



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Human Services Department

Subject: Approve Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local and Regional Plans

Meeting Date: May 20, 2025

Formal Title: Approve the program year 2025-28 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local and Regional Plans, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

- 1) Approve the Santa Cruz County Workforce Development Board's (WDB) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan for program years 2025-2028, and authorize the Santa Cruz County WDB to make any future, state-required and non-substantive edits;
- 2) Authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to sign the approved WIOA Local Plan;
- 3) Approve the North Central Coast Regional Planning Unit's WIOA Regional Plan for program years 2025-2028, and;
- 4) Direct the Human Services Department Director to submit the approved Santa Cruz County WDB's WIOA Local Plan to the California Workforce Development Board in tandem with the submission of the approved North Central Coast Regional Planning Unit's WIOA Regional Plan, both for program years 2025-2028.

Executive Summary

The Human Services Department's (HSD) Workforce Development Board (WDB) administers the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for the County of Santa Cruz. HSD seeks the Board's approval of the 2025-2028 WIOA Local and Regional Plans.

Discussion

On April 25, 2023, the Board took actions on HSD's 2021-2024 WIOA Regional Plan Two-Year Modification and approved the 2021-2024 Santa Cruz County Workforce Development Local Plan Two-Year Modification (DOC-2023-350). The WIOA Local and Regional Plans (collectively, "the Plans") are now up for renewal for the years 2025-2028.

The Regional WIOA Plan represents the North Central Coast Region Planning Unit, which includes the workforce development areas of Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito Counties, economic and workforce environment with a focus on collaborative strategies to be implemented across the region.

The approved Santa Cruz County Local WIOA Plan is a subset of the Regional Plan and delineates how residents will access services and how those services will be coordinated. The Plan articulates how the Santa Cruz County WDB will coordinate with various partners, including CalFresh Employment & Training, Individuals with

Disabilities, and English Language Learners. The draft Local Plan reflects the current and future strategies that the WDB will use to address the continuing innovation of the workforce system.

The Santa Cruz County WDB's 2025-2028 Local Plan prioritizes collaborative partnerships among local organizations to streamline services and enhance workforce readiness for diverse populations, especially those facing employment barriers. A central feature of this plan is the strong emphasis on coordinated co-enrollment, where currently 75% of WIOA Adult participants, 62% of Dislocated Workers, and 81% of Youth participants are co-enrolled in CalFresh, significantly increasing access to essential supportive services. The plan also allocates substantial resources to vocational training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), providing up to \$10,000 per person to pursue in-demand occupations, and dedicates 20% of youth program funding specifically to paid work experiences and incentives, ensuring practical skills development.

Additionally, recognizing the importance of accessibility and inclusivity, the Local Plan expands service offerings and outreach in underserved communities, including migrant farmworkers and individuals with disabilities. These services are designed to address immediate employment needs and build long-term career pathways. Through focused professional development for frontline staff, emphasizing cultural competency, trauma-informed care, and disability awareness, the plan aims to foster an inclusive environment and improve service delivery effectiveness.

The WDB approved the draft Plans for submission to the Board of Supervisors. With Board approval, the draft Plans will be submitted to the State for review by their deadline. The State Board allows for the Chief Elected Official to sign the Local Plan after submission to the State.

The draft Plans presented currently meet State requirements and are consistent with the Board's past direction regarding implementation of the WIOA.

Financial Impact

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) provides an annual WIOA allocation to the Santa Cruz County WDB. To remain eligible for WIOA funding, the regional and local areas must submit the 2025-2028 Workforce Development Regional (North Central Coast Planning Unit) and Local (Santa Cruz County) Plans to the EDD and the State Workforce Development Board for approval. Approval of the Four-Year Plans does not result in an additional General Fund contribution.

Strategic Initiatives

Operational Plan - Dynamic Economy

Submitted By:

Randy Morris, Director of Human Services

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Executive Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.