



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Health Services Agency

Subject: Memorandum of Understanding with the Pajaro Valley Collaborative

Meeting Date: March 11, 2025

Formal Title: Approve Memorandum of Understanding with Pajaro Valley Collaborative to formally establish a partnership with the Health Services Agency, Human Services Department, and Pajaro Valley Collaborative to advance positive outcomes throughout the Pajaro Valley, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

Approve a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pajaro Valley Collaborative to formally establish a partnership with the Health Services Agency, Human Services Department, and Pajaro Valley Collaborative that is strategically aligned to advance positive outcomes throughout the Pajaro Valley, and authorize the Directors of the Health Services Agency and Human Services Department, or their designees, to sign.

Executive Summary

The Health Services Agency (HSA) and Human Services Department (HSD) request that the Board approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Pajaro Valley Collaborative to formally establish a partnership between the HSA, HSD, and the Pajaro Valley Collaborative. This partnership will formalize the HSA and HSD's shared commitment to work alongside the Pajaro Valley Collaborative to address the health and socio-economic inequities experienced by residents in the Pajaro Valley.

Discussion

The Pajaro Valley Collaborative formed in 2020 in response to the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Hispanic and Latino communities. The Collaborative focuses on Santa Cruz County's Pajaro Valley, also known as "South County." It includes the City of Watsonville and the unincorporated communities of Corralitos, Freedom, and Pajaro (zip codes 95076, 95077, and 95019), which aligns with the Pajaro Valley Health Care District. Participants in the Collaborative have included community-based organizations (CBOs), and other government entities including the City of Watsonville, County Office of Education, and Pajaro Valley Unified School District.

Pajaro Valley residents experience disproportionately high rates of common and preventable medical conditions, significant unmet social needs, food insecurity, and lack of primary care access compared to other residents in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Since the pandemic, the Pajaro Valley Collaborative continues to meet to work on three focus areas for residents of the region: 1) health equity, 2) economic mobility, and 3) civic engagement.

The MOU allows HSA and HSD to become full partners in the Pajaro Valley Collaborative and take a collective impact approach across these three areas for Pajaro Valley residents. Additionally, the MOU allows for the necessary collaboration needed between local County government and community-based organizations to ensure the continuity of safety-net services to Pajaro Valley residents, given the policy changes at the Federal level.

This request is a part of programmatic efforts to address health inequities in Santa Cruz County, as directed by the Board on August 18, 2020 via Board Resolution No. 176-2020 (Resolution Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis). An MOU between HSA, HSD, and the Pajaro Valley Collaborative strengthens the partnership between the Community Based Organizations serving the Pajaro Valley, HSA, and HSD and promoting a collective impact approach to address health inequities in the region.

Financial Impact

The recommended action has no financial impact.

Strategic Initiatives

Operational Plan - Comprehensive Health & Safety

Submitted By:

Monica Morales, Director of Health Services

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

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