



# Protecting and Supporting Our Community

January 2025

Changes in federal leadership may impact community members, including immigrants, LGBTQ+ populations, and people who access reproductive care. The County has a longstanding history of providing services to these groups and will respond to attacks on individual rights in partnership with local organizations.

The Board of Supervisors has established Santa Cruz County as both a Sanctuary County and a Champion of Reproductive Freedom. The Board has also opposed any Title IX changes to weaken protections for transgender, gender non-binary and gender non-confirming residents.

The County continues to actively assess programs to ensure clients are safe and are prepared to take further protective measures as needed.

## At a Glance: How many served?

- ✔ **Social Services Provided FY 2023/24**
  - 85,067 people received Medi-Cal coverage
  - 41,765 people received CalFresh food assistance
  - 4,233 people received CalWORKs cash aid
  - 3,650 seniors received In Home Support Services
- ✔ **8,254 Undocumented Clients on Medi-Cal as of 12/24**  
 Medical, dental, vision, mental health, family planning (a result of state's legislative Medi-Cal expansion)
- ✔ **Behavioral Health Medi-Cal Clients:**  
 5,541 unduplicated clients served (1,394 youth)  
 1,424 Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Clients on Medi-Cal
  - 20% of adults unhoused across BH System of Care
  - 40%+ for individuals engaged in SUD or mental health residential
 3,954 Mental Health Clients
  - Including 40% of unhoused adults



## Immigrant Community

- Santa Cruz is a Sanctuary County for undocumented immigrants, re-affirmed on 12/17/2024
- County Sheriff does not comply with ICE detainers and does not ask victims/witnesses about their immigration status
- Under SB 54, the County is prevented from sharing personal info with ICE
- ICE/Border Patrol may not enter non-public county spaces/clinics without a valid judicial warrant
- Our Health Services providers and Human Services staff do not share any information about an individual's immigration status or records with federal immigration authorities
- We have partnered with the Pajaro Valley Collaborative and other community-based organizations for a cohesive and robust response



## LGBTQ+ Community

Santa Cruz is a Sanctuary County for trans, nonbinary & intersex people, affirmed on 6/4/2024.

Our County's Health Centers offer gender-affirming care, and our Health and Human Services Agencies partner with providers like the Diversity Center to support LGBTQ+ youth and adults with Behavioral Health needs and to prevent exploitation.



## Reproductive Rights

HSA Health Centers support the reproductive health rights of our diverse community by offering comprehensive services, including reproductive health education for teens and adults, STI/HIV testing and treatment, family planning counseling, and access to contraception for individuals of all genders.

## Next Steps

Leaders from the County Administrator's Office, Health Services Agency, Human Services Department, County Sheriff, District Attorney, Public Defender and Probation Department will meet with community leaders to strengthen partnerships and build support and resources. We will be monitoring for potential threats, including:

- Evidence of local ICE activity
- Federal funding cuts due to local sanctuary policies
- Public charge rule changes
- Policies to limit gender expression/identity
- Limits on access to reproductive care/contraception
- Changes to protections based on sexual orientation