

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors Proclamation

PROCLAIMING JUNE 2025 AS
NATIONAL ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH IN THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

WHEREAS, Santa Cruz County is home to more than 72,000 residents aged 60 or older, representing 27 percent of the population, who enrich and strengthen our community by serving as leaders, mentors, volunteers and vital members of our community, each of whom deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, and by 2030, older adults will make up nearly 30 percent of all county residents; and

WHEREAS, over 3,000 reports of abuse against our elderly residents are received every year by the County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department's (HSD) Adult Protective Services; and

WHEREAS, elder abuse remains one of the most unrecognized and underreported issues affecting older adults, where recent studies estimate that approximately 1 in 10 people in the United States aged 60 and older have experienced some form of elder abuse, and where alarmingly, for every case reported to authorities, as many as 24 cases may go unreported, highlighting a significant gap in awareness and intervention; and

WHEREAS, with the lifespan of our aging population increasing locally and nation-wide, we have an opportunity to consider how we best meet collective needs and develop services so as to provide the best care and protection to those older adults vulnerable to elder abuse; and

WHEREAS, Santa Cruz County is a leader in California by earning an age-friendly community designation by the AARP, bolstered by collaboration among the HSD, the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department, local police departments, the District Attorney, the local Seniors Council (Area Agency on Aging), the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, Public Guardian Program, and many community services partners to prevent abuse, protect victims, and prosecute offenders who abuse our elderly; and

WHEREAS, when we work collectively to ensure proper social structures exist to help people retain community and societal connection as they age, we in turn reduce the likelihood of abuse, and increase social, cultural and political actions where real and sustainable change is possible, so that all older adults may live free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Felipe Hernandez, Chair of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, hereby proclaim the day of June 15, 2025, to be World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, and the month of June 2025 to be Elder Abuse Awareness Month, and urge all Santa Cruz County residents to join in this observance and to help prevent elder abuse and support the well-being of all older adults in the county.





Chairperson, Board of Supervisors

June 4, 2025

Date