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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
Civil Grand Jury

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Honoring Commitments to the Public

Looking Back at 2022-2023 Civil Grand Jury Recommendations and Actions Taken by County Agencies

TRENDING NOW . . . Local agencies are getting it done!

Government entities in Santa Cruz County are implementing changes to improve operations. These changes are intentional and adhere to what they agreed to do. When this happens, our community benefits.

The value of Grand Jury reports is realized when government agencies meet their expressed commitments and improve their transparency and efficiency. Typically, it takes two years for results to be measurable.

California Penal Code section 933.05 requires follow through from government agencies on these commitments. Therefore, each year the new Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury looks back at reports published two years ago. The purpose is to evaluate progress on recommendations and achievements of county agencies.

The 2024-25 Grand Jury found that, in general, commitments were kept. The recommendation details, along with a brief summary of agency actions taken to address each recommendation are included in the remaining pages of this report.

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Background

Each year, a new Grand Jury is empaneled to investigate county agency practices with an eye toward improvement. The Grand Jury writes reports with facts, findings, and recommendations for change that should streamline county operations. The goal is to improve government efficiency and effectiveness, as well as promote accountability and transparency. The agency reviewed in the report has an obligation to respond.

Each agency investigated by the Grand Jury receives a copy of the Grand Jury report and a response packet that includes the instructions. The agency sends its responses to the presiding judge of the Superior Court along with a copy to the Grand Jury. Elected officials must respond within 60 days, and governing bodies are required to respond within 90 days. The responses by these agencies are to include an explanation or summary of their commitment and a timeframe or expected date for completion.

Timeline Overview

- ❖ In 2023, the Grand Jury published reports with findings and recommendations.
- ❖ In 2023, 60 to 90 days after report publication, local agencies responded to each recommendation with one of the following four choices:
 - a. Recommendation has been implemented*
 - b. Recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be in the future*
 - c. Recommendation requires further analysis*
 - d. Recommendation will not be implemented*
- ❖ In 2025, the Grand Jury reviewed the 2023 Recommendations. When the response was b or c, the Grand Jury examined what actions were taken during the past two years by the local agencies. The purpose was to determine if commitments were kept.
- ❖ In this report, the Grand Jury asks and answers, “*Was it done?*” and if not completed “*What is the current status of completion?*”

Readers interested in a more comprehensive look at the Grand Jury reports and responses are encouraged to read the original reports. All reports may be found in the Reports section of the Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury website: [Santa Cruz Grand Jury](#).

Scope and Methodology

In 2023, the Grand Jury completed their investigations and submitted their final reports and recommendations to the county department or agency that was the subject of the investigation. The 2024-25 Grand Jury (**Current Jury**) looked back two years to determine the disposition of the recommendations made by the 2022-23 Grand Jury (**Prior Jury**).

The Prior Jury investigated eight aspects of local government. The Current Jury reviewed local government responses to all eight reports from the Prior Jury. After examining all recommendations, the Current Jury focused our investigation on the following four reports:

1. *Cyber Threat Preparedness*
2. *Envisioning the Future of our Jails*
3. *Diagnosing the Crisis in Behavioral Health*
4. *Code Compliance Division - Out of Compliance*

Through online research, document requests, and confidential interviews the Current Jury examined the follow-up actions addressing the original 2023 recommendations and determined the current disposition of each recommendation.

The 2024-25 Grand Jury examined the 2023 report recommendations when the response was ***“has not yet been implemented, but will be in the future”*** or ***“requires further analysis”***.

Investigation

The Current Jury reviewed recommendations and responses to the Prior Jury reports and found that, in general, commitments were kept.

In this section, the 2023 Recommendations are provided for context. The Current Jury's assessment as to whether the agency implemented each recommendation is also included. ***Was it done? If not completed, what is the current status of completion?***

The current disposition is indicated along with a brief statement of the actions taken by local agencies to address each recommendation. A summary is included below.

Current Disposition of 2023 Recommendations	Quantity
DONE 	22
IN PROGRESS  Expected completion in 2025	1
IN PROGRESS  Expected completion in 2026	1
Has not been implemented due to funding	1

NOTE: The 2023 Recommendations quoted in this Investigation section are taken from the Prior Jury reports which can be found here: [2022-2023 Grand Jury Reports and Responses](#)

1. [Cyber Threat Preparedness](#)

Cyber attacks targeting computer information systems, personal digital devices or smartphones, increase every year, with the largest number of attacks typically hitting California. The Prior Jury investigated the level of preparedness of the County of Santa Cruz (**County**) and the four cities of Santa Cruz, Watsonville, Scotts Valley, and Capitola to understand the cybersecurity practices that were in place, the cyber threat environment, and the potential consequences of a cyber attack.

The County and cities would benefit from cyber threat information shared across the county, enabling greater knowledge of potential threats and shared ideas for threat mitigation. With proper cybersecurity measures in place, our county and cities could take advantage of the cybersecurity grant opportunities available from federal and state agencies.^{[1] [2] [3] [4]}

A) 2023 Recommendations for the County of Santa Cruz**Recommendation 1**

“Santa Cruz County should prepare and implement a Cybersecurity Plan by the end of 2023, ensuring that city officials and all staff are well aware of the plan details, their responsibilities, and associated policies.”

DONE

The County of Santa Cruz has a Cybersecurity Plan which was approved by the Board of Supervisors (**BOS**) in March 2024.^{[5] [6] [7]} In June 2023, a regional Cybersecurity group was formally convened. This Cybersecurity Consortium was formed by the County and is led by the Chief Information Security Officer (**CISO**) of the Information Services Department (**ISD**).^[8] The group meets regularly, enabling and promoting valuable information exchange among agencies in the county.^{[9] [10]} The effectiveness of the Consortium became apparent while the participants worked as a group to create a Cybersecurity Plan template for all cities. Within a six to eight month period, the Consortium enabled everyone to have their own Cybersecurity Plan.^{[11] [12]}

Recommendation 2

“By the end of 2023, the county should revise and expand its Incident Response Plan to clearly delineate the steps it will take in response to a cyber-attack, the responsibilities of identified officials, and the coordination required with state and federal officials for each type and level of cyber-attack. A detailed plan is a requirement for continuity of county operations in a cyber incident.”

DONE

The County of Santa Cruz has revised and expanded its Incident Response Plan per the recommendation. The most recent version is effective as of February 1, 2025.^{[7] [10] [13]}

There is a very strong Information Technology (**IT**) coalition within the state of California called California County Information Systems Directors Association (**CCISDA**). Only county IT employees in California are permitted to become CCISDA members. Our County CISO attends the CCISDA conference. The frequent exchange of information and the comparison of experiences between counties is very helpful.^{[14] [15] [16] [17]}

B) 2023 Recommendations for the City of Santa Cruz**Recommendation 5**

“By Fall 2023, Santa Cruz should identify and implement creative approaches to hiring and retention so they can maintain a fully staffed IT Department despite the competition with surrounding counties. The City should investigate potential partnerships with one or more of the 18 California colleges and universities with National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity.”

DONE

The City of Santa Cruz has implemented innovative hiring and retention strategies, resulting in IT vacancy rates consistently remaining between 0% and 5% since Fall 2023. They are conducting targeted outreach through professional networks such as the Municipal Information Systems Association of California (**MISAC**), while also supporting internship and mentorship programs to develop local talent and strengthen career pipelines. ^[18] ^[19]

Recommendation 6

“By Fall 2023, the City of Santa Cruz should assign one individual responsible for cybersecurity. Adoption of a managed service provider arrangement will boost its security posture, although it does not eliminate the need for a dedicated security lead within the City's IT Department.”

DONE

The City of Santa Cruz has expanded its IT Department staff from 23 to 26 full-time positions, including the addition of a Cybersecurity IT Manager. This senior-level management role is responsible for developing, enhancing, and overseeing the City's cybersecurity initiatives, significantly strengthening its overall security posture. ^[18] ^[19]

Recommendation 7

“By the end of 2023 or sooner, the City of Santa Cruz should develop and implement a Cybersecurity Plan that encompasses all aspects of information security.”

DONE

The City of Santa Cruz has developed and published a comprehensive Cybersecurity Plan, detailing all aspects of information security. This plan is reviewed and updated annually by the Cybersecurity IT Manager to ensure continued effectiveness and alignment with best practices. ^[18]

Recommendation 8

“By the end of 2023 or sooner, the City should complete an Incident Response Plan with sufficient detail for city officials to use as a step-by-step guide in the event of a cyber incident.”

DONE

The City of Santa Cruz has successfully created and published a detailed Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan. The plan outlines the designated Incident Response Team and their roles/responsibilities, a step-by-step guide for handling cyber incidents, and annual reviews and updates led by the Cybersecurity IT Manager to ensure ongoing relevance and alignment with best practices.^[18]

C) 2023 Recommendations for the City of Watsonville**Recommendation 10**

“Watsonville should conduct an evaluation of its recently expanded IT Department, critical IT upgrades, and the status of cybersecurity measures by the end of 2023. Based on this assessment, the City should allocate existing or newly identified resources to ensure cybersecurity is adequately addressed going forward.”

DONE

The City did an evaluation of its IT Department, approved a position reclassification, and hired staff to focus on cybersecurity as a major job function. All cyber issues in Watsonville are handled by their IT Department, which reports directly to the City Manager. Additionally, in December 2024 the city hired a Deputy City Manager who works closely with the IT Department.^{[20] [21] [22] [23]}

Recommendation 11

“Given the size of Watsonville, the City should have a dedicated position for cybersecurity by the end of 2023, to ensure adherence to best practices, mitigation of potential threats, and education of city staff and leadership.”

DONE

A position reclassification was approved and staff have been hired to focus on cybersecurity as a major job function. The IT Department has a dedicated position, Cybersecurity IT Analyst, who reports directly to the IT Director. In adhering to best practices, the approach taken by the IT Department is that cybersecurity is an ongoing program.^{[23] [24] [25]}

Recommendation 12

“By early 2024 or sooner, Watsonville should prepare and implement a Cybersecurity Plan that addresses all of the best practices for strong cyber hygiene.”

DONE

The City of Watsonville worked with other local agencies and the County and created a Cybersecurity Plan in September 2023.^{[23] [26] [27]}

Recommendation 13

“By early 2024 or sooner, Watsonville should prepare and implement an Incident Response Plan with sufficient detail to serve as a guide in the event of a cyber attack.”

IN PROGRESS **Expected completion in 2025**

The City of Watsonville applied for and was awarded a State and Local Government Cybersecurity grant. This is a federal grant, and the funding status is unknown at this time. However, funds have been identified in the city’s IT budget, and a vendor has been selected. The project kickoff begins in April 2025, and includes an incident response plan, playbooks, and training. A training exercise will be conducted where the participants engage in a simulated, discussion-based activity that tests the incident response plan. Team members discuss their roles and responses to a simulated emergency or crisis to identify gaps in plans and procedures. The Incident Response Plan should be completed in the summer of 2025. ^{[4] [23] [28] [29] [30] [31] [32]}

Recommendation 14

“Upon completion of IT structural upgrades and a higher level of cyber maturity, and by the end of 2023, Watsonville should participate in local, regional, and state information sharing initiatives.”

DONE

Along with participation in the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center (NCRIC) and Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), the City subscribes to California Cybersecurity Integration Center (Cal-CSIC) information sharing. The City of Watsonville IT Department is involved and participates regularly in the Cybersecurity Consortium, led by the ISD of Santa Cruz County. Watsonville’s IT Director meets regularly with the CISO of the County. ^{[23] [33] [34] [35] [36]}

D) 2023 Recommendations for the City of Scotts Valley**Recommendation 16**

“Working with its IT contractor, by Fall 2023, Scotts Valley should write and implement a Cybersecurity Plan that is shared with all city officials to demonstrate comprehensive security measures and executive-level cyber threat awareness.”

DONE

In September 2023, the City of Scotts Valley created a Cyber/Information Security Plan. This plan is intended to be updated as new cybersecurity threats and advancements progress. ^{[37] [38]}

Recommendation 17

“By Fall 2023, Scotts Valley should write an Incident Response Plan that clearly delineates the steps it will take in response to a cyber attack, the responsibilities of identified officials, and the coordination required with state and federal officials for each type and level of cyber attack.”

DONE 

In November 2023, the City of Scotts Valley created a very detailed Cyber Incident Response Plan. This plan establishes City-Wide cyber incident response capability including the formation of the City of Scotts Valley Cyber-Incident Response Team (**CIRT**). The document details the specifics outlined in the recommendation along with contact information for the CIRT, Cyber Best Practices, and Guidelines to Follow for various types of incidents. ^[38] ^[39]

Recommendation 18

“Scotts Valley should participate in local, regional, and state cybersecurity organizations for information sharing by the end of 2023.”

DONE 

The City of Scotts Valley participates regularly in the regional Cybersecurity Consortium. The CISO of the County, who leads the Consortium, is part of CCISDA, a very strong IT coalition within the state of California. The City of Scotts Valley and participants of the Consortium benefit from leveraging CCISDA’s collective experiences and a robust level of information sharing. ^[8] ^[15] ^[16] ^[40] ^[41]

E) 2023 Recommendations for the City of Capitola**Recommendation 21**

“Capitola should establish and implement a Cybersecurity Plan by the end of 2023. Several resources exist to provide a foundation or templates for these plans including NIST Guidelines, CISA resources, and Cal-CSIC guidance.”

DONE 

The City of Capitola issued a Cybersecurity Plan in September 2023. ^[42] ^[43]

Recommendation 22

“By Fall 2023 Capitola should prepare an Incident Response Plan that provides detailed guidance for a city response to a cyber attack.”

DONE 

The City of Capitola issued an Incident Response Plan in 2023 and updated the plan as recently as October 2024. ^[44]

2. Envisioning the Future of Our Jails

Santa Cruz County is a compassionate community. The Prior Jury published a report challenging the Sheriff's Department to improve the treatment and safety of jail inmates living with mental illness and to develop innovative and effective post-release reentry programs. The question was posed, "In the real world, with the funding constraints in this County, what is the best solution to both the aging Main Jail and to the distressingly high recidivism rate?" The Current Jury followed up on the 2023 Recommendations and evaluated the actions taken and determined current dispositions.

2023 Recommendations

Recommendation 3

"After Blaine Street, the second unit at Rountree should be reopened as soon as sufficient staffing is available, and preferably by the end of 2023."

DONE 

The Blaine Street Women's Facility houses non-violent, minimum-security women. Blaine Street was reopened in 2023. Rountree is a medium security facility located in an unincorporated area of southern Santa Cruz County. The second unit at Rountree, Unit "S", officially opened in March 2025. With significant staffing increases over the past year, the Sheriff's Office felt in a strong position to open the unit. [\[45\]](#) [\[46\]](#) [\[47\]](#)

Recommendation 5

"The Public Defender's Office should receive funding in the next budget cycle to provide adequate anti-recidivism programs."

DONE 

The 2024/5 Public Defender's Office Budget includes funding for holistic care. This holistic model involves connecting people to stabilizing services and supports efforts to reduce recidivism. The Supplemental Budget adds 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (**FTE**) Senior Social Worker II, 1.0 FTE Attorney II, and 1.0 FTE Department Administrative Analyst as new positions to support Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (**CARE**) Act services. The CARE courts were implemented December 1, 2024. [\[48\]](#) [\[49\]](#) [\[50\]](#) [\[51\]](#)

Recommendation 7

"The Sheriff's Office should commission a study to determine the most effective use of the three jails and any modifications to existing facilities needed to house the expected jail population into the future. This study should be completed by the end of 2024."

Has not been implemented due to funding

While conducting further analysis, the Sheriff's Office and County Administrative Office explored the best approach to carry out this study. The County issued a Request for Proposal (**RFP**) from qualified consultants to provide professional services for a needs assessment and received two proposals. The County states that due to cost they will not complete the Needs Assessment for the Jail. [\[52\]](#) [\[53\]](#) [\[54\]](#) [\[55\]](#)

3. Diagnosing the Crisis in Behavioral Health

The Prior Jury investigated the Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health Division (**BHD**) of the Health Services Agency. The report noted the longstanding and serious staffing shortage at the BHD is a contributing factor to many issues faced by the agency. Issues discussed in the report include lacking the capability to transition from locked to unlocked psychiatric care (**step-down**) and services for marginalized groups such as racial minorities and those involved with the criminal justice system. Until the staffing level is significantly improved, expecting improved service in any of these areas is unreasonable. The 2023 Recommendations included implementing changes to address these issues.

2023 Recommendations

Recommendation 5

“To eliminate the frequent offloading of the Behavioral Health Division (**BHD**) clients to local hospital emergency departments, the Board of Supervisors and BHD should evaluate ways to increase the number of Crisis Stabilization Program chairs and psychiatric beds available, which may include planning for another adult Psychiatric Healthcare Facility. This evaluation and planning process should be completed by the end of 2023.”

DONE

As of June 2023, the Crisis Stabilization Program (**CSP**) stopped serving youth and focused 100% on adults. As a result, capacity for adults in the CSP, operated by Telecare, increased from 8 to 12 chairs. This has resulted in minimal diversions to hospital Emergency Departments. The 12-chair capacity for adults has been reached on less than five occasions since July 2023, and since that time there has been only one diversion due to chair capacity.^[56]

As part of the Crisis Now Innovation Project, BHD is conducting an ongoing evaluation of current services. The goal is to identify gaps in the crisis continuum of care and develop recommendations to address those gaps by June 2025.^[56]

Recommendation 6

“The Behavioral Health Division should improve the services provided by the Mobile Emergency Response Team and the Mobile Emergency Response Team for Youth by improving staffing and expanding coverage to 24/7. This should be completed by the end of 2023.”

DONE

Santa Cruz County’s Behavioral Health Division in partnership with the Family Service Agency of the Central Coast began providing 24/7/365 mobile crisis response services in December 2024. Thanks to a grant from the California Department of Health Care Services, BHD now provides after-hours crisis response for our local communities. This includes providing mobile crisis response without involving law enforcement, unless there is a safety concern. This approach is in response to identified needs of at-risk and marginalized individuals. In addition, the BHD has clinical staff available on-call 24 hours a day to provide clinical consultation as well as Telehealth services. Both teams are capable of transporting individuals to services needed to further stabilize the crisis being faced.^[57]

Recommendation 7

“The Behavioral Health Division should ensure that there is a smooth transition plan and back up plan for the treatment of children and youths from the current Crisis Stabilization Program to the planned new facility in Live Oak other than diverting them to emergency departments. This should be completed by September 30, 2023.”

DONE

In 2024, BHD developed a transition plan, establishing a cooperative community project, which is partially funded by a grant from Dominican Hospital.

Watsonville Community Hospital (**WCH**) was identified as the preferred Emergency Department for youth on 5585 behavioral health crisis holds. (In California, a “5585 hold” refers to a 72-hour involuntary psychiatric hospitalization for a minor, under 18, experiencing a mental health crisis.) Through this cooperative community project, youth are evaluated by WCH Emergency Department physicians and staff.

Youth-centered Behavioral Health treatment, support, consultation and coordination are provided by Pacific Clinics, 12 hours/day, 7 days/week.

The permanent Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit is currently slated for completion in late Summer 2025. There will be an overlap of care between the current WCH site and the permanent location to help mitigate any uncertain circumstances.^[56]

Recommendation 8

“The Behavioral Health Division should request sufficient funding from the County to provide adequate step down care so patients do not relapse and need yet more care. This request should be in place by the end of 2023.”

DONE

BHD has implemented new rates and services as mandated by California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (**CalAIM**). In the current Fiscal Year 2024-25, the County contributed an additional \$400,000 from Measure K funds to support residential mental health treatment for persons experiencing homelessness.^[56]

4. Code Compliance Division - Out of Compliance

The Code Compliance Division is responsible for investigating homeowners and businesses. One area of responsibility includes those operating short-term rentals who may not be following applicable county codes.

The Prior Jury found that while the Code Compliance Division was earnest and well-meaning in carrying out their mission, they also faced challenges. They were extremely short staffed, had an enormous backlog of cases, and lacked basic professional organizational procedures, practices, and policies. The Prior Jury report highlighted additional areas where the department was especially lacking:

documentation, employee training and education, and quality assurance. In addition, the report identified problematic issues of the Planning Department as a whole that impact the Code Compliance Division's performance.

It was the position of the Prior Jury that the department should run transparently, productively and efficiently. When the Prior Jury reports were published, the Code Compliance Division was part of the Santa Cruz County Planning Department. A change has since occurred where the Planning Department and Public Works Department were integrated to form the Community Development and Infrastructure Department (CDI). The Code Compliance Division is now part of the CDI.

2023 Recommendations

Recommendation 4

"The policies and procedures manuals for the Planning Department and Code Compliance Department should be completely reviewed, updated as prescribed in the policy and procedures manual, and digitized. Each section should be dated, and all future revisions should include date markings for any changes. This process should be completed by the end of 2023."

IN PROGRESS Expected completion in 2026

The Code Compliance Manual was reviewed and fully revised for clarity in June 2024. It is available online.^[58]

In 2022-23, the Planning Department and Public Works Department were integrated to form the Community Development and Infrastructure Department. Since combining these departments, "an effort has been underway to review the policies and procedures of both departments in order to update and create a single set applicable to the whole department. Due to multiple reviews, including reviews by Personnel and the Union, (the county expects) this effort to take another year before it is ready for distribution."^[59]

Recommendation 10

"The Code Compliance Department should add recommended time frames for the Flow Chart described in the policy and procedure manual by the end of 2023."

DONE

The referenced flow chart was removed from the Policies and Procedures Manual as it was overly complicated and not very helpful. Instead, timelines were incorporated into the individual procedure memos in the Code Compliance Manual. Also, accessible in the newly developed CDI website is additional information regarding the code compliance process and timelines.^[58]

Conclusion

We have evaluated the outstanding progress made by our local government towards improving operations. When the agencies accept the recommendations, follow through and meet their expressed commitments, our community benefits from increased government transparency and accountability.

2025 Findings, Recommendations, and Commendations

Findings

Cyber Threat Preparedness

- F1.** The City of Watsonville does not have an Incident Response Plan. Funds have been identified in the city IT budget, and a vendor has been selected. In April 2025, the kickoff for this project begins. Items covered in the project are an incident response plan, playbooks, training, and cybersecurity scenarios that test the incident response plan.

Envisioning the Future of Our Jails

- F2.** The Blaine Street Women's Jail was reopened May 19, 2023. Incarcerated persons earn the privilege to move from the Main Jail to this minimum security women's facility.
- F3.** The "S" unit of Rountree detention center was re-opened in March 2025.
- F4.** The County issued a Request for Proposal for a needs assessment and received two proposals. The County states that due to cost they will not complete the Needs Assessment for the Jail.

Code Compliance Division - Out of Compliance

- F5.** The Code Compliance Policies and Procedures Manual was reviewed and fully revised for clarity in June 2024. It is available online.
- F6.** There is no evidence that the Policies and Procedures Manual for the Planning Department is updated and available online.
- F7.** In 2022-23, the Planning Department and Public Works Department were integrated to form the Community Development and Infrastructure Department. Since combining these departments, there is an effort underway to create a single set of policies and procedures, applicable to the whole department.

Recommendations

Cyber Threat Preparedness

- R1.** The City of Watsonville should develop a formal Incident Response Plan with sufficient detail to serve as a guide in the event of a cyber attack. They should complete the plan by October 31, 2025. (F1)

Envisioning the Future of Our Jails

- R2.** In the next budget cycle, the County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors should include the funds to complete the Needs Assessment for the jails. The goal of this assessment is to determine the most effective use of the three jails and any modifications to existing facilities needed to house the expected jail population into the future. The Needs Assessment for the Jails should be completed by October 31, 2026. (F4)

Code Compliance Division - Out of Compliance

- R3.** The recently formed Community Development and Infrastructure Department (CDI) should review the policies and procedures of both the Public Works and Planning Departments and create a single set applicable to the whole CDI. Each section should be dated, and all future revisions should include date markings for any changes. This set of policies and procedures should be completed by the CDI and posted online by April 30, 2026. (F6, F7)

Commendations

- C1.** The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury commends our County CISO for regularly attending the semi-annual conference of CCISDA (California County Information Services Directors Association). The frequent exchange of information and the comparison of experiences between counties is very helpful. In addition to leading the Consortium, the CISO also now leads an internal group involving IT, the Sheriff's office, District Attorney, Human Services, and other offices as needed.
- C2.** The City of Santa Cruz remains committed to strengthening its cybersecurity resilience framework and continuously improving its workforce strategies and response capabilities. The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury commends the City of Santa Cruz for protecting the community by prioritizing its Information Technology Department including hiring a Cybersecurity IT Manager. We also commend the City of Santa Cruz for successfully creating a comprehensive Cybersecurity Plan.
- C3.** The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury commends the City of Scotts Valley for protecting the local community by hiring a local Scotts Valley firm for administering its Cybersecurity framework and response capabilities.

- C4.** The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury commends the Sheriff's Office for the services provided to the women at Blaine Street since reopening in 2023. Blaine Street is the minimum security women's facility in Santa Cruz. Earning the privilege to move from the Main Jail to Blaine Street gives the women a sense of self-worth and pride in their accomplishments. They are appreciative of the vast services offered at Blaine Street and take advantage of these programs to better themselves. The evidence of support for one another as women is a result of the incredible staff, and the programs and services offered.
- C5.** The Santa Cruz Civil Grand Jury commends the Sheriff's Office for recognizing the need for a dedicated dental clinic and dental services at the Rountree facility location. The benefits are indeed significant for all involved.
- C6.** The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury commends the Public Defender's Office for providing funding for holistic care.
- C7.** The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury commends the Santa Cruz County's Behavioral Health Division for effectively improving access to care, and promoting the mental well-being of our community.
- C8.** The Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury commends County Behavioral Health for providing 24/7/365 mobile crisis response services. Also notable, as part of the Crisis Now Innovation Project, Behavioral Health is conducting ongoing evaluation of current services. The goal is to identify gaps in the crisis continuum of care and develop recommendations to address those gaps.

Required Responses

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Respond Within/ Respond By</i>
Watsonville City Council	F1	R1	90 Days / September 15, 2025
Santa Cruz County Sheriff	F4	R2	60 Days / August 18, 2025
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors	F4, F6, F7	R2, R3	90 Days / September 15, 2025

Definitions

- **2023 Recommendations:** Recommendations from the 2022-2023 Grand Jury Reports. The reports are available on the Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury website: [2022-2023 Grand Jury Reports and Responses](#)
- **24/7/365:** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year; available or happening without interruption, all the time, every day, and every hour.
- **5585:** In California, a “5585 hold” refers to a 72-hour involuntary psychiatric hospitalization for a minor (under 18) experiencing a mental health crisis.
- **BHD:** Behavioral Health Division
- **Cal-CSIC:** California Cybersecurity Integration Center
- **CalAIM:** California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal is a multi-year initiative by the California Department of Health Care Services to transform and improve the Medi-Cal program, California's Medicaid system
- **CARE Act:** Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment Act:
<https://www.chhs.ca.gov/care-act/>
The CARE Act creates a new pathway to deliver mental health and substance use disorder services to the most severely impaired Californians who too often suffer in homelessness or incarceration without treatment. The CARE Act moves care and support upstream, providing the most vulnerable Californians with access to critical behavioral health services, housing and support.
- **CARE Court:** The CARE Act allows certain adult people to ask (petition) a court to create a voluntary CARE agreement or a court-ordered CARE plan for someone with untreated schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders.
https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Fact-Sheet_-CARE-Court-1.pdf
- **CCISDA:** California County Information Systems Directors Association.
<https://ccisda.org/>
MISSION: Empowering Excellence in Technology Leadership: Uniting Trust, Innovation, and Collaboration for Lasting Impacts to our communities.
VISION: Improving the lives of our residents and visitors by leveraging CCISDA collective experiences and developing and maintaining innovative technology to better serve our communities.
- **CDI:** Community Development and Infrastructure
- **CIRT:** Cyber-Incident Response Team
- **CISA:** Certified Information Systems Auditor certification is the standard achievement for auditing, monitoring, and assessing IT and business systems
- **CISO:** Chief Information Security Officer: a senior-level executive who oversees an organization's information, cyber and technology security.
- **County:** County of Santa Cruz
- **CSP:** Crisis Stabilization Program

- **Current Jury:** 2024-2025 Grand Jury
- **Cyber Resilience Framework:** A structured approach that helps organizations prepare for, respond to, and recover from cyber threats, ensuring business continuity and minimizing the impact of incidents.
- **Cybersecurity Plan:** An aggregate of directives, regulations, rules, and practices that prescribe how an organization manages, protects, and distributes information
- **FTE:** Full Time Equivalent
- **FY:** Fiscal year
- **Grand Jury:** Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
- **Incident:** An occurrence that actually or potentially results in adverse consequences to an information system or the information that the system processes, stores, or transmits and that may require a response action to mitigate the consequences.
- **Incident Response Plan:** A documented strategy that outlines how an organization will respond to and recover from an incident.
- **Incarcerated Person:** Someone who is confined or imprisoned in a jail, prison, or other correctional facility. There are different classifications of incarcerated persons.
- **ISD:** Information Services Department
- **IT:** Information Technology
- **MISAC:** Municipal Information Systems Association of California
- **MS-ISAC:** Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center
- **NCRIC:** Northern California Regional Intelligence Center
- **NIST:** National Institute of Standards and Technology
- **Prior Jury:** 2022-2023 Grand Jury
- **RFP:** Request for Proposal is a document used by organizations to outline their needs for a specific project or service and invite vendors to submit proposals outlining how they would meet those needs and the amount it would cost.
- **Step-Down:** The transition from locked to unlocked psychiatric care
- **WCH:** Watsonville Community Hospital

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Websites

Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury

<https://www.santacruzcountyca.gov/departments/grandjury.aspx>

Reports from the 2022-2023 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury

[2022-2023 Grand Jury Reports and Responses](#)

Community Development and Infrastructure Department (CDI)

<https://cdi.santacruzcountyca.gov/>

Site Visits

Detention Centers in Santa Cruz County

Main Jail

Blaine Street

Rountree

Juvenile Detention Center