

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 Launches New Dashboards to Track Progress on Ending Homelessness



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

The County has launched new interactive dashboards on its website, giving the public real-time access to data and milestones on programs aimed at reducing homelessness.

The dashboards, available on the Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) webpage , showcase progress on multiple contracted and direct service programs. They include a tool tracking outcomes for individuals served by the County’s outreach teams in unincorporated areas and a Homelessness Solutions and Prevention Action Plan dashboard, which outlines progress on the County’s regional strategy to address homelessness.

“These new dashboards are giving county residents a clearer view into the progress we’re making on our strategies to impact homelessness regionally,” said Dijana Beck, Director of the County Office of Homeless Solutions. “By sharing this data openly, we’re not only demonstrating progress but also inviting collaboration to strengthen solutions for our most vulnerable residents.”

The dashboards are part of the County’s Framework for Ending Homelessness , adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in 2021 to align policies and regional efforts to assist people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Key features of the new programs dashboard include:
data on number of people

served, average program participation and percentage exiting to stable housing

Some program dashboard highlights include:

Regional Homeless Assistance Program: Focused on emergency housing for people experiencing homelessness in the unincorporated areas of the county, it has served nearly 3,000 people since 2020, with 42% moving into permanent housing – above the national average of 32%.

Home Safe : Supports older adults referred through Adult Protective Services, with over 71% entering the program experiencing homelessness and more than half exiting to stable housing.

Housing Our Youth : Assists young adults at risk of homelessness regionwide; 55% became employed, 36% enrolled in school and 164 of 409 participants transitioned to stable housing since February 2023.

While many homeless services operate regionally, the County also leads outreach and sheltering efforts in unincorporated communities.

The Unincorporated Regional Homeless Services dashboard compiles data from outreach teams, Safe Parking Programs, the Regional Homeless Assistance Program and quarterly encampment abatement reports from the Department of Public Works.

The Action Plan dashboard ,

located on the County’s Framework for Ending Homelessness page , tracks progress in emergency housing, services, treatment, outreach and permanent housing aligned with the County’s Key Performance Indicators and centers around addressing homelessness and housing opportunities facilitated by County policies and programs .

Since 2017, the County has invested more than \$334 million into affordable housing, leveraging excess land, its Innovative Housing Trust Fund, and other state, federal and local funding sources. These efforts have opened doors to more than 3,300 homes, with 2,700 more in development and added 527 permanent supportive housing units.

Residents can learn more about housing initiatives through the County’s Housing Hub , which provides details on programs designed to meet community needs.

The new dashboards support the County’s commitment to transparency and accountability in reporting on homeless program outcomes. They help connect people to critical services, including pathways to stable housing. Find more information online from the Office of Homeless Solutions or by calling 2-1-1.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 10, 2026

DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

COUNTY

County Updates Zoning Rules to Support Boutique Wineries

The Board of Supervisors has approved changes to the County Zoning Ordinance that allow amplified live music at boutique wineries—small-scale operations that sell wine and offer public tasting areas.

The amendment aims to boost the economic viability of wineries in unincorporated areas by enhancing visitor experiences while maintaining compatibility with surrounding rural communities. Clear limits on noise, occupancy, licensing, and other requirements will ensure these changes balance business growth with community standards.

Officials say the update will strengthen the rural economy and workforce, helping boutique wineries remain financially sustainable amid challenges such as drought, high water costs, and economic uncertainties.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 11, 2026

COUNTY

County Offices to Close on Presidents Day

All San Diego County offices, family resource centers, public health centers, libraries and animal shelters will be closed to the public Monday, Feb. 16 to commemorate the Presidents’ Day holiday.

Law enforcement, emergency animal control response and other essential services will continue through the holiday.

County parks, campgrounds and neighborhood day-use parks remain open 365 days a year. However, the following locations will be closed Monday:

4S Ranch Recreation Office only (all parks will be open)

Camping reservations can be made online at the County’s Online Camping Reservations web page . However, the Department of Parks and Recreation’s reservation phone line will not be

staffed during the holiday.

All County offices will resume normal business hours Tuesday, Feb. 17.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 9, 2026

COUNTY

15th Annual ‘Love Your Heart’ Campaign Kicks Off Feb. 9

The County’s Love Your Heart campaign is celebrating 15 years of raising awareness of the silent dangers of heart disease. Since its launch in 2011, more than a half million people have received blood pressure screenings.

The 2026 Love Your Heart campaign runs Feb. 9 through Valentine’s Day, Feb. 14, offering free screenings at dozens of locations across the region and throughout Mexico. Blood pressure screening sites are located throughout the County with a focus on priority zip codes where health disparities are high. To find a convenient site, visit LoveYourHeartSD.org .

“Please, make the time out of your busy schedule get your blood pressure checked in your neighborhood and bring a loved one with you,” said Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe. “It only takes five minutes and you may get a life-saving surprise.”

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States and Mexico, and the second leading cause of death in San Diego County, claiming 4,785 lives in 2023. That means the latest data shows one in five local deaths is from heart disease.

In 2024 the percentage of adults who had heart disease in San Diego rose to 7.6%, up from 6.9% the previous year, meaning 20,000 more people were diagnosed. Blood pressure is a key indicator for heart health and often one of the only warning signs.

Non-Hispanic Black residents faced the greatest burden of heart disease, with a hospitalization rate of 737.5 per 100,000, which means if the County was 100,000

people, 737 of them would be hospitalized. That rate is 1.5 times higher than the next group, Non-Hispanic Other at 482.4 per 100,000.

“Conditions linked to high blood pressure include heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease and repeatedly show up as leading causes of death across the region,” said Dr. Sayone Thihalolipavan, M.D., M.P.H., County public health officer. “So what can we do to stay healthy and live longer? First... know your blood pressure numbers... Second, make small adjustments, like a quick walk every day, choosing to take the stairs, eating more leafy green vegetables and fruits, and quitting smoking and vaping.”

The County provided 1,330 blood pressure monitors to partners in priority zip codes. Those partners are handing out the monitors to community members during Love Your Heart.

Learn more about what your numbers mean and resources to get healthy at LoveYourHeartSD.org .

County of San Diego news release · Feb 9, 2026

COUNTY

County Urges Measles Vaccination as Cases Rise Nationwide

County health officials are urging residents to protect themselves against measles as cases surge across the United States. While no cases have been reported locally in 2026, five recent cases in Los Angeles and Orange counties have raised concerns. Exposures in those counties have been reported at Disneyland, airports, restaurants, shops and other public spaces.

Measles is one of the most contagious infectious diseases. It spreads through tiny airborne droplets that can linger in the air for hours and survive on surfaces. The virus is making a strong comeback with a record 2,267 cases and 49 outbreaks reported nationwide last year—nearly all among those who

are unvaccinated. January 2026 marked the highest number of cases for that month in 26 years.

An ongoing, large outbreak in South Carolina has reached 876 cases, surpassing the 2025 Texas outbreak that reached 762 cases and claimed the lives of two children before it ended in August 2025.

Infants under 12 months are most at risk because they have not yet received the measles vaccine. Children over 12 months who are not immunized and people with weakened immune systems are also highly vulnerable.

Symptoms of measles include fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, fatigue and a red rash that typically appears one to four days after symptoms begin, starting at the head and then spreading to the lower body. There is no cure or treatment.

“If you have traveled internationally or nationally near an outbreak area and are experiencing fever and a rash, call your healthcare provider immediately,” said Dr. Sayone Thihalolipavan, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer . “Measles can be a very dangerous illness, especially for babies and young children.”

Even when not deadly, measles can lead to severe health complications . About one case in every 1,000 unvaccinated children is fatal.

“The best way to prevent measles and protect your child from getting sick is with a vaccine,” said Dr. Thihalolipavan. “Getting the measles vaccine is much safer than getting measles. Two doses of the vaccine are 97% effective at preventing measles, and more than 95% of a community should be vaccinated to prevent a measles outbreak.”

For more information about measles, other vaccine-preventable diseases and the shots that protect against them, visit the County’s Immunization Branch online or by phone at (866) 358-2966.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 5, 2026

COUNTY

Probation Program Helps People Stay on Track

San Diego County’s Probation Department reports its supportive approach is working, with most people under probation avoiding future problems—even after supervision ends.

“Our goal is to help people succeed for the long term, not just while they’re being supervised,” said Chief Probation Officer Tamika Nelson. “By connecting people to resources and building strong community ties, we’re seeing real progress in reducing crime and supporting positive change.”

Youth: In the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2025-26, 89% of youth on probation had no new sustained violations, a 3% improvement from the previous year. A year after completing probation, 85% remained uninvolved in the justice system.

Adults: 80% had no new convictions during probation and 79% stayed conviction-free a year after leaving probation supervision.

One former client shared how probation support helped them overcome addiction. Today, that person mentors young people through a community program, teaching resilience, accountability and positive choices.

Previous Year’s Numbers Youth: 86% didn’t have a new violation during probation, while 85% did not have justice system involvement a year after probation supervision. Adults: 82% had no new convictions during probation; 81% stayed conviction-free after a year.

Officials credit these outcomes to connecting people with health care, job services, education, and mentorship programs. County Probation emphasizes opportunity and support—not just court-ordered supervision.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 11, 2026

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



Illustration

BUSINESS

Member Spotlight – David Allen Capital Inc.

For those who don’t already know me, I am pleased to be celebrating over two decades of involvement with the

chamber in many different roles from Chamber member and ambassador to Chamber employee and even vendor. What an awesome experience it has been to participate in and serve the local business community through such a fine organization!

Rolling into 2026 it is my pleasure to feature a key solution sought by members for years; ready access to working capital. “Ready access” means no collateral is needed

and funds are disbursed within days—not weeks—of submitting a short application. No tax returns are needed, there are no fees to apply. We ask for only a few recent bank statements. Applying is so easy because we think business owners are ROCK STARS and have better things to do!

With today’s cutting edge technology, a request for a loan or credit line can be shopped through multiple

funding institutions almost instantly. Approvals are quick, and there is no obligation to accept the resulting offers. What a relief to the local business looking to expand their footprint, get through an inevitable small business “pinch” or check for available credit limits.

With loan amounts from \$20k up to \$2 million, the team at David Allen Capital, Inc. specialize in funding small/medium businesses

when the big banks can’t. We even partner with select banks and credit unions on a referral basis, as they can’t always grant credit that we love to fund , and we don’t offer checking accounts, a win-win-win for all!

I could not be happier to present this valuable service to the San Diego business community.

Please reach out via my established cell and email

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Member Spotlight – David Allen Capital Inc.
addresses, if only to catch up. I remain at your service!
Keith Woolgar David Allen Capital, Inc. Independent Broker #391502931 (619) 306-3369 dba FintechSanDiego.com

kjwoolgar@gmail.com
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jan 29, 2026
BUSINESS
New State Senate Committee Assignments
A new year brings new committee assignments in the California State Legislature, and Senate President pro

Tempore Monique Limón (D–Santa Barbara) has announced her leadership team and committee chairs for the year ahead. Committee chairs play a critical role in the legislative process, serving as key gatekeepers with the authority to advance or halt legislation.
Several influential committees will see new leadership

this year. Senator Sabrina Cervantes (D–Riverside) will chair the Senate Appropriations Committee, while Senator John Laird (D–Santa Cruz) will serve as Chair of the Budget Committee. San Diego legislators will also hold several prominent committee leadership roles. Senator Catherine Blakespear (D–Encinitas) will

continue as Chair of the Environmental Quality Committee, Senator Akilah Weber Pierson (D–San Diego) will lead the Health Committee, and Senator Steve Padilla (D–San Diego) will serve as Chair of the Insurance Committee.
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jan 26, 2026

AROUND CALIFORNIA

Statewide news

CALIFORNIA
Bondi Cites Release of 4,561 Criminal Illegal Immigrants by California During House Hearing
Attorney General Pam Bondi responded to questions about Epstein files by citing figures on crimes by those freed despite ICE detainers in California.
Attorney General Pam Bondi responded during her appearance before the House Judiciary Committee on Wednesday by citing figures on criminal illegal immigrants released by California.
The exchange occurred

during an oversight hearing on Department of Justice operations that included the recent release of unredacted Epstein files. Rep. Ted Lieu, a California Democrat, questioned Bondi about former President Donald Trump’s past association with Jeffrey Epstein and played a video clip of the two men conversing.
Bondi responded that there was “no evidence” of criminal wrongdoing by Trump. Lieu then accused her of perjury and said, “If you had any decency, you would resign right after this hearing concludes.”
Bondi replied, “Don’t you ever accuse me of

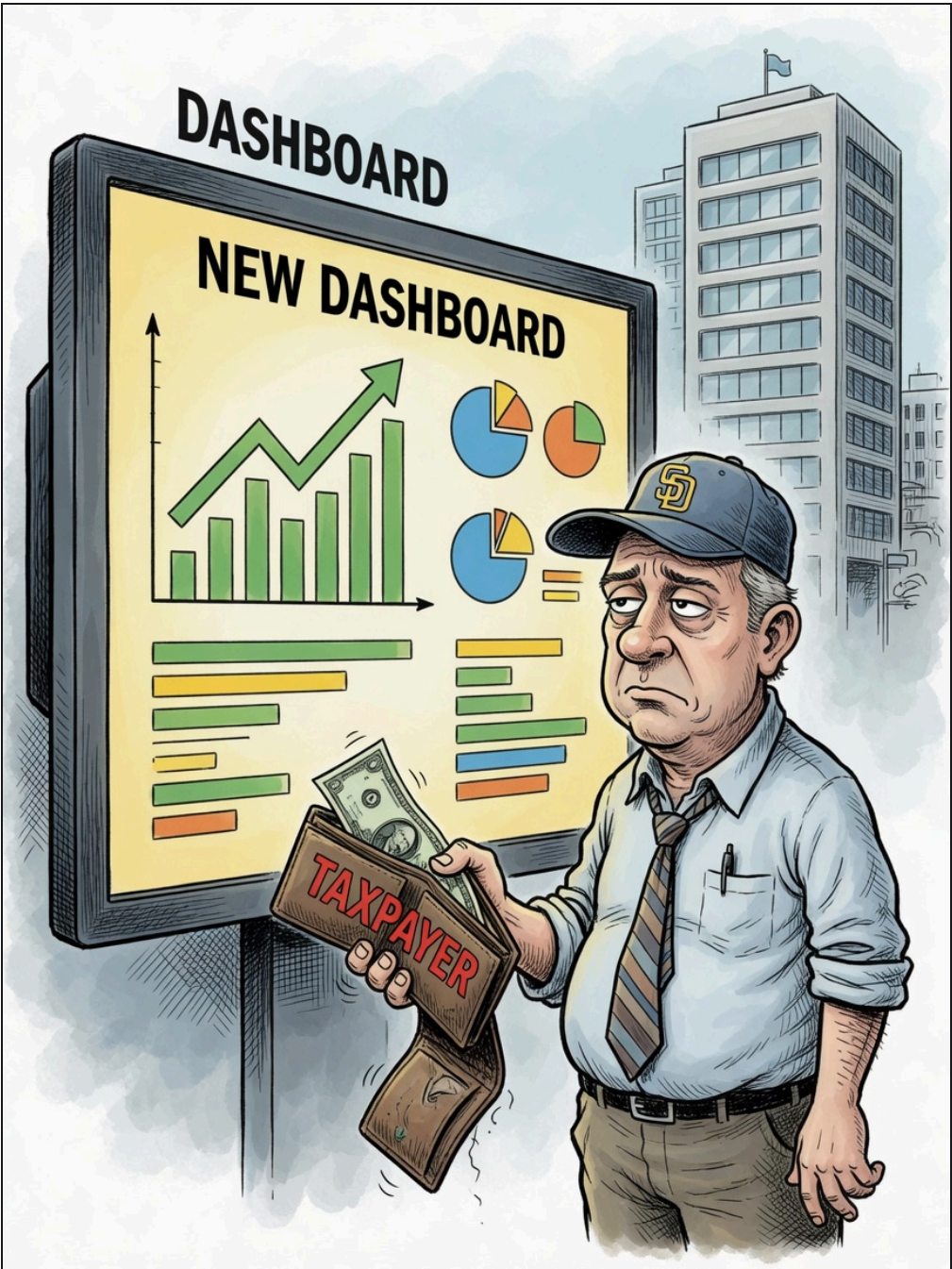
committing a crime!” When Lieu’s time expired and he tried to prevent further response, Bondi continued after the next Republican lawmaker, Rep. Gary Palmer of Alabama, allowed her to respond.
According to Bondi, Lieu “didn’t want to talk about the crime in California” or “crime in his state.” She said California’s refusal to honor ICE detainers under its sanctuary policies has resulted in the release of 4,561 criminal illegal aliens.
The offenses committed by those released, Bondi stated, include 31 homicides, 661 assaults, 574 burglaries, 184

robberies, 1,489 dangerous drug offenses, 379 weapons offenses, and 234 sexual predator offenses.
Bondi said, “That’s why they are deflecting! That is why they’re trying to talk about the Epstein files. That is currently happening in his home state!”
California’s sanctuary approach has prompted federal action, including a 2025 DOJ lawsuit against Los Angeles for obstructing immigration enforcement. Local policies, such as efforts by Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass to restrict ICE access to city property, have added to tensions with the current administration’s

deportation priorities.
The hearing exchange was captured on video and shared widely on social media by commentator Nick Sortor, who wrote that Lieu “DESPERATELY tried to silence Pam Bondi when she started naming crime stats in his state—so Bondi BOMBED him.” The post received more than 330,000 views.
Bondi’s remarks align with the Trump administration’s push to dismantle sanctuary policies.
San Diego Newsline · Based on reporting by California Globe · Feb 11, 2026

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Tracking progress on ending homelessness
THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

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

COMMENTARY

Garry Tan: The \$921 Million Public Sector Union Machine Controlling California

The Y Combinator leader argues that public employee unions collect nearly \$1 billion yearly in dues, can elect the politicians they negotiate with and often block innovation, but he says a legal path exists via the Janus decision and potential ballot measures to restore balance.

California’s public sector unions collect nearly \$1 billion each year in dues, giving them overwhelming influence over state and local politics, according to Garry Tan.

In an analysis cited by Tan, the California Policy Center found that these unions generated \$921 million in revenue in 2018 alone. That money funds hundreds of millions in election spending that dwarfs contributions from ordinary citizens.

The prize these unions protect is enormous. State and local governments spend \$240 billion annually on public employee compensation and benefits, according to Govern For California via the California Policy Center.

Tan, president and CEO of Y Combinator and founder of GarrrysList.org, writes that no other special interest matches the power of public

sector unions. “There is no special interest in California that wields more influence over state and local politics than public sector unions. At every level of government, from the office of the governor to a school board managing a district with only a few hundred students, public sector unions are omnipresent. With rare exceptions, to defy their agenda is certain political suicide,” he quotes Edward Ring of the California Globe as saying.

The California Teachers Association, with 325,000 members, brings in \$356 million a year, according to the Center’s figures. Unlike private-sector unions that bargain with shareholder-controlled management, public employee unions help elect the very politicians who sit across the table from them.

Tan calls this arrangement a “protection racket.” He argues it explains why California politics has deteriorated even though the state remains a global innovation hub.

The pattern appears repeatedly when unions feel threatened by new technology. Tan points to the Teamsters’ demand that Waymo’s autonomous vehicle license be suspended after an incident in which a child ran into the road from behind a tall SUV. The vehicle slowed from 17

mph to 6 mph, made contact, and the child stood up immediately, walked to the sidewalk, and was fine. The union’s response, Tan writes, was to call for shutting the program down.

The same union opposes allowing Waymo vehicles at San Francisco International Airport, which it controls. Marc Joffe is quoted by Tan as saying, “Unions oppose progress and are antithetical to Silicon Valley’s startup ethos.”

Not every union behaves this way, Tan notes. The California Conference of Carpenters has emerged as a leading advocate for more housing construction. Governor Newsom credited the union when he signed recent landmark housing reforms, stating, “This is the third of the last four years we’ve been together signing landmark housing reforms, and it simply would not have happened without the Carpenters.”

Assemblymember Buffy Wicks told KPBS that the Carpenters “have come to the table with more creative solutions.” The union organizes non-union workers rather than treating them solely as competition, according to the report cited by Tan.

Similarly, the San Francisco Police Officers Association routinely fights for public

safety for everyone, Tan writes. Its president, Louis Wong, advocates for “the rank-and-file officers who keep this city safe.”

The crucial distinction, Tan argues, is not between union and non-union workers but between public-sector and private-sector unions. Private unions negotiate with management that answers to shareholders with real financial stakes. Public unions, by contrast, can elect their own bosses.

Since California authorized collective bargaining for public employees in 1968, services have declined while taxes have risen, according to Tan. Many public union websites “read like a pamphlet describing the agenda of the Democratic party,” he adds.

The \$921 million in annual revenue is only a fraction of the \$240 billion in taxpayer-funded compensation the unions seek to protect, the California Policy Center’s analysis shows.

A legal opening already exists. The 2018 Janus Supreme Court ruling determined that forcing non-members to pay public-sector union fees violates the First Amendment. The California Policy Center has been working to inform public employees of their right to withdraw.

Marc Joffe, cited by Tan,

called the effort “an important opportunity to educate individuals who have been in the Democratic Party coalition.”

Tan suggests a ballot measure could require unions to operate with democratic leadership elections, term limits and open, audited financial records. If unions resist, right-to-work laws could be enacted, as Wisconsin has done.

California is the innovation center of the world, the birthplace of self-driving cars and the original home of OpenAI, yet its most powerful special interests often work to stifle the innovation that sustains the state, Tan concludes. The difference lies in whether unions block progress or support it. The Janus decision “cracked open the door. Now it’s time to walk through it,” he writes.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Feb 11, 2026

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

New County Psychiatric Facility Opens in Oceanside

The new County-funded Psychiatric Health Facility in Oceanside has completed its first month of operation, providing short-term inpatient psychiatric care to a total of 31 people to date with 10 in care earlier this week.

S taff moved into the 16-bed facility in November for training, and the first patient was admitted Dec. 29.

Located on the western edge of the Tri-City Medical Center campus, this is the first County-funded inpatient psychiatric health facility in San Diego. It expands access to behavioral health services for North County residents and adds to the region-wide network of specialty care.

“Adults in crisis are now able to get essential behavioral health care that is tailored to their needs,” said Nadia Privara Brahms, Director of County Behavioral

Health Services. “And by establishing this new service in the North County, each beneficiary can access the care they need, when they need it within their community.”

The facility accepts referrals from local Crisis Stabilization Units and emergency departments, and is available for Medi-Cal members countywide.

Patients receive support through therapeutic groups, health consultations, occupational therapy and optional

sunset mediations sessions. The care team includes psychiatrists, therapists, and nurses.

The \$27.6 million medical facility was developed through a collaborative partnership between the County and Tri-City Healthcare District, which operates Tri-City Medical Center. Exodus Recovery, a long-standing County behavioral health provider, operates the facility. It is designed to serve 350 – 500 patients annually, with

an average stay of five to seven days.

Through partnerships with community organizations and healthcare providers, the County works to create a coordinated system of care that supports resilience, equity and improved health outcomes across San Diego County. Visit the Psychiatric Health Facility webpage to learn more.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 5, 2026

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