

31. 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 ()



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:

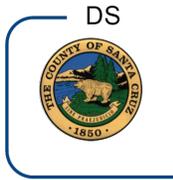
Monica Morales, Director of Health Services

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.



Pajaro Valley Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding

I. INTRODUCTION:

Pajaro Valley Collaborative (“PVC”) is a partner collaboration to advance positive outcomes throughout the Pajaro Valley with special priority emphasis on ***improving Health Equity, Economic Mobility, and Civic Engagement.***

Formed in 2020 in response to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Hispanic and Latino communities, the South County Triage Group (“SCTG”) is a network of partners representing healthcare and nonprofit service providers, government, public health, education, emergency food, interpersonal violence prevention and response, behavioral health, other social services, and private companies – the sectors required to collectively improve health equity and economic mobility for residents living and working in the Pajaro Valley.

The SCTG continues to meet regularly to focus on larger community impact issues, crises, and information sharing.

The PVC, an outgrowth of the SCTG, continues to meet regularly to coordinate and identify priority areas in the Pajaro Valley. Partners commit leadership, organizational resources, staff, and time at various levels to address joint priorities. Having responded to public health emergencies and other disasters, including the COVID-19 pandemic and severe flooding, the PVC partners are committed to evolving beyond crisis management to form a permanent collaboration to support health equity, economic mobility and civic engagement in the Pajaro Valley.

II. PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT:

The purpose of this non-binding Agreement is to outline the values, roles, membership, committees, and decision-making process of the PVC. This non-binding Agreement also outlines the specific commitments made by and to the organizational partners as they relate to the PVC’s goals of improving health equity, economic mobility, and civic engagement in the Pajaro Valley. In the second quarter of each year, the representative of the organizational partners will affirm their acceptance of this non-binding Agreement.

III. MISSION:

*Advancing systems change resulting in improved Pajaro Valley community
Health Equity, Economic Mobility, and Civic Engagement.*

IV. VISION:

All Community Members Thriving as Disparities are Eliminated.

V. DEFINITIONS:

1. **Representative:** A representative of the partner organization. The representative holds an executive or leadership role within their partner organization, attends regularly, and has decision-making authority on behalf of their organization as delegated by the organization's decision-making body such as the Board of Supervisors or City Council.
2. **Designee:** A designee is an employee of a partner organization who will attend and act on behalf of the representative in the representative's absence. Representatives may only select one designee within their organization's leadership. Designees hold decision-making authority on behalf of their organization.
3. **Partner Organization ("Partners"):** An organization or institution serving the Pajaro Valley that is a member of the Pajaro Valley Collaborative. The organization and its staff are committed to engaging and working in good faith with the Pajaro Valley Collaborative. The organization's representative must agree to this non-binding Agreement to become a member of the PVC.

VI. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. **Cooperation and Collaboration:** Partners will leverage and lift up existing complementary work of partners and others in the community. We understand that as leaders, we should uplift the community first.
2. **Transparency and Accountability:** Partners will conduct their work with a commitment to the utmost mutual respect for each other and our organizations.
3. **Regular and Inclusive Communication:** Partners commit to regular communication amongst partners, clients, and the larger community.
4. **Transformational:** Partners will maximize true meaningful change and success through policy shifts and systems change by ensuring a focus on justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and empowerment to minimize and eliminate barriers and traumas.
5. **Community-centered:** Partners will focus on and be responsive to individuals and families, providing dignity, empathy, and an opportunity to be heard and seen.
6. **Collective Impact:** Partners will aspire to collaboratively apply for funding and grants to address established and identified focus areas with a strong backbone in place.

VII. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Decision-Making Process:

As members of the Pajaro Valley Collaborative and the South County Triage Group (SCTG), Partners acknowledge that they may be called upon to represent SCTG in various settings. Collectively, Partners agree to support and advance initiatives consistent with each Partners decision-making body's policies and goals that are in alignment with the shared priorities: health equity, economic mobility, and civic engagement.

For matters outside these three core policy areas, individual organizations will defer to their own internal decision-making processes to determine whether to participate or opt-out.

When a vote is needed, a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote of the membership, utilizing e-votes as needed, must be in favor of the initiative to move forward. A vote must be cast within a week of the vote to be counted.

2. Steering Committee Responsibilities:

- A. Gather information and bring it back to the collective for a vote to gain the support of the larger group.
- B. Assess membership requests to ensure alignment with the mission, vision, and values of the group.
- C. Guide vision and strategy of SCTG.
- D. Attend scheduled meetings. If unable, send a designee with decision-making authority.
- E. Develop draft documents, including policies and procedures for committee work.
- F. Work within the boundaries of your organizational policies and procedures and contractual/funder requirements.
- G. Share best practices for collective impact efforts. Ensure best practices of the common good are shared with partners.

3. Partner Agency Responsibilities (Those not attending PV Leaders or not on the Steering Committee):

- A. Provide relevant strategic information.
- B. Share best practices.
- C. When members are absent from meetings, you will ensure an organizational representative.
- D. Work within the boundaries of your organizational policies and procedures.

4. Administrative and Organizational Support & Practices:

- A. Partners will leverage their organizations' available resources when needed to ensure administrative needs are met for the Pajaro Valley Collaborative.
- B. Annual Review: the Pajaro Valley Collaborative will review this Agreement to update and reflect on practice and organizational development needs.

As an active good faith partner organization of the Pajaro Valley Collaborative (PVC), I understand Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency and Human Services Department (name of organization)'s involvement in the Collaborative to include the above detailed in the role and responsibilities section.

This non-binding Agreement acknowledges that all parties remain separate legal entities, with their own constituent legal and fiduciary responsibilities and remain accountable to their parent bodies and other relevant legal authorities.

Signed,

DocuSigned by:

041697AE557E4B3... (Name)
Health Services Agency (Partner Organization)
3/12/2025 (Date)

DocuSigned by:

D1FB750084B1... (Name)
Human Services Department (Partner Organization)
3/12/2025 (Date)

Approved as to Form:

DocuSigned by:

F0F6FD189D784BF... 2/18/2025
Office of the County Counsel Date

Approved as to Insurances:

Signed by:

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Risk Management Date

Approved:

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Signatures: 4

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John Nguyen

John.Nguyen@santacruzcountyca.gov

Lead Assistant County County Counsel

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Gina Borasi

GINA.BORASI@SANTACRUZCOUNTYCA.GOV

Risk Manager

County of Santa Cruz

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Randy Morris

Randy.Morris@santacruzcountyca.gov

Director

County of Santa Cruz

Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Monica Morales

Monica.Morales@santacruzcountyca.gov

HSA Director

Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Jillian Ritter Jillian.Ritter@santacruzcountyca.gov Sr. Dept. Admin. Analyst County of Santa Cruz Parks Department Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)	COPIED	Sent: 3/13/2025 12:53:05 PM
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Signing Complete	Security Checked	3/13/2025 12:53:03 PM
Completed	Security Checked	3/13/2025 12:53:06 PM

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