

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 Conducts Routine 1% Manual Tally to Verify Election Results



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The San Diego County Registrar of Voters is conducting its routine 1% manual tally for the June 2 Gubernatorial Primary Election, a required step to uphold transparency and confirm the accuracy of election results.

The Registrar’s office hand-counts a random sample of 1% of mail ballot batches and 1% of vote center ballot batches to compare with the voting system’s reported totals. This occurs before results are certified.

During a public drawing on June 4, numbered ping-pong balls were randomly selected to determine which ballot batches would be manually counted.

If any contests are not included in the initial 1% sample, the Registrar selects additional batches to ensure every contest on the ballot is represented in the manual count.

The hand tally began on June 9 and will continue until all selected batches have been reviewed.

Two “board members” who independently record each tally.

A supervisor then compares these hand-count totals to the voting system results to confirm they match. The process is fully observable by the public.

Election results will be certified by July 2. Results remain unofficial until certification is complete. Updated and certified results will be posted at sdvote.com.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 17, 2026

COUNTY

County Issues Updated \$9.16 Billion Budget Ahead of June 25 Vote

The County of San Diego released a \$9.16 billion revised recommended budget Friday, reflecting public feedback and recommendations from the Chief Administrative Officer.

The revised recommended fiscal year 2026-27 budget , also known as the change letter, is \$3.8 million, or 0.04%, larger than the recommended budget the County released May 18. It is also \$522 million, or 6.1%, larger than the County’s current 2025-26 budget.

The revised recommended budget is scheduled for consideration and adoption by the County Board of Supervisors on Thursday, June 25.

While the updates reflect new spending, the largest adjustments are internal shifts. As the County transitions Behavioral Health Services (BHS) into its own department, the change letter transfers an additional \$15.3 million and 31 positions from the Health and Human Services Agency to support the BHS transition. In total the proposed Behavioral Health budget is \$1.4 billion, up \$156 million, or 12.4% from the existing budget for behavioral health.

The revised plan adds one full-time equivalent position in the Sheriff’s Office, bringing total County staffing in the revised recommended budget to 20,389.25 full-time equivalent years, an increase of 109 over the current fiscal year.

Additionally, changes include investments of \$0.5 million to extend the ¡Mas Fresco! Plus program and \$0.25 million to conduct a feasibility study for a department of youth development. There is also a \$2.8 million increase for the County’s Department of Public Works, covering contracted services for utilities and for road improvements.

Stability, Core Services and Community Needs

County officials said the proposed budget maintains stability while investing in essential services and responding to growing community needs. The values-centered proposed budget was shaped through close collaboration among community members, the Board of Supervisors and its ad hoc subcommittees. The plan strengthens core services and responds to public needs.

It bolsters public safety to meet Proposition 36 responsibilities and supports health and safety-net programs affected by federal policy changes under H.R. 1. It also expands behavioral health care and maintains investments in homelessness response, public health, infrastructure, libraries and parks. The budget dedicates resources to address the pollution crisis in the Tijuana River Valley.

Officials noted that balancing the FY 2026-27 budget required careful, thoughtful and strategic choices amid uncertain state and federal revenues, which account for nearly half of all the County’s funding. Revenue streams have not kept pace with the overall growth in the cost of doing business, prompting the County to leverage recalibration strategies.

To recalibrate and prepare for the challenges ahead, the proposed budget incorporates new efficiencies, reduces costs, shrinks the County’s facilities footprint, and shifts staff to address evolving responsibilities — all while avoiding layoffs.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 12, 2026

COUNTY

New Steps toward Reducing Tijuana River Valley Pollution

San Diego County received two major boosts this week in its efforts to reduce pollution in the Tijuana River Valley: a new \$46 million state grant program and a California Coastal Commission-approved project that will help cut harmful gases near the Saturn

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DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

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New Steps toward Reducing Tijuana River Valley Pollution

Boulevard crossing.

\$46 Million in State Grants Now Available

The State Water Resources Control Board has opened applications for a \$46 million grant program to improve water quality and reduce pollution in the Tijuana River Valley and the New River.

Both waterways carry sewage, trash and other waste from Mexico into the United States, creating health risks for communities in South San Diego County and Imperial County.

Priority will go to projects that reduce bacteria, trash, emissions and other pollutants. Funding is also available for work that improves public health, restores natural areas or manages sediment. At least one project from each river will receive funding.

Planning grants are available for up to \$750,000. Construction grants can reach \$10 million, and in some cases up to \$20 million. The program is funded through Proposition 4 , approved by California voters in 2024. Applications are open from June 11 through August 31, with a webinar planned to help applicants navigate the process.

Coastal Commission Approves Temporary Culvert Fix to Cut Toxic Gas

The California Coastal Commission also approved a County project to temporarily extend two culvert pipes at the Saturn Boulevard

crossing .

Currently, the culverts release water about six feet above the riverbed, creating splashing and turbulence that increases the release of hydrogen sulfide gas—known for its rotten egg smell and health risks.

The approved project extends the pipes so water is discharged below the surface, which should significantly reduce pathogens and gas emissions at the site. Pipe caps will help regulate flow, and anchors and riprap (rock material) will keep the system stable. Work will remain within existing disturbed areas to protect wildlife.

The Commission approved the project on June 10 with conditions to safeguard sensitive plants and animals, prevent water pollution during construction and maintain public access along Saturn Boulevard, part of the California Coastal Trail.

This short-term project will help improve air quality for nearby neighborhoods while longer term solutions are being developed.

Together, these actions show meaningful progress in addressing Tijuana River Valley pollution. While the work ahead remains, San Diego County residents can feel encouraged that new funding, improved infrastructure and continued state support are helping move the region toward cleaner water and healthier communities.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 12, 2026

COUNTY

Spirit Fund Helping Horses Rescued from Julian Property

County Animal Services is currently caring for several horses at its Bonita shelter following a large rescue operation at a Julian property, where hundreds of animals were found without proper care.

To support these horse-neglect cases, County Animal Services is using the Spirit Medical Fund, a donation-based fund that helps animals arriving at County shelters with serious medical needs or complex circumstances.

On June 10, two of the six horses at the Bonita shelter were transported to the Humane Society of Ventura County for additional care.

The scale of the rescue required assistance from organizations across the country, and community donations have played a critical role in helping the horses recover.

“ Thank you to everyone who has helped these animals get the care they need and deserve,” said Dr. Brie Sarvis, director and chief veterinarian. “Help from the community has been vital during this process.”

Every dollar donated to the Spirit Fund goes directly to animal care — no administrative costs are deducted.

The Spirit Fund was created in 2008 after an abused puppy found at the U.S.–Mexico border made national headlines. Public generosity saved the puppy — later named Spirit — and inspired the County to establish a permanent fund to help other

animals in crisis.

Those interested in donating can give online or mail a check payable to the Department of Animal Services. Write “Donation for Spirit Fund” in the memo line and mail it to 5821 Sweetwater Rd., Bonita, CA 91902. Donations are tax-deductible. The Department’s tax identification number is 95-6000934.

The Bonita shelter also accepts donations through its Amazon Wish List , which features enrichment items needed by shelter animals.

For updates on the rescue effort, visit the San Diego Humane Society’s Julian Rescue page .

County Animal Services continues to promote the humane and responsible care of pets by providing the unincorporated areas of San Diego County by providing 24-hour animal rescues, supporting people who can no longer care for their pets, investigating and stopping animal neglect and cruelty, enforcing state and local laws, and educating the public about animal welfare, restraint and licensing.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 12, 2026

COUNTY

Infant Botulism Cases Linked to Recalled Nara Organics Infant Formula

San Diego County health officials are urging parents and caregivers to immediately throw out or return Nara Organics Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula after it was linked to a multistate infant botulism outbreak involving

California, Pennsylvania and Washington.

Infant botulism is rare but serious. It occurs when bacteria grow in a baby’s intestines and produce a toxin that can cause muscle weakness and trouble breathing if not treated properly.

Nara Organics has issued a voluntary recall for all lots of its Whole Milk Organic Infant Formula sold online at Nara.com and Target.com and in Target stores, from July 2025 through June 2026.

County Environmental Health and Quality staff are working with local retailers to ensure the product is removed from shelves.

Parents and caregivers should not use any unopened containers of the recalled formula. If a baby has consumed the recalled formula and you still have the open container, the FDA advises photographing or recording the brand and lot number, sealing and labeling the container “do not use,” and storing it for 30 days in case health officials need to test it.

Seek medical care right away if a baby shows symptoms after drinking the recalled formula. Infant botulism primarily affects babies younger than six months.

Symptoms can appear three to 30 days after exposure and can include:

County Public Health officials have alerted health providers about the recall.

Anyone with health concerns should contact a healthcare provider immediately.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 17, 2026

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

BUSINESS

Immigrant Small Business Week 2026

by Mark Philip Valerio Santos, third-generation owner & operator

“I am the owner and operator of Valerio’s Bakeshop in National City , a family-owned Filipino bakery founded by my immigrant grandparents, Victor and Milagros Valerio. Through hard work, perseverance, and a passion for sharing Filipino culture, they built a business that has served generations of families and become the foundation of our family’s entrepreneurial journey.

As the next generation, I grew up surrounded by the bakery and witnessed firsthand the sacrifices required to build and sustain a small business. After my grandparents, my mother took on the responsibility of leading the

bakery and continued growing the business while preserving the traditions and values that made it special. Inspired by my family’s entrepreneurial spirit, I started my own e-commerce business, which gave me valuable experience in business operations, marketing, and growth.

Eventually, I returned to the family business and stepped into a leadership role, combining the lessons I learned as an entrepreneur with the foundation my family had built over decades. Today, I have the privilege of leading Valerio’s Bakeshop into its next chapter—expanding our reach, introducing new ideas, and finding new ways to connect with our community while remaining rooted in the traditions that have defined us for generations.

My journey reflects the opportunities created through

immigrant entrepreneurship. What began with my grandparents’ dream has been carried forward by each generation, and I am proud to continue that legacy while helping create opportunities for others and sharing a piece of Filipino culture with the communities we serve.”

Mark Philip Valerio Santos, third-generation owner & operator

Casita Colibrí is a home-based gluten-free Mexican bakery founded in Chula Vista, California, specializing in traditional pan dulce made in a dedicated gluten-free environment. The bakery was born from my personal experience living with celiac disease and the realization that many of the foods that carried memories, comfort, family traditions and most importantly cultural connection were suddenly no longer available to me. After my

diagnosis in 2018, I began navigating a world where gluten-free options existed, yet very few reflected my heritage or the foods I had grown up eating.

As a Latina and the daughter of immigrants, food has always been an important part of family everyday life. Pan dulce, bolillos, conchas, and other staples found in Mexican panaderías represent far more than baked goods. They carry generations of stories, traditions, nostalgia and a sense of belonging. As I searched for culturally representative gluten-free alternatives, I discovered a significant gap in the marketplace. The question continued to surface: Why can’t I find the foods that have been part of my life for generations? The answer became the foundation of Casita Colibrí.

Although I did not come

from an entrepreneurship background, creating Casita Colibrí felt like a natural response to a need that existed within my own life and within the broader community.

Through this journey, I learned that many Latinos and individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds are living with celiac disease, autoimmune conditions, food allergies and other dietary restrictions. Many have spent years without access to culturally familiar foods that are safe for them to eat. Casita Colibrí exists to answer that need. The bakery is dedicated to bringing gluten-free, celiac-safe Mexican baked goods back into the hearts and homes of people who have gone without them. Every concha, bolillo, empanada and pan dulce created through my bakery

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BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

San Diego commerce & the regional economy

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Immigrant Small Business Week 2026

represents an opportunity for someone to reconnect with a cherished memory or family tradition.

As the first person in my family to launch a business, I view Casita Colibrí as both a bakery and a platform for advocacy. The business raises awareness about celiac disease, food accessibility and dietary inclusion while highlighting the unique challenges faced by individuals who require medically necessary gluten-free diets. Research continues to show that people who rely on gluten-free foods often pay significantly more for products and experience barriers to access within schools, workplaces, food assistance programs and community gatherings. Casita Colibrí contributes to a broader conversation about food equity and representation. The bakery seeks to increase visibility for childhood celiac disease, support families navigating dietary restrictions, encourage

greater gluten-free accessibility in public institutions, support those newly diagnosed and celebrate the rich culinary heritage of Mexican and Latino communities. By preserving traditional recipes and reimagining them in a gluten-free format, Casita Colibrí demonstrates that cultural foods can remain accessible, inclusive and alive for future generations.

At its core, Casita Colibrí is culturally forward, built on the belief that no one should have to choose between their health and their heritage while serving a community whose needs have often gone unseen.

Rosalba Bustillos, Casita Colibrí Founder

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release • Jun 17, 2026

BUSINESS
Member Spotlight: Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego

Founded in 1919, Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego has served vulnerable individuals and families across San Diego and

Imperial Counties through programs focused on homelessness prevention, emergency shelter, food insecurity, affordable housing, immigration legal services, and family support. Guided by compassion and dignity for all, CCDSO provides both immediate relief and long-term pathways toward stability and self-sufficiency.

Catholic Charities exists “to exemplify the scriptural values of mercy and hospitality” by serving the poor, vulnerable, and marginalized while advocating for a just society and accompanying those in need on their journey toward achieving their full potential.

Through a broad network of community-based programs, Catholic Charities responds to some of the region’s most urgent challenges. Services include emergency food distribution, housing assistance, case management, refugee and immigrant support, and shelter programs for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. By partnering with local governments, businesses, faith communities, volunteers, and

nonprofit organizations, the agency connects thousands of people each year with critical resources and care.

Addressing homelessness remains a central focus of the organization’s work. Through programs such as Rachel’s Programs, which includes Rachel’s Women’s Center—a day center in downtown San Diego that has been serving unhoused women for more than 40 years—the Catholic Charities Day Center in Imperial County, and La Posada Men’s Shelter in Carlsbad, the organization provides shelter, supportive services, and transitional assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Catholic Charities is also proud to announce the upcoming opening of the Rachel’s Promise Center for Women and Children in Summer 2026. This expansion will build upon the existing Rachel’s Promise shelter by serving not only women experiencing homelessness but also their children, helping to keep families together while they access critical support. The new 210-bed facility will

significantly expand emergency shelter capacity and wraparound services and will be one of the largest programs of its kind on the West Coast.

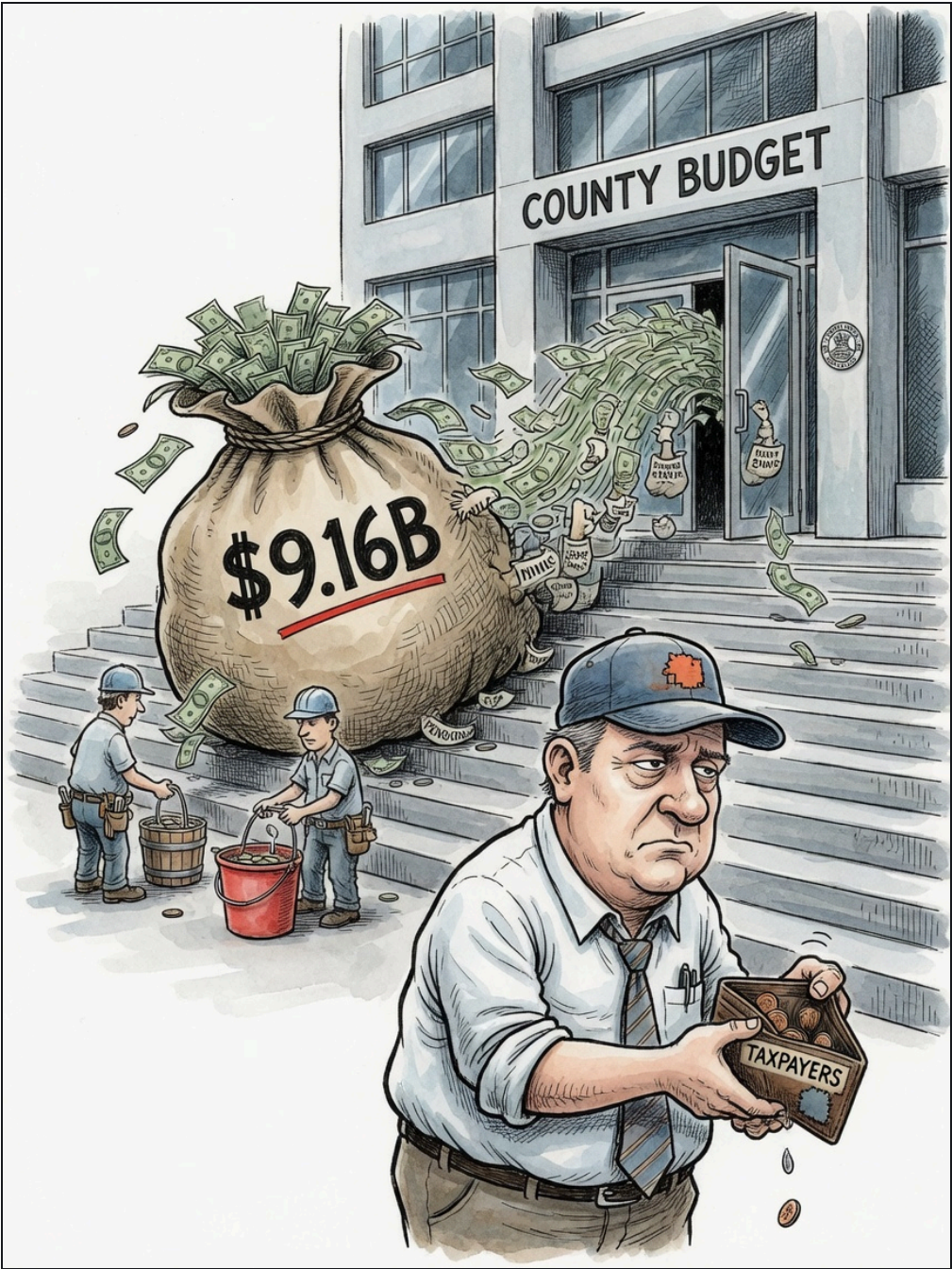
To address rising food insecurity, Catholic Charities operates regional food distribution initiatives that provide nutritious meals and groceries to families, seniors, and children throughout San Diego and Imperial Counties. Food is distributed across more than 21 sites region-wide, ensuring individuals and families can access support when and where they need it most.

Through its programs, partnerships, and continued growth, Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego continues to strengthen the region’s safety net while advancing solutions that foster dignity, stability, and opportunity for all. To learn more about how you can support your community through Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego, visit www.ccdso.org.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release • Jun 9, 2026

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Public feedback? More like public funds.

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

California Policy Center Fellow Decries States' 'Predatory' Tax Policies Driving Talent Away

Mark Moses argues that aggressive taxation in places like California and New York represents a hostile attack on success and has inverted the relationship between the state and its most successful citizens.

States with aggressive tax policies are seeing an exodus of capital and talent to jurisdictions with lower taxes, according to Mark Moses.

The senior fellow with the California Policy Center cites Elon Musk's decision to move Tesla and X from California to Texas, as well as Palantir's relocation to Colorado.

Moses writes that these moves reflect more than a response to changing costs and instead represent an effort to leave systems that have turned against high achievers.

He attributes the trend to policies that specifically

target the wealthy, such as a proposed billionaire's wealth tax that public sector union activists in California have placed on the November 2026 ballot by bypassing the legislative process.

California has also made a previously temporary high-income tax tier permanent, Moses notes, while New York City's mayor is pursuing similar goals through proposed levies on second homes.

Moses describes such tax policy shifts as a hostile attack on success itself.

For decades, he explains, tax policy operated on an assumption of fairness in which the wealthy paid more into a system that secured the environment for free operation.

That arrangement has become one-sided, according to Moses.

Moses argues the change is the inevitable result of governments that lack institutional discipline and have expanded their scope to include social engineering, geopolitical posturing and ensuring equitable outcomes without

regard to revenue or reality.

When expenses outpace collections, he writes, the result is a perpetual and desperate search for new sources of funds.

Public sector unions resist modernization by protecting entrenched staffing and legacy operations and blocking efforts to streamline organizational charts, Moses contends.

Unable to achieve cost savings, officials instead extract more from the existing tax base to sustain a bureaucracy that refuses to evolve, he writes.

Moses observes that government was historically viewed as the guarantor of individual rights and private property so that people could pursue their values.

When the state expands beyond that role, it begins to view its most successful citizens as resources to be tapped for its own ends.

Those who leave face intrusive investigations from agencies such as California's Franchise Tax Board or New

York's Department of Taxation and Finance, Moses reports.

Auditors examine cell phone pings, credit card swipes, veterinary bills and personal calendars in attempts to determine actual residency and extract final payments, he writes.

Moses criticizes wealthy individuals for engaging in what he terms hostage bargaining.

Rather than challenge the underlying premise, figures such as Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff declare that they are happy to pay their "fair share," thereby conceding that their wealth is a public resource, the fellow writes.

This concedes the premise that productivity is a harvestable asset and merely negotiates the terms of seizure, Moses warns.

True resistance requires rejecting that view and instead advocating for clearly defined limits on government, he insists.

While high-profile departures such as those by Musk

and Palantir buy time, they are an insufficient defense without a principled challenge, according to Moses.

Absent such advocacy, the approach of treating residents and businesses as fodder for budget shortfalls can be exported to other jurisdictions.

Moses concludes that until producers stop negotiating the terms of their surrender and begin insisting on clearly defined limits on government, the predator-state will simply ensure there is nowhere left to hide.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Jun 12, 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 Housing Breaks Ground Adding 45 Affordable Homes in San Carlos

Construction is underway on Navajo Family Apartments, a 45-unit affordable housing community in San Carlos.

The four-story development will feature one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments for households earning 30% to 70% of the area median income . Eight of the homes will be set aside for residents with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

The County invested \$3.4 million from its Innovative Housing Trust Fund to support the project, which is being developed by Community Housing Works.

Located in a high resource neighborhood, the \$32 million dollar development is designed to promote long-term family stability. The site is close to transit, a grocery store, pharmacy, public library, highly rated schools, Mission Trails Regional Park and Lake Murray.

Future residents will have access to 58 parking spaces, a multipurpose community room with a kitchen, a

computer lab, centralized laundry, EV charging stations, 22 secure indoor bike storage spaces and a children's play area.

More information about Navajo Family Apartments is available on the Community Housing Works website. Move-ins are expected to begin next spring.

Explore the County's interactive dashboard for data on the County's affordable housing inventory, along with the Housing for All Hub for resources, services and property information through its Affordable Housing Map .

Since 2017, the County has invested more than \$334 million in affordable housing using strategies like using excess County land, the Innovative Housing Trust Fund and other state, federal, and local sources. These investments have created more than 3,700 homes, with another 2,200 in development.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 16, 2026

COUNTY

Live Well on Wheels Helps San Diegans Navigate HR 1 CalFresh Changes

The County is stepping up

in-person outreach to help residents understand major federal changes to CalFresh food benefits that took effect April 1, 2026.

The County's four Live Well on Wheels (Live WoW) Mobile Offices are visiting neighborhood across the region to give people fast, face-to-face help.

While calls, texts, mail, and online communication to those affected continue, many residents prefer receiving assistance face to face and in their neighborhood. The Live WoW mobile make that possible.

Since HR 1 began, County Human Services Specialists and Community Health Workers have already helped nearly 2,600 people understand how federal changes affect their benefits and what actions they may need to take. That number grows daily.

Check if you are affected: Staff can access your CalFresh account and explain your specific situation.

Meet new work requirements : They can guide you through the WorkReady Hub or connect you to 211 San Diego for help.

Replacement EBT card :

Cards can be printed on the spot.

Residents can find upcoming stops on the Live WoW calendar or request the bus online for their school, workplace or community event at no cost.

Since launching the first bus in July 2021, the Live WoW fleet has supported nearly 1,900 events at libraries, schools, parks and other locations, reaching more than 154,400 people countywide.

As HR 1 continues to impact CalFresh recipients, Live WoW remains a reliable, community-based resource offering direct assistance and accurate information

For CalFresh-specific question, residents can call the Access Call Center (866-262-9881) Monday to Friday 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. (County holidays excepted).

County of San Diego news release · Jun 12, 2026

COUNTY

County Offices to Close on Juneteenth Holiday

In observance of Juneteenth, San Diego County offices will be closed on Friday, June 19. The closure includes all County public health clinics,

family resource centers, library branches and animal shelters.

Law enforcement, emergency animal control response and essential services will continue without interruption throughout the holiday.

County parks, campgrounds and neighborhood day-use parks will remain open as they do every day of the year. However, several community facilities will be closed on Friday, June 19. These include:

4S Ranch Recreation Office (all parks remain open)

Camping reservations may still be made at the County Department of Parks and Recreation Online Camping Reservations webpage . The reservation phone line, however, will not be staffed on Juneteenth.

All County offices and facilities will resume normal business hours on Monday, June 22.

County of San Diego news release · Jun 13, 2026

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