltreatment within 6 months
- ◆ No child in foster care experienced substantiated abuse or neglect while in foster care
- ◆ Fifty percent of children in out-of-home care were placed with relatives or non-relative extended family members, compared to the statewide average of 36%

## Family and Children’s Services Division: Foster Care

**Foster care** provides children who have been removed from their parents due to abuse or neglect with a temporary safe and nurturing home environment while their parents receive counseling and other services aimed at enabling them to be reunited with their children.

In FY 2015-16:

- ◆ On a monthly basis, 243 children were in out-of-home placement
- ◆ Almost three out of four children were placed with some or all of their siblings



*If parents cannot provide a safe environment, the children must be placed in foster care or relatives’ homes until they can safely be returned to their own homes or placed with an adoptive family.*

### Forever Families Adoption Program

**Adoption** services are provided to children who are unable to stay with their families. Additional services include:

- ◆ Recruiting and screening prospective adoptive parents
- ◆ Finalizing adoptions
- ◆ Providing post adoption services

<b>Adoptions &amp; Adoption Assistance</b>	<b>FY 15-16</b>
Finalized Adoptions	40
Average Monthly Adoption Assistance Cases	610

## Family and Children’s Services Division: Continuum of Care Reform

AB 403, known as Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), was passed in October 2015. CCR intends to improve outcomes for children and youth in foster care and on probation by:

- ◆ Using comprehensive initial child assessments;
- ◆ Increasing family and youth engagement in placement decision making and case planning;
- ◆ Increasing the use of home-based family care, as well as services and supports to these caregivers;
- ◆ Reducing the long-term use of group care; and
- ◆ Reducing the duration of involvement with child welfare and juvenile justice by achieving permanency more quickly.

By January 1, 2017, the County will begin implementing the provisions of this landmark legislation. One of the initial CCR implementation aims will be to step youth down from group home placements into a home with a resource family, ideally a relative.

**Chart A** illustrates the number of child welfare youth in group homes on a monthly basis in 2015; under CCR, the number of youth in group homes will be significantly reduced.

**Chart A: Number of Youth In Group Homes Per Month, 2015**

<b>High</b>	<b>23 (7/2015)</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Low</b>	<b>14 (12/2015)</b>

A second CCR implementation goal is to limit stays in congregate care to six months or less. **Chart B** shows the length of time youth in care on May 31, 2016, had spent in a group home setting.

Approximately half of the youth had been in a group setting longer than 6 months; this number will also be significantly reduced with CCR implementation.

**Chart B: Length of Time in Care, 5/31/16**

Less than 30 days	2	9%
30 to 59 days	3	14%
60 to 119 days	6	27%
120 to 299 days	0	0%
300 to 364 days	1	5%
365 or more days	10	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Adult & Long Term Care

### FY 2015-16 Program Highlights

- ◆ Improved the timeliness of case creation and assessment of senior and disabled adult victims of abuse
- ◆ Used Proposition 63 grant funding to deploy an outreach specialist who assisted over 255 Veterans to identify and seek services
- ◆ Increased the number of Veterans assisted every month by the Veterans Services Office by more than 20%
- ◆ Expanded recruitment of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) providers through direct outreach efforts by Public Authority social workers, and by mailing over 1,300 informational postcards to potential providers
- ◆ Improved the timely assessment of IHSS recipients by more than 40%

### Strategic Priorities for FY 2016-17

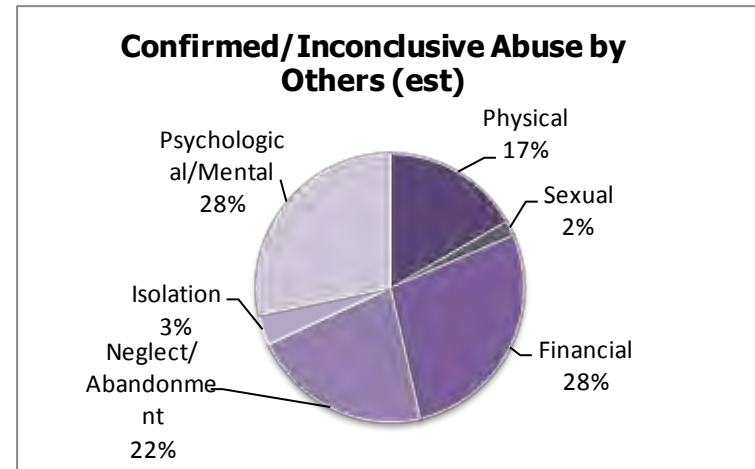
- ◆ Establish collaborative relationships with additional community, governmental, medical, and other professional organizations in order to facilitate the provision of resources, interventions, education, and advocacy to prevent and mitigate adult abuse
- ◆ Work with community partners to prevent and reduce chronic homelessness, especially for seniors, persons with disabilities, and Veterans
- ◆ Continue working with the Central California Alliance for Health to more effectively care for IHSS recipients with high service **needs and assess how nurses might be used to more efficiently coordinate these clients' services**
- ◆ Increase outreach to Veterans in order to increase the utilization of benefits and services, with a focus on Veterans who are unable or unwilling to seek services in a traditional manner
- ◆ Increase CalFresh participation among IHSS recipients and providers and Adult Protective Services clients

## Adult & Long Term Care: Adult Protective Services

**Adult Protective Services** (APS) provides intervention services to protect elderly and dependent adults from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. In FY 2015-2016:

- ◆ Approximately three-quarters of persons referred to APS were elders; the remaining were dependent adults
- ◆ Almost 90% of APS reports received an in-person investigation
- ◆ Approximately half of all allegations of abuse were *abuse by others*; the remaining cases were *self abuse* including self-neglect

APS Referrals	FY 2015-16
Abuse/Neglect Referrals Received	992
Abuse/Neglect In-Person Investigations Completed	879
Clients Served (unduplicated count)	743



### Financial Abuse

Financial exploitation of both elderly and dependent adults represents almost 30% of all APS reports of abuse that were either confirmed or determined inconclusive — the largest category of APS reports of abuse by others. Individuals exploited in this manner risk losing their homes as well as significant assets.

Strategies to combat financial abuse include:

- ◆ Responding to reports of potential financial abuse cases with the District Attorney's Office and law enforcement as members of the Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST)
- ◆ Providing training to banks and credit unions

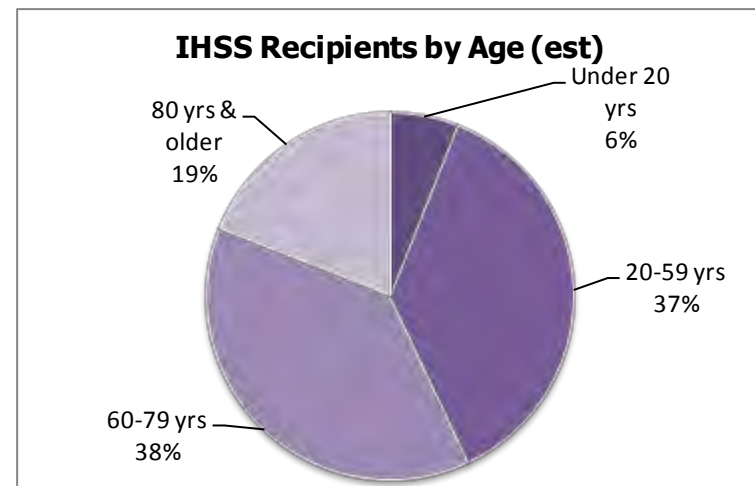
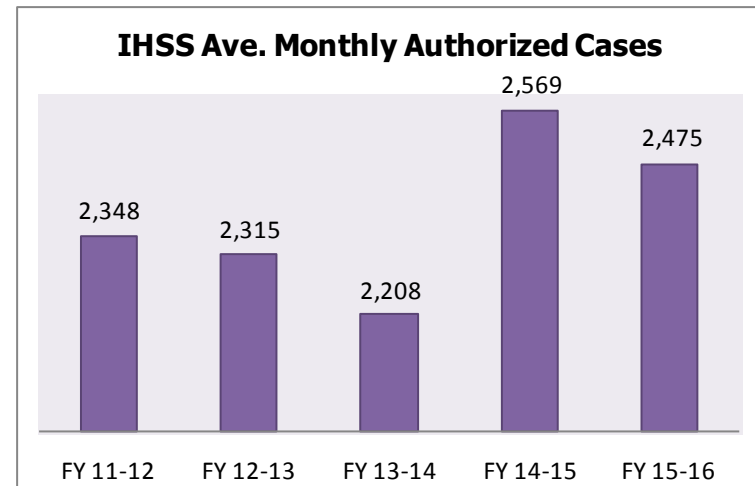
## Adult & Long Term Care: In-Home Supportive Services Program

The **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)** program supports safe, independent living for low-income frail, elderly adults, and disabled persons of all ages by providing a variety of services including:

- ◆ Basic housekeeping
- ◆ Meal preparation and clean-up
- ◆ Personal care

In FY 2015-16:

- ◆ IHSS recipients were authorized to receive an average of 105 hours of assistance per month
- ◆ Approximately 2,100 IHSS providers per month received a payment for services
- ◆ Every month, an average of 60 individuals attended enrollment appointments to become a new provider



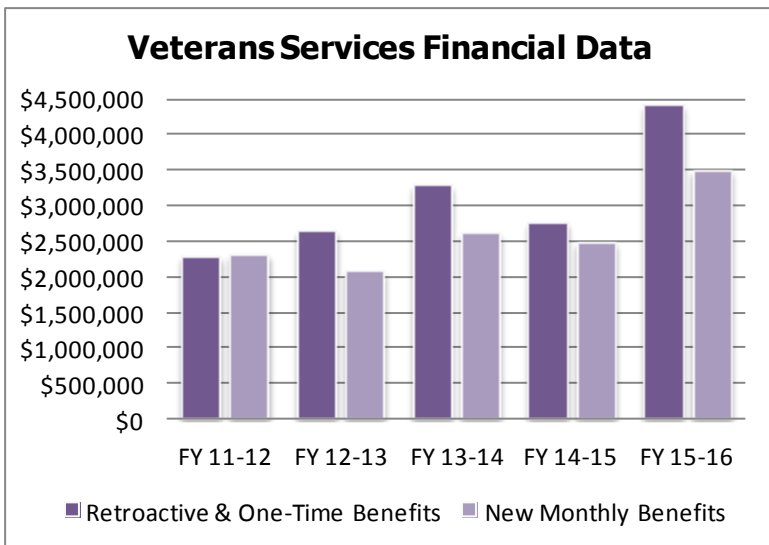


## Adult & Long Term Care: Veterans Services Office

The **Veterans Services Office (VSO)** provides Santa Cruz County Veterans and their families with a range of services, including:

- ◆ Assisting Veterans to access government benefits accrued through military service
- ◆ Providing information, referrals, and advocacy
- ◆ Providing assistance with claims and appeals

In FY 2015-16, the VSO assisted 1,662 Veterans with claims resulting in almost \$3.5 million in new monthly benefits and \$4.4 million in retroactive and one-time benefits for County Veterans and their dependents.



## Palo Alto Veterans Administration Medical Services

The VSO coordinates transportation to medical **services for the County’s most vulnerable** Veterans through the Veterans Administration (VA).

- ◆ In FY 2015-16, the VSO arranged round trip transportation to the Palo Alto VA Medical Center for 173 Veterans.

## Medical Outreach Team

The VA Medical Outreach Team provides County Veterans with initial access to VA healthcare, medical screenings, referrals to medical and mental health care specialists, and substance abuse disorder and rehabilitation programs within the Palo Alto VA Health Care System.

- ◆ In FY 2015-16, the VA Medical Outreach Team provided 229 medical outreach appointments at the Veterans Memorial Building.

## **Workforce Investment Board**

### **FY 2015-16 Program Highlights**

- ◆ In partnership with Monterey and San Benito Counties, secured a new \$400,000 Proposition 39 Pre-Apprenticeship grant to train at-risk youth, women, Veterans, and other disadvantaged job seekers in green job skills
- ◆ Created a new in-demand scholarship pilot program that enabled 14 jobseekers to pursue two year degrees in the hard to fill employment areas of nursing, dental hygiene, and radiological technology
- ◆ **Completed a transition from the local virtual career center to the State's CalJOBS system, saving approximately \$68,000 per year and freeing up staff time that had been dedicated to maintaining the old system**
- ◆ Hosted 69 on-site recruitment events, more than double the number of events offered in the previous fiscal year

### **Strategic Priorities for FY 2016-17**

- ◆ **Continue to implement the new federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's (WIOA) requirement to create a regional workforce development plan in cooperation with Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties**
- ◆ Implement a new Business Engagement Plan that creates more career opportunities for Santa Cruz County Residents and helps employers find skilled talent
- ◆ Create new pilot programs designed to provide in-demand career training and work experience opportunities for at-risk youth

## Workforce Investment Board

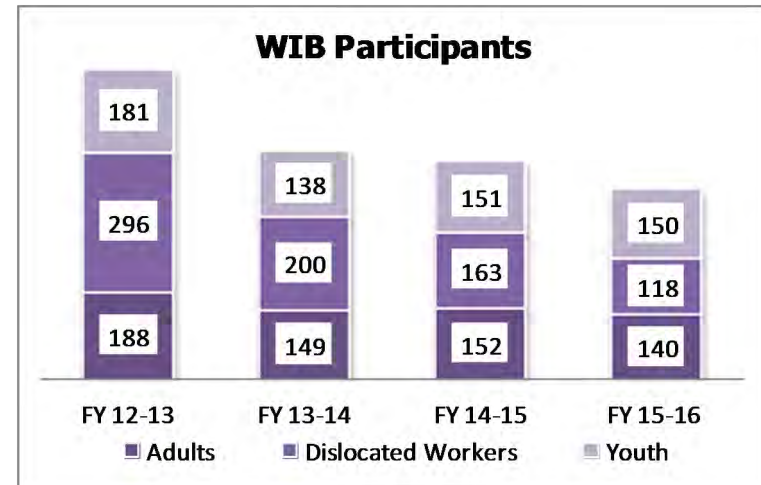
The **Workforce Investment Board** (WIB) helps connect local job seekers with employers who are seeking qualified job applicants.

The WIB collaborates with members of the business and education communities, local government, and community members, to respond to the needs of local employers and County residents seeking employment.

### Adult & Dislocated Worker Services

The WIB assists businesses as well as workers who will be dislocated as a result of layoffs, plant closures, or downsizing. Rapid Response Services include assistance with:

- ◆ Filing unemployment claims
- ◆ Searching for employment
- ◆ Utilizing labor market information
- ◆ Accessing retraining services



### Sueños Youth Employment Program

The **Sueños** program provides disadvantaged youth in the Watsonville and Freedom areas with:

- ◆ Work experience placement
- ◆ Basic skills development
- ◆ Mentoring
- ◆ Leadership Services

In FY 2015-16, the WIB exceeded all of its performance goals for the **Sueños** program including:

- ◆ 83% of program participants placed in employment or post-secondary education
- ◆ 83% attain a degree or technical certification
- ◆ 87% gain literacy and math skills

## Community Partners

In partnership with the community, HSD provides services that support and protect adults, children and families, the elderly and dependent adults, and provides resources and job training opportunities for persons who are unemployed

The Human Services Department contracts with nonprofit agencies and organizations to provide services and support to the community, including:

Cabrillo College	Parents Center
Community Action Board	Santa Cruz County Office of Education
Community Bridges	Santa Cruz County Community Ventures
El Pajaro Community Development Center	Santa Cruz Volunteer Center
Encompass Community Services	Second Harvest Food Bank
Families In Transition	United Way of Santa Cruz County
Goodwill Industries of the Central Coast	<b>Walnut Avenue Women's Center</b>
Homeless Services Center	Watsonville Law Center
Meridian Psychotherapy	Youth Resources Bank
Monarch Services/Servicios Monarca	

The Human Services Department participates in and supports a variety of coalitions and collaborative workgroups, including:

211 and Community Assessment Project Steering Committees	All In: Toward a Home for Every County Resident	Homeless Action Partnership
Benefits Collaborative	First Five Commission	Santa Cruz Connect
Child Welfare System Improvement Plan Steering Committee	Fund for Women & Girls Advisory Board	Roadmap to Collective Mental Health Wellness
<b>Children's Network</b>	Go For Health Collaborative	Substance Abuse Disorder Prevention and Treatment Plan
Community Data Mapping Project	Health Improvement Partnership	Youth Violence Prevention Strategic Plan
Cradle to Career Initiative	Healthy Kids	
Financial Abuse Specialist Team		

**Report Child Abuse**  
**1-877-505-3299**

**Report Elder Abuse**  
**1-866-580-4357**

## **Contact the Human Services Department**

Visit our website at [www.santacruzhumanservices.org](http://www.santacruzhumanservices.org)

For Public Assistance Programs, call the Benefits Phone Customer Service Center at 1-888-421-8080 or TTY 454-4763

Or

Apply for CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and CalWORKs Online at [www.MyBenefitsCalWIN.org](http://www.MyBenefitsCalWIN.org)

<b>Family &amp; Children's Services</b>	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4222	TTY 711
<b>Adult &amp; Long Term Care</b>	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4101	TTY 763-8828
<b>Employment &amp; Benefit Services</b>	1020 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	888-421-8080	TTY 454-4763
<b>Veterans Services</b>	842 Front Street, Santa Cruz 215 E. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-7276	

### **Workforce Santa Cruz County Career Centers**

#### **Watsonville**

18 W. Beach Street  
763-8700  
TTY 464-4358

#### **Santa Cruz**

350 Encinal Street  
423-8611  
TTY 711

#### **Capitola**

2045 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
464-6286  
TTY 464-4358

***Dedicated to making a difference - Serving people in need in Santa Cruz***