

- 10.1. Approve the Proposed 2025-26 Budget for the County Executive Office, including any supplemental materials, and take related actions, as outlined in the referenced budget documents, and as recommended by the County Executive Officer ( )



## County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

### Agenda Item Submittal

**From:** County Executive Office

**Subject:** Proposed 2025-26 Budget for the County Executive Office

**Meeting Date:** June 3, 2025

**Formal Title:** Approve the Proposed 2025-26 Budget for the County Executive Office, including any supplemental materials, and take related actions, as outlined in the referenced budget documents, and as recommended by the County Executive Officer

### Recommended Action

Approve the Proposed 2025-26 Budget for the County Executive Office, including any supplemental materials, as provided in the referenced budget documents:

- [Proposed Budget](#)
- [Continuing Agreements List](#)
- Presentation

### Executive Summary

The Proposed 2025-26 Budget for the County Executive Office supports two divisions: County Executive Office and Clerk of the Board with staffing of 21.0 funded full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

### Discussion

The mission of the County Executive Office (CEO) is to lead with innovation and collaboration, ensure fiscal responsibility, and promote equitable, results-oriented services under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors and on behalf of Santa Cruz County residents. Department and division operational objectives are shown in the Proposed 2025-26 Budget document and 2025-27 Operational Plan. Both are available online at: [www.SCCVision.us](http://www.SCCVision.us)

The CEO Proposed Budget includes negotiated salary and benefit increase as well as a change in facility charges to properly reflect the cost of facility services and utilities.

The budget reflects important service changes, including reductions in contracted professional services and the realignment of stipends for County advisory boards, commissions and committees as well as increases in costs for technology improvements, including the implementation of the new payroll system and costs for subscription software.

Staffing of 21.0 FTE positions is status quo for 2025-26. The office does not anticipate significant identifiable changes to this budget as a result of potential state or federal budget actions at this time.

Budgeted funding will continue to support ongoing staff work, including preparing and managing the County budget, conducting legislative analysis, managing intergovernmental relations, administering contracts and grants, supervising non-elected department heads and maintaining and publishing the record of the proceedings of the Board of Supervisor meetings. In addition, the County Executive Office is responsible for several initiatives including the equity framework, strategic and operational plans, performance measurement, continuous process improvement, facility

master planning, and leadership development.

Over the next fiscal year, the department will be focused primarily on monitoring and mitigating federal policy and budget changes, refreshing the County Strategic Plan, producing measured process improvements for building permit issuance, developing workforce and affordable housing, improving investment in capital projects to support equitable service delivery, supporting efforts related to Measure Q implementation increasing local participation in County internships, and developing a bilingual communications and education plan.

**Financial Impact**

The CEO Proposed Budget includes \$6,230,531 in expenditures offset by \$1,035,117 in revenues and \$5,195,414 in General Fund contribution. This reflects a total expenditure increase of \$390,883 or 6.7% from the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Adopted Budget.

**Strategic Initiatives**

Operational Plan - Operational Excellence

**Submitted By:**

Carlos J. Palacios, County Executive Officer

**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.



# **County Executive Office**

## **2025-26**

### **Proposed Budget**

Carlos J. Palacios  
June 3, 2025



# Presentation Overview



Our Mission



How We are Organized



Budget Overview



Fiscal & Staffing Details



Federal/State Risks & Emerging Issues



Request & Questions



## **Our Mission**

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To lead with innovation and collaboration, ensure fiscal responsibility, and promote equitable, results-oriented services under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors and on behalf of Santa Cruz County residents.

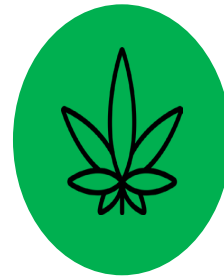
# Divisions & Services



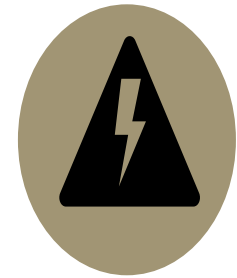
COUNTY  
EXECUTIVE  
OFFICE



CLERK OF THE  
BOARD



CANNABIS  
LICENSING  
(SEE SEPARATE  
BUDGET)



OR3  
(SEE SEPARATE  
BUDGET)

# County Executive Office (All Divisions)

## Summary of Proposed Budget

	2024-25 Adopted	2025-26 Proposed	Amount of Change	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>	\$802,267	\$1,035,117	\$232,850	29.02%
<b>Expenses</b>	\$5,839,648	\$6,230,531	\$390,883	6.69%
<b>General Fund Contribution</b>	\$5,037,381	\$5,195,414	\$158,033	3.13%
<b>Funded Staffing</b>	21.00	21.00	0.00	0.00%



# Major Budget Changes from Adopted Revenues

	Amount	Title of change in revenue
↑	\$ 156,850	Cost Allocation Plan revenue recovery in FY 2023-24
↑	\$ 75,000	Carry over of unspent grant funding from FY 2024-25

# Major Budget Changes from Adopted Expenses

	Amount	Title of change in expenditure/expense
↓	\$ 730,128	Professional services expenses, various contracts
↑	\$ 161,011	Payroll system & website improvements
↑	\$ 197,982	GSD services & charges
↓	\$ 526,687	Intrafund transfers for County Cost Plan allocations in 2023-24, fewer charges billed to General Fund Departments (recorded as a negative expense)

# County Executive Office Division

## Summary of Proposed Budget

	2024-25 Adopted	2025-26 Proposed	Amount of Change	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>	\$773,217	\$1,006,067	\$232,850	30.11%
<b>Expenses</b>	\$4,836,120	\$5,130,762	\$294,642	6.09%
<b>General Fund Contribution</b>	\$4,062,903	\$4,124,695	\$61,792	1.52%
<b>Funded Staffing</b>	16.00	16.00	0.00	0.00%

# Major Budget Changes from Adopted County Executive Office Division Revenues

	Amount	Title of change in revenue
↑	\$ 156,850	Cost Allocation Plan revenue recovery in FY 2023-24
↑	\$ 75,000	Carry over of unspent grant funding from FY 2024-25

# Major Budget Changes from Adopted County Executive Office Division Expenses

	Amount	Title of change in expenditure/expense
↓	\$ 707,124	Professional services expenses, various contracts
↑	\$ 79,379	Payroll system & website improvements
↑	\$ 153,191	GSD services & charges
↓	\$ 526,687	Intrafund transfers for County Cost Plan allocations in 2023-24, fewer charges billed to General Fund Departments (recorded as a negative expense)

# Clerk of the Board Division

## Summary of Proposed Budget

	2024-25 Adopted	2025-26 Proposed	Amount of Change	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>	\$29,050	\$29,050	\$0.00	0.00%
<b>Expenses</b>	\$1,003,528	\$1,099,769	\$96,241	9.59%
<b>General Fund Contribution</b>	\$974,478	\$1,070,719	\$96,241	9.87%
<b>Funded Staffing</b>	5.00	5.00	0.00	0.00%

# Major Budget Changes from Adopted Clerk of the Board Division Expenses

	Amount	Title of change in expenditure/expense
↓	\$ 23,004	Professional services expenses, various contracts
↑	\$ 81,632	Payroll system & website improvements
↑	\$ 44,791	GSD services & charges

# State & Federal Funding Risks

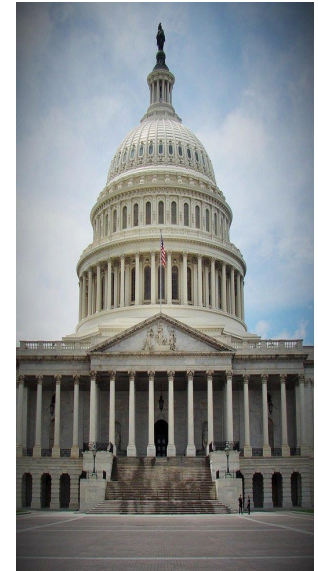


- **Federal & State Funding:** This budget does not receive direct Federal or State funding, but risks to other departments may impact the overall County budget and could require reductions to this budget at a later date.



# Emerging Issues

- **Federal Policy Response Team:** The CEO is closely monitoring recent federal adjustments to contracts, grants, policies, and funding priorities, which have the potential to impact programs in health care, homelessness, benefits services, and numerous other vital areas. Led by the CEO, the Federal Policy Response Team is a multi-departmental effort formed to: identify and assess policy and financial changes affecting county programs; increase interdepartmental and community partner collaboration to ensure financial and services sustainability; engage with communities and advocate for policy positions and funding solutions at state and federal levels; and co-develop and communicate adaptation strategies to anticipate and mitigate service disruptions.
- **Strategic Plan Refresh:** The County of Santa Cruz continues to advance its strategic initiatives to align leadership, foster collaboration, and achieve measurable results for residents and communities. These initiatives ensure that County policies, programs, and resources align with community needs and aspirations. With the first County Strategic Plan completing its six-year cycle in 2024, efforts are now focused on refreshing the plan to guide the County's work from 2026 through 2032. The Strategic Plan refresh will build on the existing foundation, ensuring that the County continues to focus on results that reduce disparities and increase opportunity. The CEO is committed to engaging the public, County staff, County boards, commissions and other advisory bodies, and the Board of Supervisors in shaping the next iteration of the Strategic Plan.



# Emerging Issues

- **Building Permit Organizational Assessment:** In June 2024, the CEO engaged Baker Tilly to complete an organizational assessment of the County's building permit process with the goal to gain an understanding of insights from internal and external sources and to develop recommendations for moving forward with improved processes and customer experience. Baker Tilly's work included a review of current and past process improvement efforts, operational data, interviews with employees and customers, stakeholder meetings, and an employee survey. By June 2025, the CEO, in conjunction with Baker Tilly and the Community Development and Infrastructure (CDI) Department, will develop a workplan to implement near and longer-term improvements to the development and building permit approval process based on the assessment.
- **Succession Planning:** The CEO has been succession planning for department heads and other executives across the County. The CEO works closely with non-elected department heads to help identify and develop the next generation of County leaders. To assist with this effort, the County established the Learn Engage Apply Perform program and is launching the fourth cohort in May 2025.



## County Executive Office

Approve the Proposed Budget for the County Executive Office, including any Supplemental Materials, which includes

- Revenues of \$1,035,117
- Expenses of \$6,230,531
- General Fund Contribution of \$5,195,414
- Staffing of 21.00 funded FTEs



**From:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**To:** [Agenda Management Support](#)  
**Subject:** Item 15 comment\_Rogers, H  
**Date:** Monday, June 2, 2025 1:58:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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**From:** Heather Rogers <Heather.Rogers@santacruzcountyca.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 2, 2025 9:53 AM  
**To:** Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountyca.gov>  
**Subject:** Support for Funding JAG

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing to support continued funding for the **Justice and Gender (JAG) Commission**, whose work has been instrumental in ensuring equal access to dignity, inclusion, and justice in our criminal legal system. Now more than ever, we must amplify the voices of our underrepresented community members who are experiencing poverty, the criminalization of mental health and substance use disorders, limited visitation with their children while incarcerated, and barriers to reentry. JAG's upstream work breaks harmful cycles and avoids downstream consequences. JAG provides invaluable support for women, children, and families who are impacted by the criminal legal system, ensuring that our most vulnerable community members have a role in creating policies, practices, and programs designed to strengthen community and keep families together.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Heather Rogers  
Public Defender  
Santa Cruz County Office of the Public Defender  
Phone: (831) 454-5301 | Fax: (831) 454-5360  
Email: [Heather.Rogers@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:Heather.Rogers@santacruzcountyca.gov)  
[www.santacruzdefenders.us](http://www.santacruzdefenders.us)  
#cruzdefender



To courageously defend the accused. To demand equal justice for all. To empower our clients with inspired advocacy in the courtroom and community. We are on a mission to elevate public defense, one client at a time.

**From:** [Board Of Supervisors](#)  
**To:** [Agenda Management Support](#)  
**Subject:** Item 15 comment\_Silva, J  
**Date:** Monday, June 2, 2025 1:48:56 PM  
**Attachments:** [5.30.25 Letter to SC County BOS from the Justice & Gender \(JAG\) Co-Chairs.pdf](#)

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**From:** Jesse Silva <silvaj@santacruzpl.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 30, 2025 1:06 PM  
**To:** Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountycalifornia.gov>  
**Cc:** leeannl <leeannl@monarchsc.org>  
**Subject:** Letter to SC County BOS from the Justice & Gender (JAG) Co-Chairs

\*\*\*\***CAUTION:**This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Dear Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors:

We are writing to urge you to fully fund the Commission on Justice and Gender (JAG) in this year's proposed budget. The JAG Commission's annual budget of \$51,700 ensures 5 hours a week of staffing support and provides \$1000.00 for speaker stipends. Staffing the JAG commission in this way is critical to the success of JAG and our goal to improve the lives of women in the criminal legal system, reduce recidivism and intergenerational trauma and crime, and hold accountable people and policies for reducing and preventing harm to women.

The Board recently allocated \$100,000 each to support immigrant and LGBTQ+ communities, which is very much needed, and for half of that amount, you will demonstrate you value the wellbeing of women and families impacted by the criminal legal system. Statistics show that women who are incarcerated are disproportionately people of color, economically disadvantaged, and survivors of gender-based violence. They are also mothers, sisters, daughters, grandmothers, our neighbors, our friends, and our loved ones.

Over the last few years the JAG Commission, with the support of funded JAG designated staff, has:

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- Advocated for re-opening of Blaine St. Women's Facility, providing equitable access to
- a medium security facility for women.
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- Developed a Safe Release Program, overseen by Monarch Services, for women released from

jail with no safe place to go. This program significantly reduces risk of sexual assault, gender-based violence, and decreases the chances of reoffending and returning to incarceration.

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- Advocated to reinstate in-person contact visits at Blaine St. and the Rountree Men's Facility, resulting in SCSO reinstating one hour per month for children of moms at Blaine St.
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- Contributed holiday cards during December holidays and Mother's Day to women in custody
- along with \$10 on each of their accounts to support communication with children and other loved ones during these holidays.
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- Included people with lived experience on the commission and as guest presenters to ensure
- their valuable input guides the work of the commission.
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- Tracked and reported the number of women in custody, including the number kept in isolation;
- on the list of people releasable to a program and still waiting in custody; and the number in custody on a bench warrant (with no new charges).
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The CEO's office provides some administrative support but they do not attend subcommittee meetings, where the bulk of our work gets done. Our commission meetings have grown to 25-30 members of the public, not including the 16 appointed commissioners. This exceptional engagement is largely due to the leadership of Susan Greene, whose contract is at risk with this cut. We need Susan's leadership to maintain this level of engagement and organize the knowledge, expertise, and relationships that make this commission so effective.

Cutting or reducing the JAG budget could destroy it, at the very least, it will suppress its ability to respond to the needs and concerns of women and families impacted by the criminal legal system. While the current presidential administration is actively destroying safeguards to women's health and safety, we implore you to retain the full JAG budget so that we may continue the critical work of lifting up women who have been subjugated and often ignored. But, who, with meaningful support, have the power to create real positive impact on all people in our community.

Respectfully,  
Leeann Luna and Jesse Silva, JAG Co-Chairs

Jesse Silva ([she/her](#))

Outreach Manager

[Santa Cruz Public Libraries](#)

Tel: 831-427-7700 x 7669

**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 7:30 AM-4:30 PM



## **General Government**

15. Approve the Proposed 2025-26 Budget for the County Executive Office, including any supplemental materials, and take related actions, as outlined in the referenced budget documents, and as recommended by the County Executive Officer

**Name:** Cassie Gazipura

**Comment - 06/02/2025 09:15 PM: ( Against )**

To the Member of the Board,

As a community member, attorney, and someone who has been involved with the Justice and Gender Commission (JAG) since its inception, I urge you not to defund the leadership infrastructure that has guided this Commission from the start. JAG has become a rare example of what true community-rooted justice work can look like—built on trust, deep relationships, and a clear vision. From its beginnings as a task force formed to revive the inactive Domestic Violence Commission, JAG has grown into a highly effective body with sustained participation not only from its 16 appointed commissioners but from 25–30 members of the public at nearly every meeting. That kind of consistent engagement, especially from those with lived experience, should not be taken lightly.

JAG has gained and maintained the trust of a remarkably broad coalition—District Attorney’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, law enforcement, the courts, and community-based organizations—who continue to show up because the Commission has proven itself as a space where work gets done. It has already advanced unanimously approved policy recommendations such as the Safe Release Program and successfully advocated to reopen Blaine Street and push for the reinstatement of contact visits. These are not abstract goals—they directly impact public safety, family stability, and the dignity of incarcerated women in our county.

This work doesn’t happen by chance. It has been supported by consistent, knowledgeable stewardship and a diverse coalition that cares deeply about the lived realities of the people JAG exists to serve. The kind of trust and participation JAG has built—across systems and communities—cannot simply be handed off to internal administrative staff unfamiliar with the relationships, expertise, and sensitivity this work demands. To do so, especially without a clear transition plan, risks unraveling years of progress.

Now is not the time to divest from a commission that is not only working—but working in a way that few others are. If changes are being considered, they must be made with transparency, care, and a commitment to preserving the structure that has made JAG effective. Please invest in the leadership and community trust that make this Commission one of the most impactful in Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,

Cassie Gazipura

## Juliette Rezzato

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**From:** Board Of Supervisors  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 3, 2025 10:17 AM  
**To:** Agenda Management Support  
**Subject:** Item 10.1 comment\_Gazipura, C

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**From:** Cassandra Gazipura <cgazipura@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 2, 2025 9:21 PM  
**To:** Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountyca.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Justice & Gender Commission

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To the Member of the Board,

As a community member, attorney, and someone who has been involved with the Justice and Gender Commission (JAG) since its inception, I urge you not to defund the leadership infrastructure that has guided this Commission from the start. JAG has become a rare example of what true community-rooted justice work can look like—built on trust, deep relationships, and a clear vision. From its beginnings as a task force formed to revive the inactive Domestic Violence Commission, JAG has grown into a highly effective body with sustained participation not only from its 16 appointed commissioners but from 25–30 members of the public at nearly every meeting. That kind of consistent engagement, especially from those with lived experience, should not be taken lightly.

JAG has gained and maintained the trust of a remarkably broad coalition—District Attorney’s Office, Public Defender’s Office, law enforcement, the courts, and community-based organizations—who continue to show up because the Commission has proven itself as a space where work gets done. It has already advanced unanimously approved policy recommendations such as the Safe Release Program and successfully advocated to reopen Blaine Street and push for the reinstatement of contact visits. These are not abstract goals—they directly impact public safety, family stability, and the dignity of incarcerated women in our county.

This work doesn’t happen by chance. It has been supported by consistent, knowledgeable stewardship that understands the lived realities of the people JAG exists to serve. The kind of trust and participation JAG has built—across systems and communities—cannot simply be handed off to internal administrative staff unfamiliar with the relationships, expertise, and sensitivity this work demands. To do so, especially without a clear transition plan, risks unraveling years of progress.

Now is not the time to divest from a commission that is not only working—but working in a way that few others are. At a moment when women’s rights are under attack nationwide, and local systems are searching for more humane and effective approaches, stepping away from a working model of inclusive

justice sends the wrong message. If changes are being considered, they must be made with transparency, care, and a commitment to preserving the structure that has made JAG effective. Please invest in the leadership and community trust that make this Commission one of the most impactful in Santa Cruz County.

Sincerely,

Cassie Gazipura

## Juliette Rezzato

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**From:** Board Of Supervisors  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 3, 2025 10:07 AM  
**To:** Agenda Management Support  
**Subject:** Item 15 comment\_Balawejder, A

-----Original Message-----

From: Alani Balawejder <alomonis@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, June 2, 2025 5:54 PM  
To: Board Of Supervisors <boardofsupervisors@santacruzcountycal.gov>  
Subject: JAG Justice and Gender Committee

\*\*\*\*CAUTION:This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email.\*\*\*\*

Hi there,

My name is Alani Balawejder, and I am a Santa Cruz local, a formerly incarcerated resident of Blaine st, and a decade-long thriving, sober addiction counselor for a local non profit agency. I am writing to share my support for Santa Cruz's Justice and Gender committee. I was fortunate enough to serve on the committee for years as a representative of the Gemma House, a local residential program for previously incarcerated women. A program that will sadly be closing its doors next month.

For years, JAG has brought focus to social issues facing women in our community and beyond. The committee has showcased community members who have been justice-involved in some way, and given them a platform to share their experience with local policy makers, police officers, public attorneys, librarians, non profit workers, residents, and more. This ongoing conversation between the people who create social structures and the people who are affected by them needs to be fostered and supported in any way possible. It would do my hometown of Santa Cruz a great disservice to pull funding from the JAG Committee. I both urge you and heartfully plea with you to consider the importance of keeping the JAG Committee funded.

Thank you for your time.

Warmly,

Alani Balawejder