



Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
P: (831) 454-2772 F: (831) 454-2411 TTY/TDD 711

commissions@santacruzcountyca.gov

www.sccseniors.org

Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

DATE Tuesday, April 15, 2025
TIME: 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM
LOCATION: United Way of Santa Cruz County
4450 Capitola Road, Ste 106, Capitola, CA 95010

As a courtesy to those who are affected, kindly attend the meeting **scent-free** and **smoke-free**.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review
2. Approval of *February 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes*
3. Public Comment
Any member of the public may address the Commission for a period not to exceed 3 minutes on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Commission not on the agenda.
4. New and Continuing Business/Action Items:
 - 4.1. Officer Elections
 - 4.2. Consider 2026 Meeting Schedule
 - 4.3. Ad Hoc Senior Resource Fair Outreach & Planning Subcommittee Report
 - 4.4. Considering Advocacy Opportunities for Assisted Living Waiver Program Implementation
5. District Reports
 - 5.1. District 1
 - 5.2. District 2
 - 5.3. District 3
 - 5.4. District 4
 - 5.5. District 5
6. Senior Legislature Report
7. Staff Report
8. Correspondence
9. Emerging Matters and Commissioner Announcements
10. Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: June 17, 2025 at 12:30 PM United Way, Capitola CA 95010

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. If you are a person with a disability and require assistance to participate in the meeting, please contact (831) 454-2772 TTY/TDD:711 at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting to make arrangements.



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Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, February 18, 2025
TIME: 12:30 PM
LOCATION: United Way, 4450 Capitola Road, Ste 106, Capitola CA 95010
PRESENT: Suzanne Doty (*Chair - 1st District*), Dena Taylor (*1st District*), Mark Johannessen (*2nd District*), Lois Sones (*3rd District*), Katie Limas (*Vice Chair - 4th District*), Carol Childers (*5th District*)
EXCUSED: Antonio Rivas (*2nd District*), Alicia Rodriguez (*3rd District*)
ABSENT: None
STAFF: Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Manager*)
GUESTS: No members of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Agenda Review

Meeting convened at 12:38 PM.

2. **Motion to Approve December 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve minutes.

Motion/Second: Taylor/Sones

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comment: None

4. New Business/Action Items:

4.1. Ad Hoc Senior Resource Fair Outreach and Planning Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee has not yet convened. Taylor reported Mid-County Senior Center expressed enthusiasm. London Nelson Center has already scheduled one for February 28th. Felton Community Hall is holding an all-age resource fair. Commissioners Taylor and Doty will meet with Mid-County Senior Center to determine their interest and report back. Limas will meet with Watsonville Senior Center to determine their interest and report back. Commissioners will send the subcommittee their suggested vendors.

4.2. Ad Hoc Legislative Subcommittee Report

Johannesson summarized the five CSL legislative priorities that the subcommittee identified as being most relevant to the seniors community in Santa Cruz County. They included SP-4 Ralph M. Brown Act Teleconferencing, AP-10: Hospitals: Patient Discharge Summary, Ap-2: Caregiving Grandparents support, and AP-6 Health Facilities: Transfer of Patients: Requirements. If authorized, Staff will work with Johannessen to draft a letter to the Board of Supervisors advocating for their support of these legislative priorities and copy it to CSL.

Motion authorizing Co-Chairs to send a letter advocating with the Board for their support

Motion/Second: Johannessen/Sones

Motion passed unanimously

4.3. Commission Strategic Action Planning for 2025

Commission made the following amendments to their 2024 Strategic Action Plan for 2025: specified collaborative resource fairs with County senior centers, revised 3A to include safety net services for all vulnerable seniors, added advocacy for Assisted Living Waiver to 3B, revised 3D to include monitoring implementation, revised 4A to pertain to monitoring the status of restoring the ombudsman program, added natural disasters to 4C, and added 4D to monitor the impact of new immigration law enforcement on undocumented Latinx seniors.

Motion to approve and adopt the 2025 Strategic Action Plan.

Motion/Second: Childers/Taylor

Motion passed unanimously.

4. District Reports

5.1. District 1:

Doty shared information on a recent 8-week balance class that is going to be at the Volunteer Center. She requested additional information on the cost of funding additional opportunities from the organizers. Doty attended a senior's line dancing event. Taylor had no report.

5.2. District 2

Johannessen provided an AAA report: met on Jan 15th, Senior Network Services was evicted in February, though the Community Bridges lease was extended for two years. CORE funding for Advocacy, Inc. (the County's Ombudsman contractor) was eliminated this year, though CORE safety net services (health care, meals, etc.) are still being prioritized. California Dept of Aging (CDA) allocated one-time monies in support of the Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties' AAA.

5.3. District 3: No Report

5.4. District 4: No Report

5.5. District 5:

Childers reported minimal damage from recent storms in the San Lorenzo Valley.

6. Senior Legislature Report: No Report

7. Staff Report:

Staff reported on the new payment system and will invite the District Attorney's Office to present on senior scams at an upcoming meeting.

8. Correspondence: None

9. Emerging Matters and Commissioner Announcements: None

10. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 2:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted by: Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*



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Scheduled Meetings

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* Unless noted otherwise below

Changes to the schedule, including special meetings, changes of location, or meeting cancellations, will be listed on the website at www.sccseniors.org as soon as information becomes available.

2026 Meeting Dates		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
February 17, 2026	12:30 – 2:30 PM	United Way
April 21, 2026	12:30 – 2:30 PM	United Way
June 16, 2026	12:30 – 2:30 PM	United Way
August 18, 2026	12:30 – 2:30 PM	United Way
October 20, 2026	12:30 – 2:30 PM	United Way
December 15, 2026	12:30 – 2:30 PM	United Way

Public Participation

- Please check the meeting agenda to learn details about how to participate in the commission meeting.
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The **Assisted Living Waiver (ALW)** is a Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver program that allows eligible individuals who require a nursing home level of care to receive care in **assisted living settings** or **public subsidized housing with services**, rather than in institutional facilities. The goal is to **support aging in place** and increase access to less restrictive, more community-integrated living options for seniors and people with disabilities.

It's available in **certain states** (like California), and specific program features vary by state, but generally:

Key Features of the Assisted Living Waiver

- **Eligibility:** Must be eligible for Medi-Cal (or Medicaid in other states) and meet nursing facility level of care.
- **Services Covered:** Includes personal care assistance, medication management, housekeeping, transportation, meal prep, and 24-hour oversight.
- **Settings:** Licensed assisted living facilities, public housing with supportive services, or Adult Residential Facilities.
- **Goal:** Prevent or delay institutionalization by offering more dignified and community-centered care.

In **California**, the **Assisted Living Waiver (ALW)** is **not available in all counties**. Counties **must be approved by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)** to participate. In other words, **counties don't automatically have access** just because they're in California — and **they don't opt in at will**, but rather the **state expands the waiver to specific counties** when it chooses to increase the program's reach.

As of April 2025, **Santa Cruz County is not included in California's Assisted Living Waiver (ALW) program**. The ALW is currently available in 15 counties, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Sonoma .

The **California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)** determines which counties participate in the Assisted Living Waiver (ALW) program. Counties do not automatically opt in; instead, DHCS expands the program based on the specific criteria and strategic considerations below:

Criteria for County Selection

While DHCS has not publicly detailed all selection criteria, several key factors influence a county's inclusion:

1. **Provider Readiness:** The presence of licensed **Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs)** or **Adult Residential Facilities (ARFs)** willing to participate in the ALW program is crucial. These facilities must meet specific licensing and operational standards to qualify. [Cal DHCS+1](#)[Cal DHCS+1](#)
2. **Care Coordination Infrastructure:** Availability of **Care Coordination Agencies (CCAs)** is essential. CCAs are responsible for developing and implementing individualized service plans for ALW participants. [Cal DHCS+3](#)[Cal DHCS+3](#)[Cal DHCS+3](#)
3. **Demonstrated Need:** Counties with a significant population of **Medi-Cal beneficiaries requiring nursing facility level care** but preferring community-based alternatives are prioritized.
4. **Geographic Equity:** Efforts are made to ensure **regional balance**, expanding the program to underserved areas across northern, central, and southern California. [Legislative Information](#)
5. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Active involvement and support from local stakeholders, including healthcare providers, community organizations, and county officials, can influence DHCS's decision to expand the program to a particular county.

Next Steps for the Seniors Commission

To effectively advocate for the inclusion of Santa Cruz County in the ALW program, the Commission will need to discover what criteria elements are potentially precluding the County from having already being included.

Step 1: Gather data on each of the criteria elements above

Step 2: Invite County Human Services Department to present on the data collected and any efforts by the County that are already underway.

Step 3: Determine what the advocacy priorities are as informed by HSD and the data.

Step 4: Advocate for support from the Board of Supervisors on those priorities.



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April 11, 2025

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street, Fifth Floor Room 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Re: Support for California Senior Legislature Proposals SP-4, AP-2, AP-6, and AP-10

Dear Chair Hernandez and Members of the Board,

The Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors express their support for four important bills that the California Senior Legislature (CSL) is bringing to the California Legislature for consideration this year. These measures respond directly to the needs of older adults and caregivers in our state and would be particularly impactful for residents of Santa Cruz County. The proposals are as follows:

SP-4: Ralph M. Brown Act Teleconferencing

This measure seeks to make permanent the option for members of county-based Advisory Councils, Committees, Commissions, and their attendant Work Groups, Committees, and Subcommittees established for aging and disabilities issues to participate remotely without the public having to be physically present in their remote location, provided that public access is ensured. For Santa Cruz County, where many residents—especially seniors and people with disabilities—face transportation challenges due to geographic, financial or mobility limitations, maintaining remote participation options is essential to equitable civic engagement.

AP-10: Hospitals: Patient Discharge Summary

This measure would require hospitals to provide patients or their caregivers with a written discharge summary that includes clear, understandable information about medications, follow-up appointments, and care instructions. In a county like Santa Cruz, where many older adults live independently or rely on informal caregiving arrangements, having accessible discharge instructions is vital to reducing hospital readmissions and supporting recovery at home.

AP-2: Caregiving Grandparents Support

This proposal aims to establish support services for grandparents and older relatives raising children. Many such families in Santa Cruz County are living on fixed incomes and face complex emotional, financial, and legal challenges. Providing dedicated resources and support would help stabilize these households and ensure children receive the care they need.

AP-6: Health Facilities: Transfer of Patients: Requirements

This legislation would ensure that when patients are transferred between health care facilities, essential information—such as diagnosis, treatment, and care needs—is communicated clearly and

consistently. Given our county's mix of rural and urban areas and the sometimes-limited availability of specialized facilities, these safeguards are critical to patient safety and continuity of care.

The Commission urges the Board to consider submitting a letter to the appropriate state legislative representatives and agencies in support of these proposals. Doing so would demonstrate Santa Cruz County's continued commitment to the well-being of older adults, caregivers, and all residents who depend on a responsive and inclusive health and civic infrastructure.

In closing, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Board of Supervisors for your unwavering dedication to Santa Cruz County seniors. We hope that you will give our recommendation serious consideration and add your influential voice in support of the legislation summarized herein.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Suzanne Doty
Commission Chair, Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

Katie Limas
Commission Vice Chair, Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission

Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission
2025 Strategic Action Plan

Focus #1: Conduct Outreach & Advocacy to Elected Officials on behalf of the Santa Cruz County Seniors

ACTION 1A: Maintain consistent contact with District Supervisors & their staff (recommendations & advocacy, constituency meetings, in-person meetings, monthly reporting, field trips, events, etc.) to keep them apprised of Commission activities.

ACTION 1B: Communicate with District Supervisors to advocate for the interests of Santa Cruz County seniors.

ACTION 1C: Communicate with Federal and State officials, agencies and commissions on matters of interest to Santa Cruz County seniors and assist in the preparation, implementation and review of any regional plan or program designed to serve senior citizens.

Focus #2: Promote the Interests of Santa Cruz County Seniors through Community Outreach, Advocacy and the Provision of Resources

ACTION 2A: Promote interest and public participation in Commission meetings (media outreach, television/radio presence, brochures, website, etc.)

ACTION 2B: Share resources, information and referrals with seniors and invite local speakers to present to the Commission on issues of interest to seniors (safety, consumer education, housing, transportation, legislation, etc.)

ACTION 2C: Connect with other organizations, commissions and advisory groups that impact Santa Cruz County seniors.

ACTION 2D: Participate in local events of interest to seniors (e.g. District forums for seniors, family, & caregivers, fundraisers, resource fairs, etc.).

Focus #3: Monitor and Assess Local Services, Programs and Agencies to Advocate for Effective Service Delivery to Seniors

ACTION 3A: Monitor Safety Net Services on behalf of vulnerable seniors including those with cognitive impairment

ACTION 3B: Foster Age-in-Place solutions & community structures supporting residents as they age (including advocating for County participation in the Assisted Living Waiver Program), ensure affordable housing, and provide resources for unsheltered seniors.

ACTION 3C: Monitor and promote accessible, affordable transportation for seniors

ACTION 3D: Support County efforts to implement Master Plan for Aging elements

Focus #4: Monitor and Assess Issues Impacting Santa Cruz County Seniors and Advocate on Their Behalf

ACTION 4A: Monitor funding for and the status of the local Ombudsman contract

ACTION 4B: Monitor and promote awareness of programs and services that address senior isolation and loneliness.

ACTION 4C: Monitor and promote awareness, availability of and access to emergency preparedness resources for seniors (planning, education, pandemic response, natural disaster response, cooling centers, etc.)

ACTION 4D: Monitor how changes in immigration law enforcement are impacting undocumented Latinx seniors



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