

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

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COUNTY

County Advances Equity in Job Hiring for Formerly Incarcerated



Illustration from a photo by Edward O'Connor (hober) · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0

A new County ordinance builds on the state's Fair Chance Act to give people with a criminal past a better chance of gaining jobs in the unincorporated area.

Local officials held a news conference Tuesday to announce how the ordinance will affect justice-involved people and their potential employers.

The ordinance ensures justice involved people have a fair chance at employment without being automatically disqualified due to past incarceration.

An employer can still conduct a background check, but now there are rules and guidelines about what they can consider regarding arrests and more.

If an employer decides to withdraw a job offer based on background check results, they must provide a written assessment explaining their decision and allow the applicant to respond with additional information.

The Fair Chance Ordinance went into effect Oct. 10. The County's Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) is getting the word out about the program.

OLSE is also offering a new hiring tool kit to give employers guidelines on the new ordinance.

Penalties for violations of the ordinance will begin on July 1, 2025. Employers could be fined up to \$20,000 for multiple violations.

For more information about the new ordinance and the hiring tool kit, visit the County's Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement

webpage or call 619-531-5129.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 12, 2024



Illustration from a photo by RightCowLeftCoast · Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0

COUNTY

Bomb Threat at Registrar of Voters Investigated, Is Not Credible

The County of San Diego Registrar of Voters received a bomb threat early Friday evening at its office in Kearny Mesa. Sheriff's deputies conducted an investigation. They determined the threat was not credible, and those who were in the building were safe.

The safety of County employees and the public is a top priority. The Sheriff's Office will continue working with law enforcement partners to monitor intelligence and information related to any possible threats, and they are prepared to handle any safety challenges that may arise.

The Registrar of Voters is committed to a safe, transparent and accurate election process and will continue to process remaining ballots to certify election results by Dec. 5. The Registrar expects to use the full certification period to make sure every legally cast vote is added to the count in the most expeditious, yet careful manner available, ensuring accurate results. All updates will be posted on sdvote.com .

County of San Diego news release · Nov 9, 2024

COUNTY

County Receives Grant to Run a Program for High-Risk DUI Offenders

County Probation received a \$642,600 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) for an intensive probation supervision program for high-risk individuals with serious felony and/or multiple driving under the influence (DUI) convictions. The grant program runs through September 2025.

"This funding empowers our team to ensure community safety remains at the forefront of all we do by enhancing our ability to effectively balance support and accountability in the monitoring of and case planning for probation clients who have committed serious and/or multiple DUI offenses," San Diego County Probation Chief Tamika Nelson said.

"It allows our department to continue making impactful strides toward assisting these probation clients in achieving their rehabilitative goals and in restoring their lives and families, increasing successful outcomes for both clients and public safety. We are grateful for this opportunity that positions us closer to accomplishing one of our main priorities, to reduce the number of impaired drivers on our streets."

The probation grant will pay for field operations, including multi-agency efforts to reduce DUI and unlicensed driving, conducting compliance checks during business and non-traditional hours, alcohol testing, officer training in Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST), distribution of DUI "Be on the Lookout" (BOLO) alerts, and collaborating with courts and prosecutors to establish and enforce probation orders.

"Intensive supervision programs are essential in reducing the harmful impact of DUI offenses," said OTS

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

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County Receives Grant to Run a Program for High-Risk DUI Offenders

Director Barbara Rooney. “This is one important measure to help prevent the tragic consequences of impaired driving and create safer roads for everyone.”

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety , through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 13, 2024

COUNTY

County Receives \$125,000 Office of Traffic Safety Grant for Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program

The County’s Health and Human Services Agency has received a \$125,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to support its Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program. The program will promote safe practices for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers’ on how to responsibly share roads and paths. The grant program runs through September 2025.

“We are excited to receive this grant, it will allow us to significantly expand our bicycle and pedestrian safety program,” said County Health and Human Services Agency Community Operations Officer Barbara Jiménez. “By focusing on education, awareness and promoting safe practices, we are working to reduce crashes and prevent injuries. Ultimately, we’re working to build more walkable and bike-friendly neighborhoods where everyone can travel safely and confidently.”

Grant funds will support various activities focused on bicycle and pedestrian safety: Community bicycle and

walk “audits” of streets with a high rate of pedestrian and/or bicyclist fatalities and serious injury crashes.

Participation in “Open Streets” events that encourage biking and walking.

Bicycle training courses that educate youth on safe riding behaviors.

Community and school education presentations.

Community bike rides that encourage and teach riders safe riding skills.

Walking field trips with older residents and walking safety education for people who are experiencing homelessness.

Pop-up events that promote the importance of visibility on roads and encourage usage of safety equipment such as reflective armbands/leg bands and bicycle headlights/taillights.

“The safety of people walking and biking on our roads is a top priority for our office,” OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. “Everyone moves, and not always by car. It’s important that we invest in efforts to protect people walking, biking and rolling that helps establish a strong traffic safety culture where everyone on California roads can travel to and from places safely.”

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 12, 2024

COUNTY

\$11.5M Available from County for Affordable Housing and Veterans

The County has made \$11.5 million available to finance the creation of affordable housing to benefit low-income people and unsheltered veterans.

The notice of funding availability (NOFA) was created from a combination of funds:

\$6.5 million from the federal HOME Investment Partnerships program,

\$3.5 million from the County’s Innovative Housing Trust Fund ,

\$1.5M million from the state’s Permanent Local Housing Allocation program .

The NOFA also includes the opportunity to apply for Project Based Vouchers through both the Housing Choice Voucher program as well as the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing programs.

“Our region is behind in housing development to meet the needs of our community,” said David Estrella, director of Health and Human Services Agency’s Housing and Community Development Services. “ We are constantly looking for construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition opportunities that increase affordable housing, supporting families, our veterans and ultimately build a more resilient future for the county.”

Proposals from qualified developers must be complete and in compliance with all the specified requirements set forth in the solicitation documents.

Applications close at 2 p.m. on Dec. 20, 2024.

For more information, please visit the Housing and Community Development Services website or email at community.development@sd county.ca.gov .

County of San Diego news release · Nov 7, 2024

COUNTY

Help Build San Diego County

The community is invited to learn about the County’s upcoming building projects in the region, give their input

and have a little fun at the same time.

The County is holding an open house on the 2025-30 Capital and Public Works Plans. The event will take place from 6 to 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 14 at the County Operations Center Chambers at 5520 Overland Ave. in Kearny Mesa.

The County provides facilities and infrastructure all over the region. For example: libraries, parks, behavioral health centers, fire stations, roads and much more.

People can learn about projects that may be planned for their neighborhoods. County department representatives will be on hand to answer questions and residents can give their input.

Visitors will also find some opportunities for family fun. You can meet live hawks and owls, CAL FIRE’s mascot and his fire engine display, see a Sheriff’s Office armored vehicle and a K9 narcotics detection demonstration. Attendees can spin the “Check Your Mood” prize wheel, play life-size games and check out other activities.

Visit our Engage Hub to dig into the 2025-30 Draft Capital and Public Works Plans. You can also submit comments at the site, register for the event and request interpretation services.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 12, 2024

COUNTY

Vista Azul Affordable Housing Opens in Carlsbad

A grand opening ceremony was held this week for Vista Azul in Carlsbad, the newest affordable housing community in the county for low-income individuals and families.

The 70-unit development is near the corner of Aviara Parkway and Palomar Airport

Courts · Transit · Public safety

Road and includes a mix of 32 one-bedroom apartments, 19 two-bedroom apartments, and 18 three-bedroom apartments with one manager’s unit. The homes are available to individuals and families who earn between 30% and 60% of the Area Median Income.

Vista Azul features a community room with free wifi and kitchen, a teen room, a common laundry area, an outdoor BBQ and picnic area, a play structure with a tot lot, and a bocce ball court. It is located near retail shops, employment opportunities and schools.

“There is a critical need for affordable housing and I am proud of our partnership with the City of Carlsbad to make this grand opening possible,” said David Estrella, County Housing and Community Development Services Director. “The residents here at Vista Azul will have housing security and that leads to better health and educational outcomes.”

Vista Azul is a BRIDGE Housing development made possible through private and public partnerships including the \$1.3 million dollars in HOME Investment Partnerships Funding provided by HUD and administered by the County of San Diego.

Visit the BRIDGE Housing website for more information.

Since 2017, the County has invested more than \$314 million into affordable housing, using excess land, its Innovative Housing Trust Fund, and other state, federal, and local funding sources administered by the County.

Those funds have helped open doors to nearly 2,500 homes with 3,100 more on the way.

County of San Diego news release · Nov 7, 2024

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



Illustration

BUSINESS

Member Spotlight: Novo Brazil Brewing

Novo Brazil Brewing , founded in 2014 by the Carneiro Family in Chula Vista, has become a prominent figure in the San Diego area. As the largest beverage company in the South Bay, Novo boasts a strong presence in the

Eastlake and Imperial Beach communities. Driven by innovation, Novo introduced NOVA Easy Kombucha , a renowned kombucha brand in California. NOVA has a partnership with the San Diego Padres, offering its Sunset Slam hard kombucha inside Petco Park. Additionally, the company proudly sponsors the San Diego Wave FC women’s soccer team and has a presence inside Snapdragon Stadium with its La Ola Dragon Fruit hard kombucha. The colorful and lively NOVA brand is particularly popular with the younger crowd and

has a taproom in the heart of Ocean Beach. In 2024, Novo was the only brewery selected to be part of the new Terminal 1 expansion at San Diego International Airport.

Novo actively contributes to the community through various initiatives and partnerships. By donating a portion of sales from NOVA Raspberry Azteks Kombucha to the MESA Foundation, Novo supports SDSU student-athletes in their educational and athletic pursuits. Besides, the company donates funds and volunteers time to significant causes such as the iHeart Rady

Children’s Giveathon, benefiting Rady Children’s Hospital, and the Ronald McDonald Foundation through restaurant sales. Novo also offers a 10% discount at their Mission Valley restaurant to SDSU students.

In collaboration with local educational institutions like Southwestern College, Novo provides students with hands-on experience in brewing science. The company also hosts community events at its brewpubs and taprooms, creating welcoming spaces for families, sports

enthusiasts, and the broader community. These events often serve as fundraisers or awareness campaigns for local causes.

Through its expansion, Novo Brazil Brewing has created over 150 jobs in the San Diego area, significantly contributing to the local economy and providing employment opportunities for residents. These extensive efforts exemplify Novo’s strong commitment to community engagement and support, making a lasting impact on the San Diego and Chula Vista areas.

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

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Member Spotlight: Novo Brazil Brewing

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Nov 12, 2024

BUSINESS

Member Spotlight: Minivan Productions

Do you know the ROI of your video marketing?... Are you happy with it?

Campaigns run on strategy, not just creative. The #1 mistake brands make is not

pairing their creative with an actual video strategy.

If you want to start seeing real results from your video marketing you need to use your creative to address the problem your product solves for your audience. Then...

Engage with awareness content to help your audience become aware of an issue they're facing or an opportunity that's presenting itself.

Retarget with consideration content that shows your audience there are solutions to solve their problems or achieve their opportunity.

Convert with decision content that positions your brand as the provider that's going to fix their issue or help them achieve their opportunity.

We're a full-service video production firm developing campaign and story-driven

content! Our sweet spot is in humanizing brands by helping clients engage and convert target audiences.

Our focus on solution centric, ROI driven campaigns is what makes us different – not only is your time, energy and creative safe with us.. so is your financial investment!

Get a FREE content strategy (and coffee on us) to see how you can get real results from your video investment.

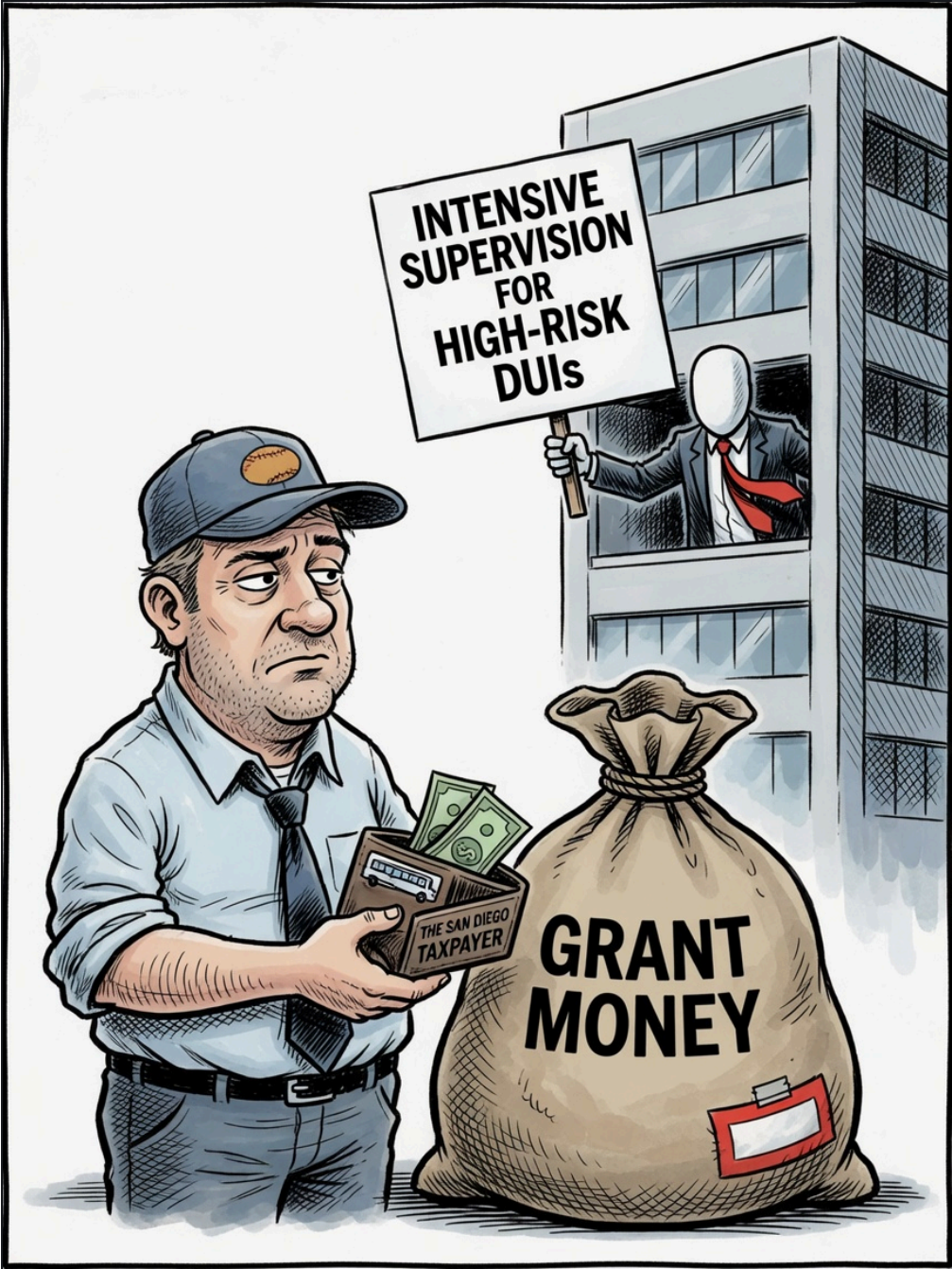
We'll analyze organic and paid media from your brand, identify the gaps and opportunities, and build a content strategy unique to your brand that is guaranteed to generate ROI.

616-920-2480 – kyler@minivanproductions.com

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Oct 30, 2024

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



County gets \$642k state grant for high-risk DUI probation

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

COMMENTARY

California's Rush to Eliminate Oil Risks Energy Shortages and Higher Costs, Policy Expert Warns

Edward Ring of the California Policy Center argues that aggressive regulations are shrinking refinery capacity and in-state production while petroleum dependence remains high, setting the stage for potential crises.

California's political leaders, from the governor and attorney general to lawmakers and agency officials, are pushing hard to phase out fossil fuels with

petroleum as their primary target, according to Edward Ring.

The director of water and energy policy at the California Policy Center contends that even if the objective is worthwhile, the approach taken so far contains serious problems.

Ring points out that the state still relies on petroleum for half of its total energy needs and natural gas for nearly a third. Efforts to shift away from gasoline have stalled, he writes, as electric vehicle sales have flattened and 2024 is expected to show no increase from the previous year.

Despite previous rapid growth, EVs account for less than 5 percent of all registered vehicles in the state. Ring suggests that most buyers interested in current EV technology may have already purchased one.

He also questions whether the necessary power generation, charging stations and transmission lines will be ready if EV adoption doubles or triples, let alone becomes dominant.

Data from the California Energy Commission shows that crude oil consumption in the state actually rose after the 2020 pandemic low of 485 million barrels, reaching 524

million in 2021, 527 million in 2022 and 528 million in 2023, Ring reports.

While increased EV use and better vehicle efficiency could eventually lower demand, the expert asks how quickly that will happen and whether it will occur fast enough to match the pace of regulatory pressure.

Against this reality, the legislature approved ABX2-1 in a special session on October 14, a measure aimed at stopping what it calls price gouging by requiring refineries to keep a minimum fuel inventory.

Ring argues there has been

an almost perfect match between gasoline price changes and the cost of crude oil, which suggests refiners are not artificially inflating costs. He calls the new rule a risky added burden on an already strained industry.

Just three days after the governor signed the bill, Phillips 66 revealed plans to close its Los Angeles refinery. Although a company official said the move was unrelated to the legislation, industry sources told Ring that claim is not credible.

The state needs its refineries because it uses a unique gasoline blend to cut

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COMMENTARY (CONTINUED)

Opinion — the views of the writers named, not news reporting

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California’s Rush to Eliminate Oil Risks Energy Shortages and Higher Costs, Policy Expert Warns

air pollution and cannot easily bring in fuel from other states. Current refining capacity stands at 1.62 million barrels per day against average demand of 1.45 million, leaving a 10.7 percent cushion that Ring describes as already slim.

Once the Phillips 66 facility shuts down next year, that surplus shrinks to just 2.3 percent, he calculates. The policy expert asks whether it

makes sense to impose more operational controls and storage mandates when there is almost no extra capacity left.

Ring writes that recent rules are also undermining the state’s own oil production. New drilling permits have become nearly impossible to obtain in Kern County and other producing areas, while operating wells face strict setback requirements of nearly a mile from any building that houses people or serves the public.

Annual in-state oil output, which held steady near 400

million barrels per year in the 1980s, fell to 118 million barrels in 2023. The annual decline rate has accelerated from 2-3 percent before 2017 to 5-7 percent since then.

As a result, California now imports 75 percent of its crude oil, and the industry is shrinking, Ring states. Energy firms are seeking federal aid for hydrogen and carbon capture projects, but he says the long-term value and funding stability of those efforts remain uncertain.

Reliable and reasonably priced energy will require cooperation across oil, gas, nuclear, hydro, wind, solar,

geothermal and biomass sectors to balance environmental goals with economic needs, Ring argues.

Instead, current policies create scarcity that raises conventional energy costs, allowing subsidized renewables to gain ground while consumers pay the price, according to Ring.

He warns that this strategy will persist until a supply disruption occurs, potentially leading to blackouts and gasoline lines similar to those in 1979. At that point, lawmakers’ environmental ambitions would face a harsh test.

Ring concludes that Californians can only hope such a breakdown never arrives.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Nov 12, 2024

ABOUT THIS PAPER

San Diego Newsline covers downtown San Diego first — City Hall, the Gaslamp Quarter, East Village, Little Italy, Barrio Logan and the waterfront — and the county around it. Every item names its source; read the originals and our standards at sandiegonewsline.com.

MORE NEWS

Downtown, City & County

COUNTY

County and Prebys Foundation Join Forces to Help Local Artists, Support Art and Culture Sustainability

A new partnership will dramatically boost funding opportunities for local artists.

The San Diego County Arts and Culture Commission and Office of Economic Development & Government Affairs in partnership with the Prebys Foundation are announcing a new matching grant program to boost funding for local arts and cultural projects.

Starting Dec.1 and until Jan. 31, 2025, organizations applying for County Community Enhancement

grants can receive dollar-for-dollar matching funds from the Prebys Foundation when hiring artists or cultural practitioners for their projects.

The foundation will provide \$250,000 in matching funds for the \$250,0000 available through the County’s Community Enhancement grants for a total of \$500,000.

Grant amounts to organizations will range from \$2,500 to \$5,000 and could be put toward murals, public art pieces for buildings, dance performances and more. When matched, the partnership will fund projects of \$5,000 to \$10,000.

“This program effectively

doubles the impact of arts funding in our community,” said County Director of Economic Development & Government Affairs Matthew Parr. “This partnership with the Prebys Foundation will really make a difference to artists and people who enjoy different forms of art and cultural events.”

“Envisioning our county as a dynamic hub of arts and culture, we are excited to announce matching grants that will enhance the funding for artists across our region,” said Prebys Foundation CEO Grant Oliphant. “This initiative aims to help the County Arts and Culture Commission establish a vision that invests in artists

in a sustained and meaningful way. We look forward to the thriving arts scene and strengthened partnerships that will result from this collaboration.”

To apply for funding, organizations can:

Visit the County’s Community Enhancement Grant portal .

Check the designated box on your grant application to indicate interest.

Apply Dec. 1, 2024 through Jan. 31, 2025.

Current grant applicants will be automatically reviewed for eligibility.

For questions about the matching program, contact arts@sdcounty.ca.gov .

The San Diego County Arts and Culture Commission supports and sustains the growth and vitality of San Diego County’s diverse arts and culture communities.

Prebys Foundation is the largest independent private foundation in San Diego County, a unique tri-national area encompassing communities from San Diego, Tijuana, and the Kumeyaay Nation. The foundation works to create an inclusive, equitable, and dynamic future for all San Diegans. For more information about the Prebys Foundation, visit prebysfdn.org .

County of San Diego news release · Nov 8, 2024

STARTING A BUSINESS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY?

Publish your DBA the easy way.

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