



FY 2022-23 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.



FY 2022-23: Serving Our Community



93,715

Provided Medi-Cal benefits to 93,715 county residents



40,424

Provided CalFresh benefits to 40,424 county residents



1,664

Served 1,664 adults through Adult Protective Services



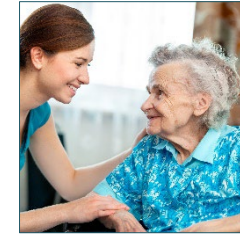
136

136 children on average were in an "out-of-home" placement each month



1,506

1,506 individuals received employment support services



3,468

Provided In-Home Supportive Services to 3,468 seniors and dependent adults



13

Provided 13 children a permanent home through adoptions



1,363

Assisted 1,363 Veterans in receiving benefits



\$62.6 Million

Provided \$62.6 Million in CalFresh benefits



\$13.4 Million

Provided \$13.4 million in temporary cash assistance to families in need



1,616

Served 1,616 families through CalWORKs



2,314

Responded to 2,314 allegations of abuse to children



737

Permanently Housed 737 households experiencing homelessness



827

Assessed 827 households experiencing homelessness for housing and sheltering programs

Responding to Winter Storm Events

During disasters, County Human Service Departments are mandated by state and federal law to provide mass care and shelter and emergency social service assistance. This emergency preparedness and response work, and well as resource costs, all fall well outside of, and in addition to, regular social services work activities County Human Service Departments like ours are mandated to carry out.

During the winter storm events that took place between January and March 2023, HSD worked as part of the County's Emergency Operations Center's (EOC) Operational Coordination Team. HSD took the lead role to provide mass care and shelter, in coordination and collaboration with the County Administrator's Office (CAO), the County's Office of Response, Recovery & Resilience (OR3), the Health Services Agency (HSA), the General Services Department (GSD), other County departments, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the Cities of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Scotts Valley and Watsonville, other neighboring jurisdictions and many local non-profits. Together, with HSD in a lead role, we:

- ◆ Opened and staffed 4 emergency shelters and 3 temporary evacuation point (TEP) shelters, providing short-term emergency congregate shelter to 502 individuals during the January 2023 winter storms.
- ◆ Opened and staffed 5 emergency shelters and 1 temporary evacuation point (TEP) shelter, providing short-term emergency congregate shelter to 436 individuals during the March 2023 winter storms.
- ◆ Opened and supported night-time only congregate shelters for those experiencing homelessness during the February 2023 extreme cold weather event.
- ◆ Secured and delivered food, safety kits and other health and safety provisions for evacuees at congregate emergency and TEP shelters.
- ◆ Provided benefits outreach and support at each of the County's Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) for evacuees in need of benefits assistance.
- ◆ Initiated the County's written requests for non-congregate Shelter (NCS) assistance and Disaster Case Management (DCM) from the state and federal governments.



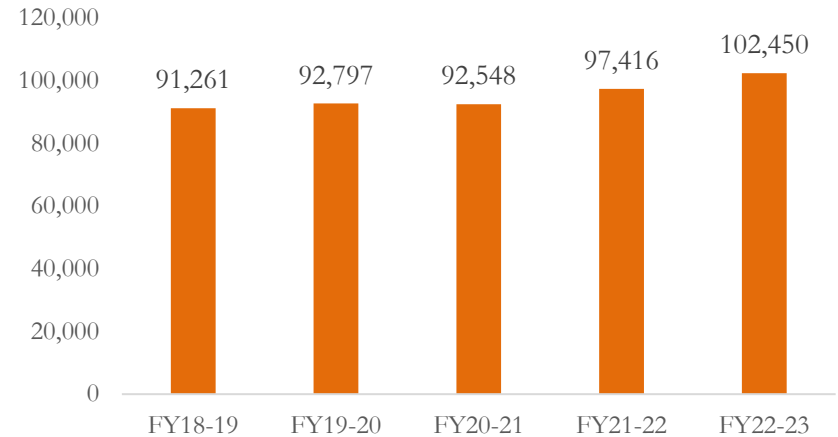
In addition to these collaborative inter-agency efforts, HSD also worked to ensure that our existing clients in Adult Protective Services, Public Guardian, In-Home Support Services, Foster Care or who are in a Family and Children's Services preventative care program, and who reside in evacuation zones, were contacted and provided any needed assistance to help ensure safe evacuation and storm recovery support. Additionally, HSD's Employment & Benefit Services Division helped 58 eligible households, comprised of 130 individuals, access \$32,619 in Disaster CalFresh benefits as a result of food loss due to the floods and resulting evacuations.

Employment and Benefits Services Division: Access to Public Benefits

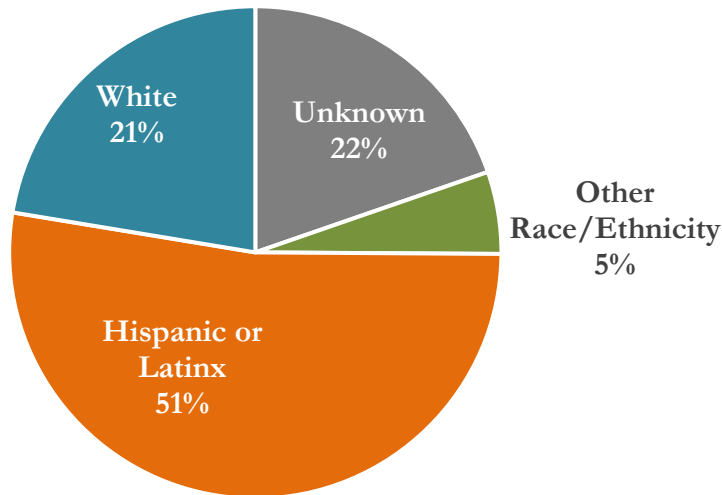
In FY 2022-23, the Employment & Benefits Services Division (EBS) provided public benefit assistance to 102,450 unique individuals representing over 58,524 households served through:

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

Number of Unduplicated Individuals Receiving Benefits



Race/Ethnicity of Individuals Receiving Benefits



Over the course of FY 2022-23, one-third of all Santa Cruz County residents received benefits from one or more of HSD's public assistance programs

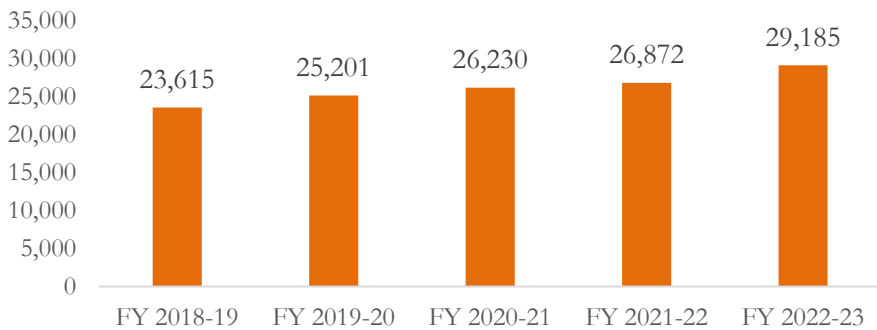
Employment and Benefits Services Division: Food and Medical Care

CalFresh

CalFresh, nationally known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is Santa Cruz County’s largest food assistance program. CalFresh benefits can help County residents buy nutritious foods for a better diet, stretch food budgets, and by preventing food insecurity for families and individuals.

- ◆ The County completed two Disaster CalFresh operations to provide food assistance benefits for individuals and families affected by disaster.
- ◆ Applied statewide flexibilities, removing the interview requirements for some households.
- ◆ Temporarily issued the maximum benefit allotment for the household size through February 2023.
- ◆ Promoted CalFresh Awareness throughout the month of May 2023, partnering up with local organizations to increase program participation and utilization of the Farmer’s Market Match, doubling the purchase power for fruits and vegetables grown and sold locally.

Average Monthly Number of Individuals Receiving CalFresh

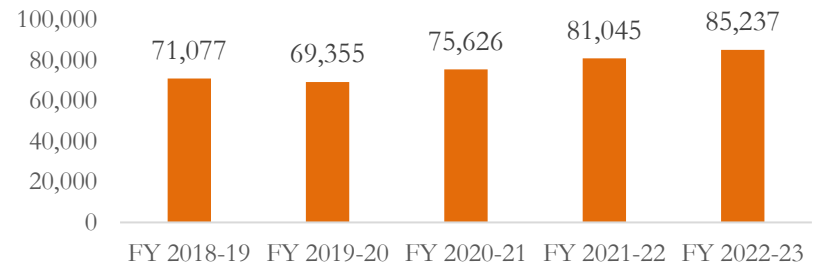


Medi-Cal

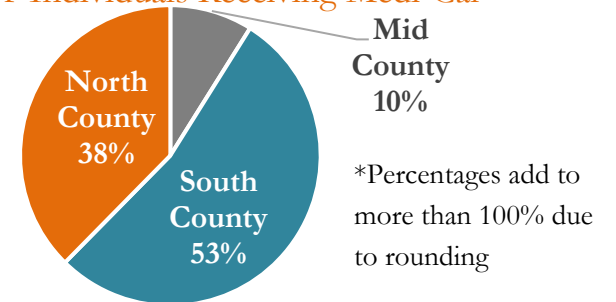
This program provides health coverage for low-income families and individuals.

- ◆ In July 2022, the Medi-Cal program increased the asset limits from \$2,000 to \$130,000 for a household of one, and from \$3,000 to \$195,000 for a household of two, allowing more low-income families and individuals to obtain healthcare coverage.
- ◆ Effective April 2023, Federal waivers enabled the County to complete Medi-Cal renewals with less burden on recipients supporting continuous access to health coverage after an extended pause on Medi-Cal renewals due to the pandemic.

Average Monthly Number of Individuals Receiving Medi-Cal



Location of Individuals Receiving Medi-Cal*



Employment and Benefits Services Division: Income and Employment Services

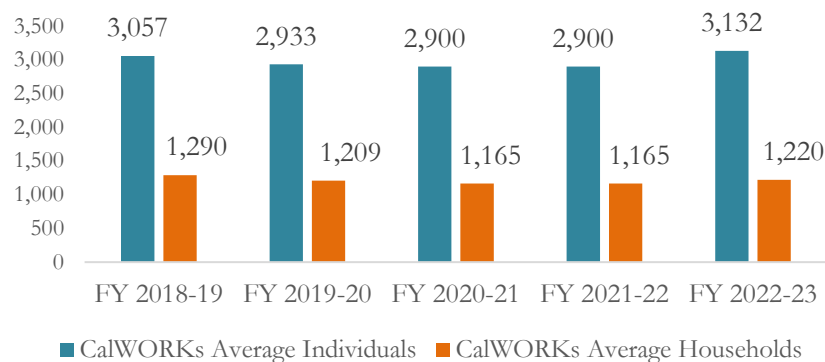
The **California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)** program offers temporary cash assistance to families with children living in extreme poverty. Eligible parents/caretakers may also participate in education, training, or work activities.

- ◆ Beginning July 2023, the CalWORKs program increased the Income and Vehicle Value limits expanding eligibility to more low-income families.
- ◆ A temporary 10% CalWORKs grant increase was made permanent providing needed support for Santa Cruz families and children.
- ◆ A one-time payment of \$310 was issued to CalWORKs families in May 2023 to support enrichment opportunities for children.

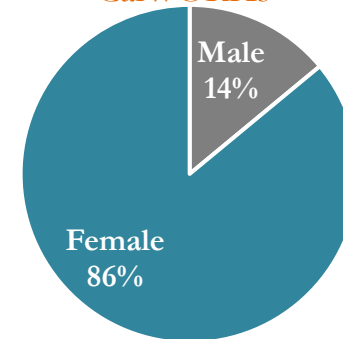
Welfare to Work, or CalWORKs Employment Services provide services to help underemployed and unemployed parents/caretakers learn new work skills and obtain work, so they can support their families. In FY 2022-23, 4,242 individuals received employment support services. CalWORKs Employment Services include:

- ◆ Childcare
- ◆ Substance use and mental health services
- ◆ Job training and educational assistance
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Subsidized employment
- ◆ Housing

Average Monthly Number of CalWORKs Households and Individuals



Gender of Head of Household Receiving CalWORKs



Approximately \$13.4 million in CalWORKs cash aid benefits and \$2.1 million in childcare benefits were disbursed, totaling more than \$15.5 million going into the Santa Cruz economy. On average, households received \$925 a month in aid.

Employment and Benefits Services Division: Workforce and Business Support

The **Workforce Development Board (WDB)** connects local job seekers with employers who are seeking qualified job applicants. The WDB 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 and Dislocated Worker Services

The WDB 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 searching for employment, utilizing labor market information, and accessing retraining services.

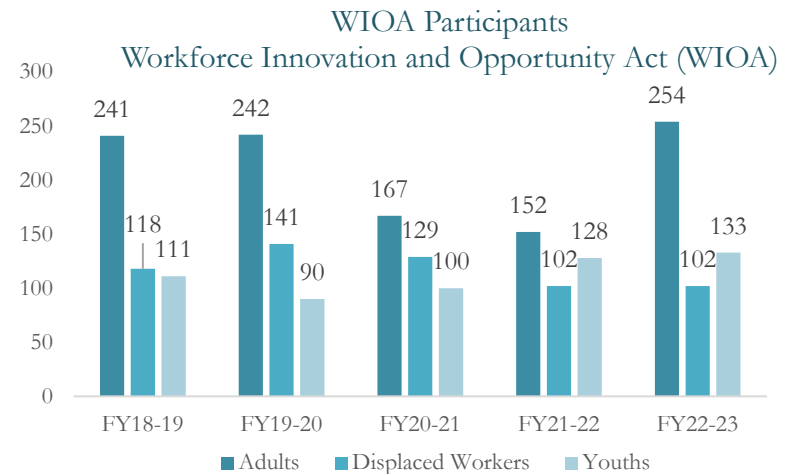
Sueños Youth Employment Program

The program provides disadvantaged youth in the Watsonville and Freedom areas with work experience, basic skills development, mentoring, and leadership services. The Sueños program enrolled 125 youth and 30 participated in work experience with 10 different employers.



The FS Social Worker team is co-located with the Employment Services staff to allow for optimum collaboration between staff.

General Assistance (GA) is a county-funded program providing cash assistance to adults who have no other form of income support and do not qualify for other aid programs. In FY 2022-23 the average monthly GA caseload was 171. On average individuals received \$514 a month in benefits.



Family Stabilization (FS) is a component of CalWORKs Employment Services (CWES) that provides intensive case management and services to address immediate crisis situations and needs. The goal of FS is to increase family success through more intensive case management and to link families to services to help minimize and address barriers. CWES recipients experiencing a situation or crisis that is destabilizing the family and would interfere with participation in program activities and services may participate in FS services. Situations of crisis include, but are not limited to:

- Homelessness or imminent risk of homelessness;
- A lack of safety due to domestic violence; and/or
- Untreated or undertreated behavioral needs, including mental health or substance abuse-related needs.

Employment and Benefits Services Division: Workforce and Business Support

Helping Start a Career Path

Ana Campos is a strong independent woman, a single mom of two kids, and full of dreams, goals, and ambitions. Before participating in the WIOA program, Ana worked as a Registered Dental Assistant for 10 years. She knew she wanted to advance her career in the medical industry to provide a better-quality life for her family. Ana was actively researching different occupations in the health care industry when she came across a surgical tech program with Silicon Valley Surgical Tech Institute (SVSTI). She found out through the school the different types of financial aid assistance and visited our Watsonville Career Center. The Career Center Coordinator supported her to get her started with her eligibility process. After becoming eligible, she was assigned to Ana Ontiveros (Employment Services Specialist [ESS]). During Ana's initial assessment, she mentioned to her ESS that she was interested in attending SVSTI and that she was also participating in the CalWORKs program. During the five months it took to get Ana registered, Ana, her ESS, and her CalWORKs case manager maintained constant communication and provided multiple updates.

Ana began her training in Fall 2021. Due to a family emergency, Ana failed one of her training courses and needed to retake the course to be able to graduate from the program. To retake the course, Ana needed to pay for it. She was worried she would have to drop out of the program because she could not afford the cost of the class. Ana's ESS advocated for her with the school to obtain a program extension and worked alongside the CalWORKs case manager to find other funding sources to pay for this course. The CalWORKs program was able to fully fund the course and allowed Ana to retake it. In February 2023, Ana graduated from SVSTI and obtained her Surgical Tech License.

In April 2023, Ana began working for Dominican Hospital as a Surgical Technologist earning \$45.36/hour. She is also working on obtaining her Associate of Applied Science in Surgical Technology Degree. She describes her experience with WIOA: "Thank you for all your help, without the help of the WIOA program I wouldn't have done it. Thank you so much for the support and guidance."

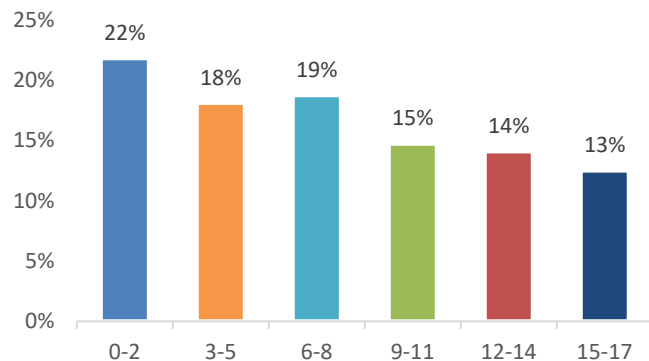
Family and Children’s Services Division: Ensuring Child Safety

Child Protection Response and Investigation

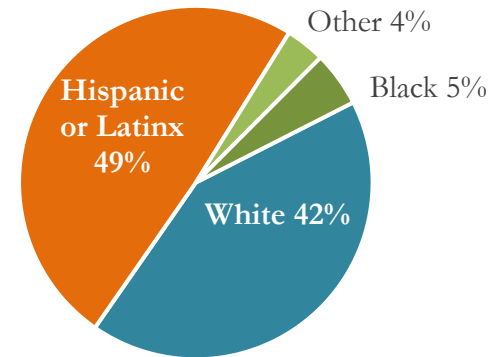
Family & Children’s Services (FCS) provides child welfare services to children who have been abused, neglected, or who are at risk of abuse or neglect. FCS social workers work with families to assess safety and risk and to keep children in their home whenever safe to do so. Social workers develop safety plans with families and their support networks and refer them to community resources to keep children safe at home. When children cannot be maintained safely at home, FCS strives to place children with kin while providing services to birth parents so they can make the behavioral changes needed to safely parent their children.

- ◆ In FY 2022-23 FCS received 2,314 calls about potential abuse and neglect, but many did not necessitate an investigation. 945 children required an investigation of abuse or neglect.
- ◆ In FY 2022-23, FCS opened child welfare cases for 81 children based on safety and risk.
 - In 17 of these cases the children were able to receive ongoing services and remain safely with their parents.
 - In 44 cases, the children were removed from their home and received family reunification services.

Children with Investigations by Age Group

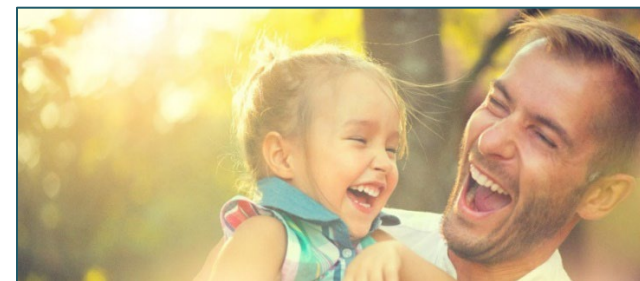


Percent of Children in Out of Home Placement by Race/Ethnicity



When Social Workers determine the referred incident demonstrates evidence of abuse and neglect it is deemed “substantiated”, FCS in collaboration with the family, works to determine the most appropriate services to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.

- ◆ On average, 32 children received services each month to ensure their safety and wellbeing while living with their parents.
- ◆ On average, 136 children and transitional age youth were in an “out-of-home” placement. While only 64 children were removed from their home in FY 22-23, many children stay in out of home placement for months or years.



Family and Children’s Services Division: Promoting Permanency

Permanency

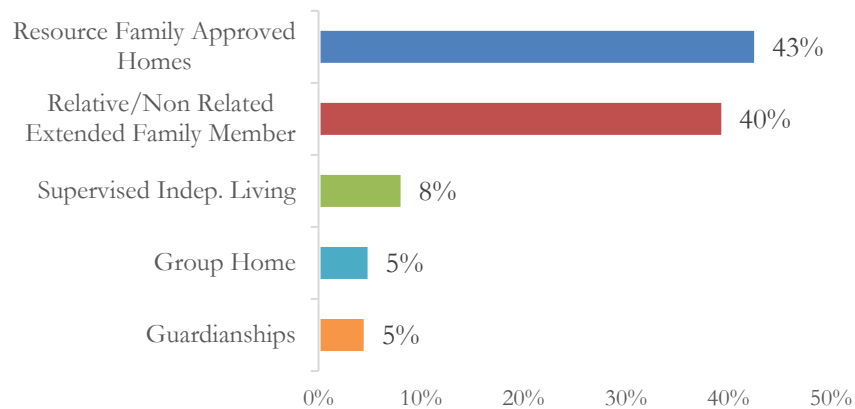
FCS’ primary goal when working with families is to safely stabilize them and/or reunite children with their parents. Parents receive services to make behavioral changes to ensure the child’s safety and wellbeing.

- ◆ 29 youth and children in “out-of-home” placements were reunified with their parents.
- ◆ 44% of all children who were in out-of-home care for 12-23 months were either reunified with their families, adopted, or attained legal guardianship, exceeding the federal standard of 44%.

At times it is determined that children cannot remain safely in their home.

- ◆ Approximately 29% of children were placed with relatives or friends.

Children in Out of Home Placements by Placement Type



Forever Families

Adoption services are provided to children who are unable to reunify with their parents.

Adoptions & Adoption Assistance	FY 2022-23
Finalized adoptions	13

Engagement

A key strategy for FCS to ensure permanency is to strengthen family, youth, and community engagement. This past year FCS has:

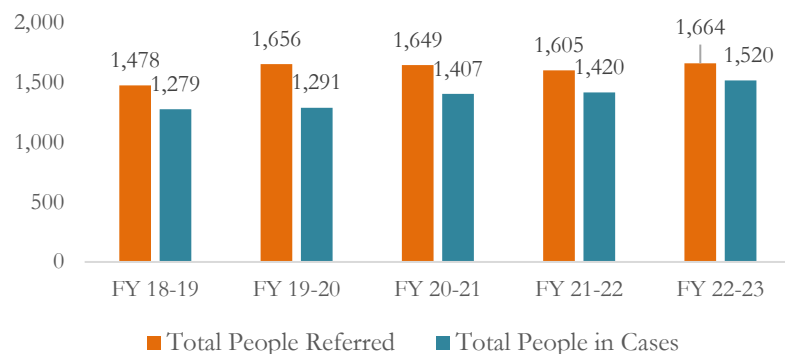
- ◆ Continued the Parent Partner Program, in which birth parents currently receiving FCS services receive support from parents who previously reunified successfully with their children.
- ◆ Documented progress resulting from the implementation of the System Improvement Plan (SIP), whose five strategies are: 1) Improving father engagement, 2) Enhancing services to birth parents, 3) Strengthening implementation of Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM), 4) Increasing placement capacity, and 5) Expanding Prevention Services.

Adult & Long-Term Care: Ensuring Adult Safety

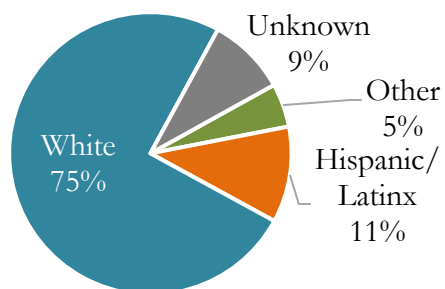
Adult Protective Services (APS) provides intervention services to protect elderly and dependent adults from abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

- ◆ **APS Expansion:** In January 2022, the State of California changed the definition of “elder” from age 65 to 60. This means APS can provide services to vulnerable adults five years earlier than previously permissible. The APS program has increased its workforce to handle the additional cases that require longer-term case management for those with more complex needs.
- ◆ **In FY22-23**, 75% of APS referrals received became an APS case.
- ◆ **41%** of APS allegations of abuse that were confirmed or inconclusive was abuse by others, the remaining were self-neglect.

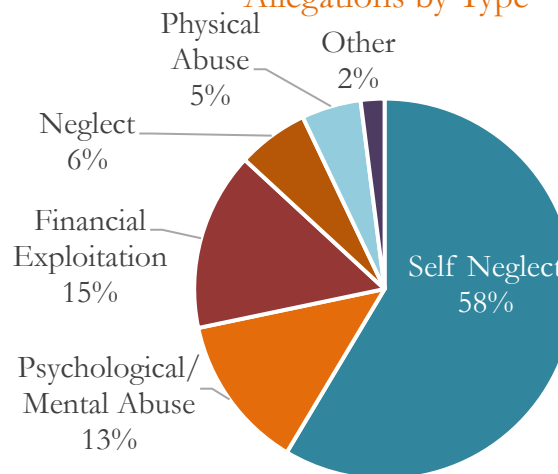
Number of People Referred and with Cases



Race/Ethnicity of Clients in Cases



Percentage of Confirmed and Inconclusive Allegations by Type



There is often more than one type of abuse reported for each individual victim.

APS continues to implement the **Home Safe** program with funding from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). **Home Safe** provides housing-related services to APS clients at-risk or currently experiencing homelessness through June 30, 2024. This program is a collaboration with the Housing for Health Division to leverage resources and expertise to preserve housing and prevent eviction for APS clients.

The **Long Term Case Management (LTCM)** provides case management services for ALTC clients with the highest needs.

“I didn’t think suffering would ever end and it did. Now I have hope for a brighter life.” — APS Client

Adult & Long-Term Care: Supporting Seniors to Live at Home

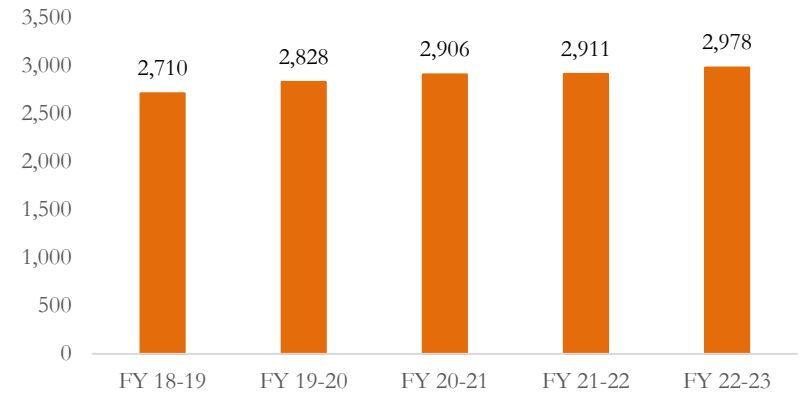
The **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)** program supports safe, independent living for low-income frail, elderly adults, and disabled persons of all ages by providing a variety of services including basic housekeeping, meal preparation and clean-up, and personal care.

Medi-Cal Expansion: In May 2022, the State expanded Medi-Cal to people aged 50 or older, regardless of immigration status. This expansion in full scope Medi-Cal expanded access to the **In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)** program benefits for low-income elderly and disabled residents.

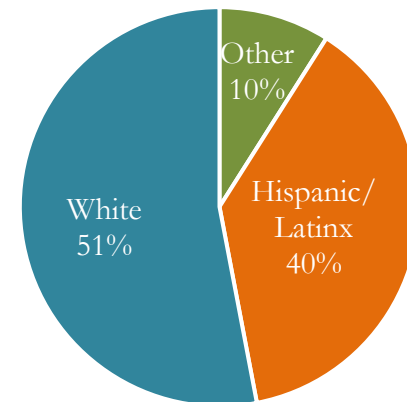


- ◆ 3,468 seniors and disabled adults received services in the fiscal year and an average of 2,978 were served each month.
- ◆ IHSS recipients were authorized to receive an average of 108 hours of assistance per month.
- ◆ On average, there were 2,335 IHSS providers paid for in-home care each month.

Monthly Average of Authorized IHSS Cases



IHSS Recipients by Race/Ethnicity



“I live successfully in my own home with the support of IHSS workers. I am happy and thankful for having the opportunity to live my best life!” -- IHSS client

Adult & Long-Term Care: IHSS Public Authority

The **IHSS Public Authority (IHSS PA)** plays a unique role in supporting IHSS recipients and providers. IHSS PA is the employer of record for the purpose of collective bargaining with the providers union and maintaining a Registry.

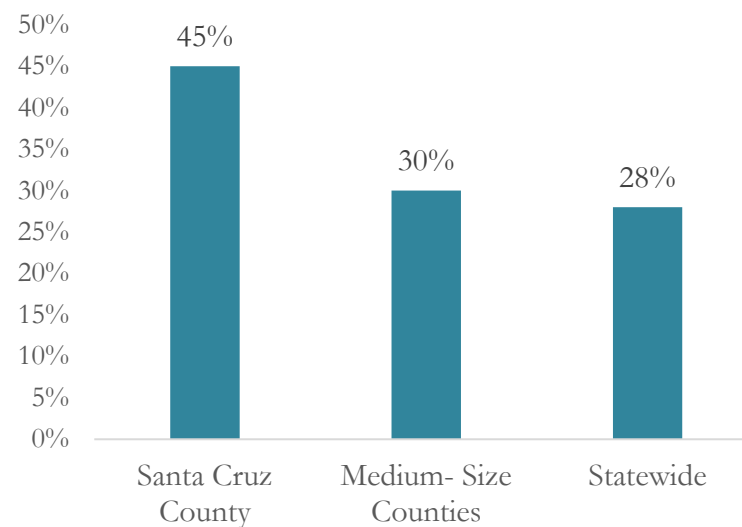
The IHSS recipient serves as the “employer” who interviews, hires, supervises, and trains their care provider. Although many care providers are relatives of their recipient, sometimes recipients are interested in non-relative providers. In these cases, recipients may access the **PA Registry**, a service operated by the IHSS Public Authority to refer prescreened providers. If needed, Public Authority staff will assist the recipient with the interview and hiring process.

Public Authority staff recruit Registry providers through job fairs, online postings, and connections with existing providers.

- ◆ As of June 2023, Santa Cruz County IHSS programs had 2,730 active providers.
- ◆ 45% of Santa Cruz County providers exclusively supported non-relatives. That is a higher percentage than other medium size counties and the state overall, which underscores the county’s reliance on the PA Registry to supply providers.
- ◆ Santa Cruz County providers are paid \$17.75/hour, which is 7% higher than the statewide average for providers.
- ◆ The IHSS PA office offers free safety supplies to IHSS providers and has partnered with local agencies to provide free trainings.



Percent of Relative Providers



“My provider is wonderful! She is great at everything she does. She is an invaluable asset to my well-being.”

— **Public Authority Recipient**

Veterans Service Office: Serving Those That Served

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 assistance
- ◆ Providing assistance with claims and appeals

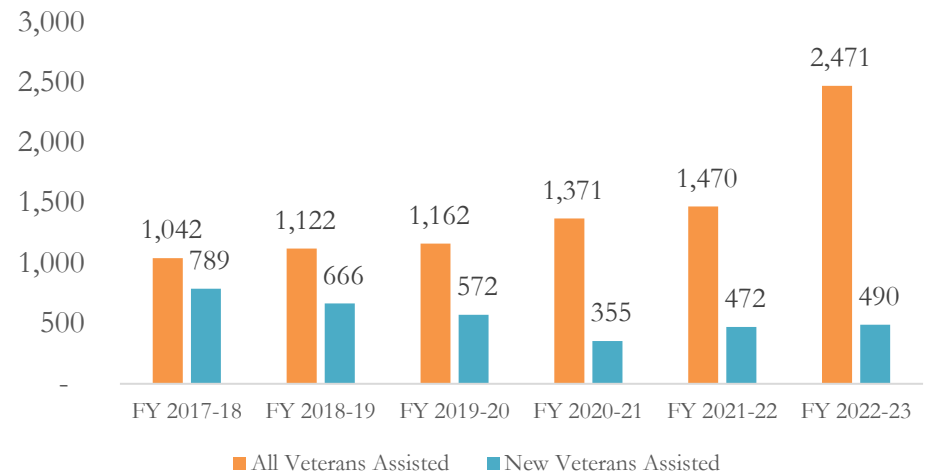
In FY 2022-23, the VSO assisted 2,471 veterans with claims resulting in \$377,125 in new monthly benefits and more than \$3.13 million in retroactive and one-time benefits for county veterans and their dependents.

Expanded Outreach: During the fiscal year 2022-23, the Veterans Service Office increased its efforts to bring awareness and education about the many services and benefits available to veterans, with a focus on those living in rural areas of the county, those facing mental health challenges, and by increasing the number of contracted Veterans Benefits Outreach Representatives.

Helping a Veteran

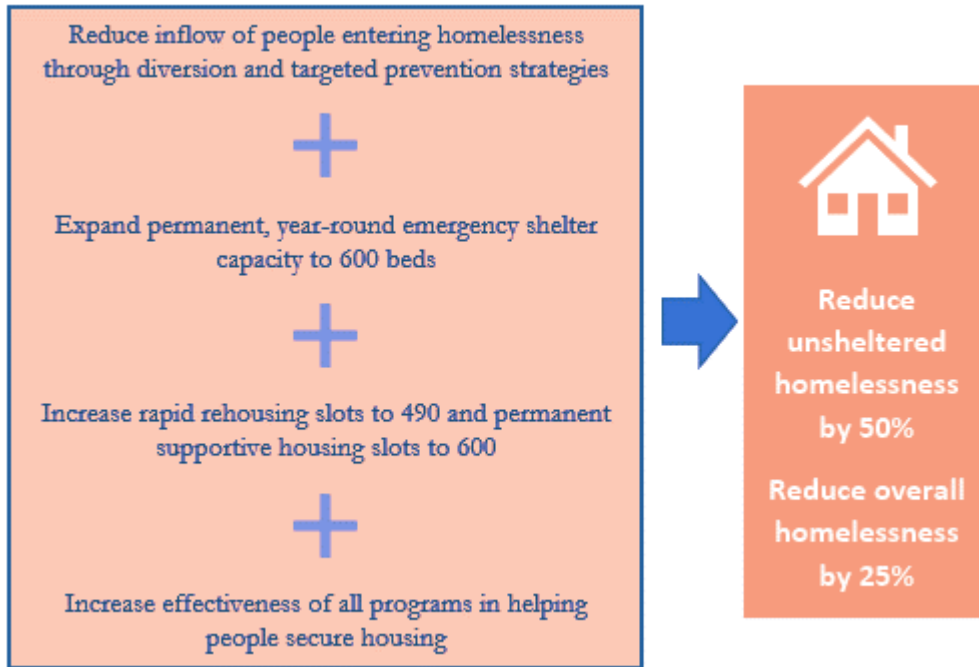
Last year, the Veterans Services Office helped “Bill” a veteran who was at risk of losing his VA pension and home. The VSO team learned that the VA had been overpaying Bill and that he now owed back \$75,000, an amount he was unable to pay. The VSO assisted Bill in submitting a statement and financial status report, which led the VA to waive his debt. Later, the VSO helped Bill file a new claim and he is now service connected and no longer at risk of losing his home.

Number of Veterans Assisted



Housing for Health: Preventing and Ending Homelessness

Housing for Health (H4H) works to ensure that all residents have a safe and stable place to call home. Established in 2020, this division is implementing a three-year strategic plan framework to address homelessness by January 2024. The framework can be summarized as follows:

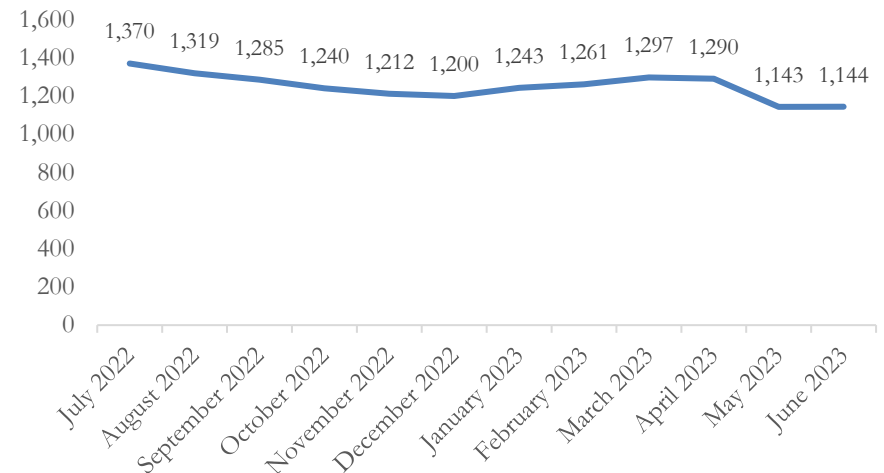


Coordinated Entry: Smart Path

Smart Path is Santa Cruz County’s coordinated entry system to access housing assistance and services for all people experiencing homelessness. In FY 2022-23:

- ◆ 476 assessments were completed

Households Participating in Homelessness Programs



Housing for Health: Housing Programs

H4H funds and coordinates a variety of housing programs meant to prevent and reduce homelessness.

- ◆ **Temporary Housing:** A variety of programs designed to provide those experiencing homelessness interim stability and support to successfully move to and maintain permanent housing.
- ◆ **Rapid Rehousing:** These programs rapidly connect families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services.
- ◆ **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Community-based housing without a designated length of stay in which formerly homeless individuals and families live as independently as possible.

291 households experiencing homelessness on average each month participated in Temporary Housing Programs

233 households experiencing homelessness on average each month participated in Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing



737 households served in local programs exited homelessness into a permanent home.

Administration: Promoting Operational Excellence

The HSD Department employed 575 people in FY 2022-23. Our diverse workforce supports our community by delivering safety net services that provide the people we serve the opportunity to thrive. Our employees can provide services in Spanish and through our contract translators, we provide services in many other languages.

Staff Development (SD) promotes the continued excellence of Human Services Department services through supporting the professional and personal growth of employees by providing program expertise, professional development opportunities, and training. Staff Development provides specific California Department of Social Services (CDSS) mandated workforce development trainings to prepare new and existing HSD employees to successfully administer social service programs implement state, federal, and local regulations.

Highlights this past year include:

- ◆ Trained over 220 staff on the new California State Automated Welfare Systems (CalSAWS) to successfully determine eligibility for Medi-Cal, CalFRESH, CalWorks, Homeless Assistance and Employment Services programs.
- ◆ Coordinated workforce development interventions to support best practices in social services, cultural competency, customer experience and leadership.
- ◆ Conducted numerous program academies to onboard staff to Child Welfare, Adult Services, and Eligibility programs.
- ◆ Employee Engagement Survey administration including result summaries for staff and organizational development workplans by division (progress updated quarterly).

Organizational Development (OD) supports operational excellence through focused research, analysis, implementation of change management strategies to adapt and improve work environment systems impacting employees' overall job satisfaction. Using evidence-based employee engagement strategies, organizational development identifies and implements process improvements in areas such as communication, employee motivation, leadership development, and retention.

Highlights this past year include:

- ◆ Trainings on successfully administering social services programs and implement state, federal and local regulations.
- ◆ Sharing best practices in social services, customer experience and leadership.
- ◆ Development and implementation of HSD's Career Development Coaching program to support staff in building professional development skills.
- ◆ Continued administration of HSD's Mentorship program (2022 Mentorship session was the 4th annual session).
- ◆ Annual Employment Engagement Survey administration including results summaries for staff and organizational development workplans by division (progress updated quarterly).

Administration: Promoting Operational Excellence (continued)

The **Planning and Evaluation Division** collaborates with internal and external partners to inform and improve processes and outcomes for HSD programs. Our team values integrity, equity, experience, transparency, accountability, and inclusion in our work. We commit to data driven decision making and innovation to improve services.

- ◆ **Business Analytics Unit (BA)** works in collaboration with divisions to develop data solutions and conduct evaluations to understand what works and best meets business needs.
 - In the past year BA launched several reports that allow disaggregation of program data, automated operational reports, fine-tuned housing dashboards, and worked with the Fiscal unit to build several databases.

- ◆ **Program Integrity (PI)** ensures that HSD is administering social services in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations. This includes case verifications, a client's right to appeal and the safeguarding of public assistance funds through the prevention and investigation of welfare fraud. Additionally, all claims of civil rights violations and discrimination complaints are thoroughly investigated to ensure equity across all programs.

- ◆ **Quality Improvement (QI)** supports programs by collecting information on quality and identifies needed improvement through on-going case reviews and other methods. This past year, QI led the implementation of a Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) Learning Collaborative which meets quarterly and is open to all staff throughout the department.



Administration: Promoting Operational Excellence (continued)

The **Public Information Officer** provides public communications to achieve the following goals:

- ◆ Improve the public's knowledge of and access to HSD services.
- ◆ Increase public confidence in HSD's work.
- ◆ Provide transparency to the public.
- ◆ Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion as fundamental to achieving HSD's mission.

Highlights this past year include:

- ◆ Completing 13 California Public Records Act requests opened in the past year on a range of in-depth topics and requiring large amounts of data and records research, review, and release determinations.
- ◆ Providing website post assistance to HSD's departments to provide public information on a range of topics.
- ◆ Drafting numerous press releases, news reports, and other informational highlights to keep staff and the public aware of various HSD efforts and initiatives.
- ◆ The **Centralized Contracts Unit** administers HSD's contracts, purchase orders (POs), memorandum of understandings (MOUs), and associated procurements. In collaboration with divisions and fiscal, the unit supports most HSD agreements, which represent almost 25% of the budget.

Fiscal Services provides ongoing fiscal management for the agency including budget development and oversight of an approximate \$188 million dollar budget, generates prompt and accurate payments to clients, prepares claims for Federal and State reimbursement and oversees budgetary status of agency programs.

Last year, the Fiscal Services team:

- ◆ Administered \$161 million of client benefits paid directly by the State.
- ◆ Ensured access to \$152 million in Federal and State grants, managed by the County, that provide direct services to clients.

Information Technology provides technical leadership, services, and support that ensures effective and efficient service delivery. The unit is responsible for planning, managing, and supporting all the agency information systems in coordination with county, state, and external systems and providers.

The **Automated Client Systems** team is responsible for application support across the department which includes major case management systems' infrastructure and security. The units also oversee user management and provides Help Desk support for over 60 applications.

The **Facilities Team** manages 5 county facilities in North County and 3 leased buildings in South County. The team is responsible for building maintenance, facility upgrades, and the security, safety, and wellness of clients and staff.

Administration: Partnerships

HSD staff worked with a variety of County Department and Community Based Organizations to conduct needed services and participate in a multitude of collaborative efforts to improve the well-being of the community.

Collaborating with Departments and the Community

HSD worked with Departments and the community on a variety of projects to improve the lives of Santa Cruz Residents.

- ◆ **Master Plan for Aging:** ALTC staff is currently leading our local effort in collaboration with leadership from the County, BOS, Senior's Council, and all 4 city jurisdictions to launch a County Wide Needs Assessment. A diverse and representative steering committee with 10 community members was formed to ensure this is a grassroots effort that includes the voices of unrepresented communities. Focus groups were held in July and August with caregivers, Spanish speaking community members and aging community members. The needs assessment is scheduled to launch in early 2024 to identify our local priorities and inform our strategic planning effort in creating an age- friendly/livable community for all county residents.
- ◆ **Santa Cruz County AARP Age- Friendly Community Designation:** ALTC Division Director, Alicia Morales, and Seniors Council Executive Director, Clay Kempf, presented to the Board of Supervisors on August 8th on our acceptance into the AARP Livable Communities Network and how this designation helps support the work we are doing under the California Master Plan for Aging. We are working to address 10 domains for the community including housing, transportation, communication and information, outdoor spaces and buildings, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, and community supports and health services, disaster preparedness and elder justice.
- ◆ **Public Service Announcements (PSAs):** On September 7, 2023, the Family & Children's Services (FCS) Division was notified by the California Department of Social Services that their Comprehensive Prevention Plan under the Family First Prevention Services Act was approved. FCS is collaborating with several County Departments including Probation, Children's Behavioral Health, Public Health, Santa Cruz Office of Education, the Juvenile Court and a multitude of providers and stakeholders in the Child & Family Well-Being Cabinet to create a community pathway. This pathway will shift families not meeting abuse criteria from mandated reporting to community supporting. The pathway is also expected to reduce the number of calls to the hotline and potentially reduce the number of youths receiving child welfare and juvenile justice intervention. The work of the Cabinet also includes consideration for a Community Response Guide which will serve as a decision tree for community members to aid in their assessment of whether a call to the hotline is warranted. More to come!
- ◆ **Older Americans Month:** HSD Director, Randy Morris, and ALTC Division Director, Alicia Morales, addressed the Board of Supervisors on May 9, 2023, to thank the Board for issuing a proclamation recognizing May as Older Americans Month.

Partnering for Impact

HSD strives to be an effective public steward of funding and collaborates with local partners to promote results in a variety of ways.

◆ The Collective of Results and Evidence (CORE) Investments

In 2022 the Santa Cruz City Board of Supervisors along with the Santa Cruz City Council approved \$5.8 million in funding for the Collective of Results and Evidence-based (CORE) Investments to be distributed to local non-profits addressing inequities among the most vulnerable members of the community. CORE investments awarded funding to 58 programs who completed their 1st year of the 2022-2025 funding cycle with many programmatic successes while facing a varied set of challenges, including the atmospheric river events in Santa Cruz. A total of just under 107,000 unduplicated participants engaged in CORE funded programming and based on satisfaction surveys, 94.3% of surveyed participants reported they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their respective programs. In the next round of funding cycle, HSD will continue to support the CORE contracted programs including address program challenges such as techniques to better collect data and capture participant demographics.

For more information about CORE visit:

[CORE Results Menu \(www.datasharescc.org\)](http://www.datasharescc.org)
















FY 2022-23 Operational Plan Objectives

This Fiscal Year marked the beginning of a new two-year operational plan process through FY 2022-2023. This two-year plan details the departments steps in achieving the County’s vision. Below are the department’s objectives in the County’s focus areas. The chart below details the progress of each objective and whether it was completed, on target, or below target. More information on each objective may be found online here:

www.santacruzcounty.us/VisionSantaCruz

Status symbols:  Completed  On Target  Below Target

Objective	Description	Status
<u>Mentorship Program</u>	By December 2021 June 2021, Human Services will report that 90% of employees who completed the department mentorship program as a mentee, have increased job satisfaction and development of leadership skills.	
<u>Rehousing Rate</u>	By December 2023, Human Services will increase the rehousing rate of households served in emergency shelter programs to 40%.	
<u>Permanent Supportive Housing</u>	By December 2023, Human Services, in collaboration with community partners, will increase the number of permanent supportive housing slots countywide by 20% or 100.	
<u>Shelter to Housing</u>	By June 2022, Human Services will move at least 68 Hispanic/Latinx, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Asian, Black or African American, or Multi-Racial households currently in COVID-19 shelters into permanent homes.	
<u>Dislocated Workers</u>	By June 2023, Human Services will provide employment services targeted to any dislocated workers and 75% of dislocated workers will retain employment six months after exiting the program.	
<u>Father Engagement</u>	By June 2023, Human Services will increase engagement of fathers, with 80% of cases with a reunification goal having a father participating in child welfare case planning.	
<u>Immigrant Food Security</u>	By June 2023, the Human Services Department will enroll 10% more eligible children, who live in mixed immigration status households, into the CalFresh program.	
<u>Master Plan for Aging</u>	By June 2023, the County Administrative Office and Human Services Department, in collaboration with partners, will identify at least two priorities to implement the State’s 10-year Master Plan for Aging (MPA) and promote age-friendly community principles.	

Objective	Description	Status
<u>Thrive by Three</u>	By June 2023, Human Services will refer 20% of eligible CalWORKS families to Thrive by Three, a program to improve outcomes for Santa Cruz County's youngest children and their families.	
<u>Employee Satisfaction</u>	By June 2023, Human Services will increase by 25% employee satisfaction with professional development opportunities including applying their talents and skills through mentorship, coaching, and targeted skill building.	
<u>Equitable Supervision</u>	By June 2023, Human Services will have 50% of staff surveyed report consistent and equitable supervision.	
<u>AFN Disaster Preparedness</u>	By December 2022, Human Services will support County disaster response efforts by updating and creating disaster plans for older adults and people with Access and Functional Needs (AFN) to ensure coordinated delivery of care and shelter in a disaster.	
<u>Community Partners</u>	By June 2023, Human Services will provide 80 CORE Institute events and target organizations that serve underrepresented populations to support cross-sector, systemwide application of the CORE Investments framework and tools with an equity lens.	



Contact the Human Services Department

Visit our website at www.santacruzhumanservices.org



Public Assistance Programs

Call the Benefits phone customer service center at 1-888-421-8080 or TTY 454-4763

Apply for CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and CalWORKs online at www.benefitsCal.com.

Family & Children's Services	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4222	TTY 711
Adult & Long-Term Care	1400 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-4101	TTY 763-8828
Employment & Benefit Services	1020 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	888-421-8080	TTY 454-4763
Housing for Health	1000 Emeline Ave, Santa Cruz www.housingforhealthpartnership.org	454-7312	
Veterans Services	842 Front Street, Santa Cruz 18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville	454-7276 763-8868	
Workforce Santa Cruz County Career Centers	18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville 2045 40 th Avenue, Capitola	763-8700 464-6286	TTY 464-4358 TTY 464-4358

Report Child Abuse
1-877-505-3299

Report Elder Abuse
1-866-580-4357

Dedicated to making a difference – Serving people in need in Santa Cruz County

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