

San Diego Newsline

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

WHAT'S NEWS

COUNTY
County Weather Center Strengthens Flood Preparedness and Community Safety

COUNTY
Living Sustainably Can Put Money in Your Pocket

TRANSIT
San Diego MTS Riders can Ride into Everyday Savings with Mastercard Public Transit Benefit

COUNTY
County Releases \$9.16 Billion Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2026-27 Online

COUNTY
County to Treat Areas for Mosquitoes to Reduce Risk of West Nile Virus

BUSINESS
Member Spotlight – Episcopal Community Services

CALIFORNIA
Guinean National Who Crossed Illegally Into Arizona and Was Released Now Faces Maryland Rape and Kidnapping Charges

INSIDE

Downtown, City & County — 2

Business — 3

Around California — 3

Cartoon — 3

Commentary — 4

COUNTY

County Weather Center Strengthens Flood Preparedness and Community Safety



Illustration from a photo by USFWS Pacific Southwest Region · Wikimedia Commons, Public domain

The County’s Weather Center in Kearny Mesa is a critical resource that supports field operations and enhances public safety. Operated by the County Flood Control District, the center provides technical weather expertise and manages key systems that help reduce flood risk across the region.

The Flood Control District oversees stormwater drainage maintenance, develops mapping and flood-risk studies, and manages the countywide floodplain. Its Weather Center serves as the hub for the Automatic Local Evaluation in Real-Time (ALERT) system, the County’s flood-warning network.

The ALERT system collects and analyzes data from rain and stream gauges installed throughout the county. These sensors track rainfall, river levels and streamflow conditions. When the system detects levels that signal possible flooding, it issues early warnings to downstream communities.

The real-time data also guides planning decisions and helps direct field operations. Road crews rely on ALERT updates to respond to flooding, close roads when needed and take steps to protect the public.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 23, 2026



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

COUNTY

Living Sustainably Can Put Money in Your Pocket

The County’s Climate Action Plan (CAP), designed to cut greenhouse gas emissions, offers programs that help residents, businesses, and agricultural producers in the unincorporated area lower costs while reducing their carbon footprint.

Through the CAP, the County provides resources that can help residents and businesses reduce energy and water use, upgrade properties at no cost, and get discounts on everyday equipment.

Small changes can lead to big savings. Borrow a free Do-It-Yourself Sustainability Toolkit and try simple projects, like swapping traditional lightbulbs with LEDs or installing a low-flow showerhead. These simple updates can reduce energy and water use and lower your monthly bills.

For long-term savings, check if you qualify for free home upgrades through the Equitable Building Decarbonization Program . The program offers modern, all-electric appliances, including water heaters and cooktops.

Residents who meet income requirements can also apply to the San Diego Solar Equity Program for free rooftop solar panels. The program serves single-family homes, mobile homes and multi-unit properties up to quadplexes,

helping cut electricity costs.

Big Savings for Homes, Businesses and Farms

Many CAP programs support property owners, business operators and agricultural producers.

The Waterscape Rebate Program offers free rain barrels and rebates for water-efficient landscaping.

The Zero-Emission Equipment Voucher Program provides up to 50 percent off electric equipment such as leaf blowers, mowers and trimmers.

Businesses or property owners may qualify for reimbursement through the Electric Vehicle Charger Program when they install publicly accessible EV chargers at locations like a retail parking lot, apartment complex, office, or industrial site.

Residents can extend their impact by attending a local fix-it event to repair household items and reduce waste. The Equity-Driven Tree Planting Program offers free trees to boost shade, improve air quality and strengthen community health.

Explore all CAP programs on the County’s sustainability program page , subscribe to the CAP monthly newsletter , and follow the County’s sustainability team on Facebook or Instagram to stay updated.

In 2025, the County achieved 35% of required emissions reductions for 2030, with 55% of CAP investments benefiting historically underinvested communities. The County reduced 259,481 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions (MTCO2e) through the implementation of 35 actions. This is equivalent to removing 60,525 gas-powered vehicles from the road for one year.

Installing 551 miles of sidewalks and 393 miles of bikeways to support low-emissions travel.

Continued on page 2

DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Living Sustainably Can Put Money in Your Pocket

Powering County facilities with electricity from 72% renewable energy.

Achieving 69% waste diversion in County operations.

Removing 276,247 square feet of turf and installing 685 rain barrels to reduce outdoor water use.

Preserving 624 acres of land for habitat conservation and carbon sequestration.

Get more detail and track ongoing CAP progress through the County’s climate dashboard.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 18, 2026

TRANSIT

San Diego MTS Riders can Ride into Everyday Savings with Mastercard Public Transit Benefit

Riders can earn up to \$2.50 when they spend \$10 a month on public transit with Mastercard

San Diego – Eligible Mastercard consumer and small business debit and credit cardholders can now earn savings on everyday transit purchases across the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) through Mastercard Public Transit Benefit . Cardholding SD MTS riders can receive a monthly statement credit of \$2.50 when they spend \$10 or more on public transit during any calendar month using any Mastercard contactless payment on MTS transit services. The benefit is available through Dec. 31, 2027.

The Mastercard Public Transit Benefit is designed to deliver tangible, everyday value to eligible consumer and small business debit and credit cardholders. The program rewards routine transit spending while encouraging the use of secure, seamless contactless payments. According to MTS, more than 4.27 million contactless payment transactions have been recorded across its system to date.

"The Mastercard Public Transit Benefit helps put money back in riders' pockets while making it easier than ever to tap, ride, and go using contactless payment," said Stephen Whitburn, MTS Board Chair and San Diego City Councilmember. "This benefit from Mastercard is supporting our broader efforts to modernize and improve the rider experience across the region, all while rewarding riders for choosing transit."

“This program helps put money back in our riders’

pockets while making it easier than ever to tap, ride, and go using contactless payment,” said Stephen Whitburn, MTS Board Chair and San Diego City Councilmember. “This benefit from Mastercard provides meaningful savings on the trips they already take while supporting our broader efforts to modernize fare payment and improve the rider experience across the region.”

"At Mastercard, we're committed to delivering meaningful everyday value to consumers and small businesses through the cards they use every day," said Kamila Chytil, Executive Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Acquiring, Processing and Public Sector at Mastercard. "Our Public Transit Benefit is a unique offering that rewards cardholders for something they already do regularly, helping them save on commuting costs while enjoying the speed, security and convenience of contactless payments. As we continue expanding the program to additional transit systems, we're creating more opportunities for cardholders to experience the value of Mastercard through their everyday spending."

MTS riders can take advantage of the benefit by using an eligible Mastercard to pay their fare directly at the fare validator. Once riders meet the monthly spending threshold, they will automatically receive the statement credit within 60 days. Eligible payments must be made using contactless payment via a digital wallet or by tapping the physical card.

With the addition of San Diego, Mastercard continues to expand the reach of its Public Transit Benefit program across North America. The benefit is now available in 12 major transit systems, bringing the unique value of Mastercard's everyday rewards experience to more consumer and small business cardholders.

For more information about using contactless payments on MTS, visit www.ridepronto.com/contactless-payments . For Mastercard eligibility details, visit www.mastercard.com/us/en/personal/experience-mastercard/transitbenefit.html .

The Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) operates 93 bus routes and four Trolley lines in 10 cities and unincorporated areas of San Diego. MTS is a leader in advancing initiatives to create a greener, cleaner and better-connected transit system in San Diego.

Each weekday, more than 250,000 passenger trips are taken throughout the MTS system, taking people to work, school, health appointments and other essential trips. In FY 2026, MTS served more than 81 million riders. In 2026, MTS was recognized by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) as the Outstanding Public Transportation System in North America among agencies providing 50 million or more annual passenger trips. For service schedule updates, news, alerts and more information on how you can use public transportation, go to www.sdmts.com .

San Diego MTS news release · Sep 17, 2026

COUNTY

County Releases \$9.16 Billion Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2026–27 Online

The County has released its \$9.16 billion fiscal year 2026-27 adopted budget online on the County’s budget website .

The balanced spending plan took effect July 1 and maintains core services, responds to rising community needs, and supports long-term fiscal stability amid uncertainties at the state and federal levels.

The new budget is \$522 million, or 6.1%, larger than the previous year’s budget and includes 20,389.25 staff years, a net increase of 109.

Officials said the plan reflects the County’s year-round financial strategy by maintaining healthy reserves and ensuring stability while meeting today’s needs and positioning it to meet future demands.

The budget expands critical safety net services, strengthens behavioral health and public health programs. It also invests in public safety and fire protection, roads, parks, and community spaces.

County programs and services reach nearly all of the county’s 3.3 million residents, across the unincorporated areas, 18 incorporated cities and 18 federally recognized tribes.

In the unincorporated area, County government provides day-to-day municipal services a city government typically provides, including law enforcement, roads, building permits, animal services, parks and libraries. Some cities also contract with the County for these services.

Regionwide, the County also oversees emergency preparedness, criminal prosecution and detention, food and financial assistance programs, behavioral health

services, public health and safety-net programs, restaurant inspections, elections and beach water monitoring.

The County Board of Supervisors adopted a revised recommended budget June 25, incorporating Board feedback, and public input gleaned from public surveys, open houses, virtual and in-person forums, and an 11-day public comment period. The County introduced the recommended budget May 18.

The full Fiscal Year 2026-27 Adopted Budget document can be seen here on the County’s budget website.

To learn more about the budget, visit the San Diego County budget website .

The County of San Diego follows a long-standing fiscal strategy rooted in responsibility, transparency and long-term stability, maintaining structurally balanced budgets, healthy reserves and disciplined financial planning to ensure we can continue delivering essential services while preparing for future needs and investing in safety, health and community infrastructure across the region.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 18, 2026

COUNTY

County to Treat Areas for Mosquitoes to Reduce Risk of West Nile Virus

To protect the public and keep mosquitoes from potentially spreading West Nile virus (WNV), the County is scheduled to conduct ultra-low volume, pesticide-mist treatments by truck this week to reduce the number of adult mosquitoes on approximately 6,000 lots in Coronado. The area being treated includes from 2 nd Street in the north to Ocean Boulevard in the south, F Avenue in the west, and Glorietta Boulevard to the east. The exact boundaries of the treatment can be found on the County’s Adult Mosquito Control Information webpage.

County Vector Control truck treatments use AquaDuet—a pesticide that mimics natural insecticides found in chrysanthemum flowers, is approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, and does not pose a risk to people and pets as applied. The treatments are scheduled to take place from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Friday, September 25 and from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. on Saturday, September 26. Additional treatments may also be applied the following week, depending on conditions.

The County’s surveillance of mosquito activity found elevated numbers of

mosquitoes in Coronado, some of which were positive for WNV. More information, including a map of the treatment area, frequently asked questions, and contact information for Vector Control, can be found on the Vector Control Program Adult Mosquito Control Information webpage.

The treatments will be applied in the early morning hours when most people are not outside. It is practically invisible and dissipates in under 30 minutes. Beekeepers and those with insects and fish kept outdoors are encouraged to cover their habitats during treatments. Beekeepers registered with the County’s Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures can request to receive advance notice of treatments in their area.

As of 9/16/26, there have been 11 reported human cases of WNV in San Diego County this year, three of which were Coronado residents. This is the most local WNV infection since 2016.

Some people who become infected can suffer fever with other symptoms such as headaches, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. In rare cases, West Nile virus can make people extremely ill and even kill them. If you have symptoms, seek medical care.

County officials said people should continue to follow the County’s “Prevent, Protect, Report” guidelines to protect themselves from mosquitoes. Those include finding and dumping out standing water around homes to keep mosquitoes from breeding.

Dump out or remove any item inside or outside of homes that can hold water from rain or landscape irrigation such as plant saucers, buckets, garbage cans, toys, old tires, and wheelbarrows.

Mosquitofish, available for free by contacting the Vector Control Program, or mosquito dunks may be used to control mosquito breeding in backyard water sources such as stagnant swimming pools, rain barrels, ponds, fountains and horse troughs.

Protect yourself from mosquito-borne illnesses by wearing long sleeves and pants or use insect repellent when outdoors. Use insect repellent that contains DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone or IR3535. Make sure screens on windows and doors are in good condition and secured to keep insects out.

Report increased mosquito activity, unmaintained green swimming pools, and other

Continued on page 3

DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY (CONTINUED)

Courts · Transit · Public safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

County to Treat Areas for Mosquitoes to Reduce Risk of West Nile Virus

mosquito-breeding sources, as well as dead birds—crows,

ravens, jays, hawks, and owls—to the County Vector Control Program by calling (858) 694-2888 or emailing vector@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Go to San Diego County’s “Fight the Bite ” website to

learn how to prevent and protect against West Nile virus and mosquitoes.

For more information about West Nile virus, go to the County Health and Human Services Agency’s

West Nile virus webpage .

To accommodate operational needs, media availability for interviews will be held between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. on Friday, September 25 at the County Operational

Center next to the community garden in the center courtyard.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 22, 2026

BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



BUSINESS

Member Spotlight – Episcopal Community Services

Kim had lost everything: her home, her vehicle, her job. Due to her 20-year struggle

with substance use disorder, her family disowned her, and she turned to crime. “I was clearly on my way to jail if I did not turn myself around,” she said.

Tired of a life ruined by substance use, Kim found her way to ECS Central East Regional Recovery Center (CERRC). CERRC provided support she didn’t even know she needed.

Now, over a year later,

Kim’s life has changed for the better. CERRC’s specialized services connected her with the resources she needed to pull herself out of unemployment and homelessness. Kim secured her own apartment, restarted her accounting career, and purchased a car. Most importantly, she is on great terms with her family, including her granddaughter who encouraged her recovery.

“I’ve had family members

say, ‘Kim, you’re a different person,’ and I am.”

She was so inspired by CERRC that she started an LLC—All of Me Recovery (“olive me,”) support for sober living, in honor of her granddaughter Olive and late mother Meme.

Her journey is proof that compassion, accessible resources, and specialized services can change your path completely. Watch ECS’ full

interview with Kim.

ECS CERRC provides outpatient treatment services to adults with substance use disorders. To learn more, visit CERRC — Episcopal Community Services. Questions? Contact VP of Strategic Engagement, Adrienne Wilkerson, at awilkerson@ecscaifornia.org

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Sep 17, 2026

AROUND CALIFORNIA

Statewide news

CALIFORNIA

Guinean National Who Crossed Illegally Into Arizona and Was Released Now Faces Maryland Rape and Kidnapping Charges

Abdoulaye Dia, who entered without authorization near Lukeville in December 2023, was arrested in September on charges including first-degree rape and kidnapping after a rideshare assault.

A man who entered the United States illegally near Lukeville, Arizona, in late 2023 was later released by federal agents and now stands accused of kidnapping and raping a teenage girl in Maryland while working as a rideshare driver.

According to information

provided by the Department of Homeland Security and reported by Fox News correspondent Bill Melugin, Abdoulaye Dia crossed the border without authorization on December 21, 2023. Border Patrol released him into the country shortly afterward.

Dia, identified by DHS as a citizen of Guinea living illegally in the United States, had been residing in Lanham, Maryland. Montgomery County Police arrested him on September 16 and charged him with first-degree rape, kidnapping, second-degree assault and third-degree sex offense.

Investigators suspect additional victims may exist, the Montgomery County Police Department stated on September 17. The latest

charges stem from an incident reported on September 15, when officers responded to a hospital after a girl under 18 said she had been assaulted.

The teenager told police that the driver for Empower picked her up and took her to a parking lot in Silver Spring, where the attack took place inside the vehicle. Detectives used data from the rideshare app to identify Dia and took him into custody the next day through the department’s Repeat Offenders Unit.

This arrest followed Dia’s earlier detention by New York police on June 10. That case involved allegations of sexual abuse by forcible compulsion, forcible touching of sexual or intimate parts, injuring a child younger than 17 and

sexual abuse without consent.

Prosecutors in Brooklyn asked a judge to hold Dia on bail after the New York charges, but he was placed on supervised release instead, a spokesperson for the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office told a local station.

Melugin noted that the Arizona crossing occurred on a day when his reporting team observed large groups of African men entering the country without resistance. He posted video from Lukeville that same date and suggested the suspect could appear in the footage.

Empower, the rideshare company, told Fox News Digital that it performed a background check, sex offender registry review,

driving record search, Social Security trace and global watchlist screening on July 16, 2026. The company said those reviews turned up no incidents.

After Montgomery County authorities contacted the firm about the case, Empower said it followed policy by offering full cooperation and turning over all requested information to law enforcement.

Dia is being held without bond at the Montgomery County Central Processing Unit. Police have urged anyone who may have been victimized by him to call the Special Victims Investigations Division at 240-773-5050.

San Diego Newsline · Based on reporting by California Globe · Sep 21, 2026

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Living sustainably puts money in your pocket

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Court Bid to Alter Ballot Language Hands School Critics a Stronger Argument, Policy Center CEO Says

A union ally's legal effort to correct challengers' claims about student performance in Orange Unified has backfired, according to California Policy Center CEO Will Swaim.

Teacher union supporters often act without considering the consequences of their actions, argues California Policy Center CEO Will Swaim.

In a recent example from Orange Unified School District, activist Darshan Smaaladen filed suit against three board challengers ahead of the November 3 election. She claimed their ballot statements wrongly described the share of students

unable to do math at grade level as 60 percent.

Superior Court Judge Craig Griffin ruled that the correct figure stands at 54 percent and ordered the challengers to revise their statements. The challengers made the change.

Far from damaging the challengers, the outcome has supplied them with more potent language, according to Swaim. The court decision now lets them point out that a judge has confirmed a majority of the district's students fall short in both reading and math proficiency.

One challenger explained in court that she had mixed up two columns in a state database. The 60 percent figure actually refers to students who cannot read at grade level. That related statistic only strengthens the broader criticism of district performance.

Swaim suggests Smaaladen may regret bringing the case. As a longtime union activist, she previously co-chaired the 2023 recall effort against conservative trustees Rick Ledesma and Madison Miner.

That recall, funded by the Orange Unified Education Association and the California Teachers Association, portrayed the pair as "social extremists." In truth, their offense was questioning teacher pay raises amid falling enrollment and warning signs in district finances.

Voters ousted both trustees in March 2024, returning board control to union-aligned members. Yet this victory, too, carried unforeseen costs, Swaim contends.

The newly constituted board swiftly approved a union contract in June 2024 that delivered a 9.75 percent salary increase. It did so even

though district staff had flagged declining enrollment and the end of pandemic-era funding as threats to the district's financial position.

The pay boost accelerated the crisis and gutted district finances, triggering red flags in the government finance world, Swaim writes. Enrollment has dropped sharply and is expected to continue falling, reducing state funding.

Officials are now eyeing workforce reductions, including possible layoffs if voluntary departures prove insufficient. The district has delayed needed maintenance to conserve cash and is weighing closures or consolidations of under-enrolled campuses.

These steps merely postpone deeper trouble, Swaim predicts. Should they fall short, union leaders may soon push for higher taxes.

The entire episode illustrates how union allies "wouldn't know what to do if they caught one," Swaim concludes, comparing their tactics to dogs chasing cars.

The challengers' revised ballot statements, bolstered by a judge's finding on widespread underperformance, will prove far harder for union-backed incumbents to rebut, according to Swaim.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Sep 18, 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

County Confirms Mumps Outbreak at San Diego State University

County Public Health Services (PHS) has confirmed a mumps outbreak at San Diego State University (SDSU) and is coordinating with school leadership on notifications to the campus community.

A similar mumps outbreak on the SDSU campus occurred in 2020 and was contained through collaboration between the County and SDSU.

As of Sept. 18, five confirmed and probable cases have been identified, all among student athletes on a single team. The first known symptom onset began on Sept. 6, with the case confirmed this week. PHS is collaborating with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and SDSU officials for management of the outbreak, including testing of known close contacts of people who are ill.

Mumps is a contagious viral illness that spreads easily in close-contact settings, typically within three feet. It can spread through kissing, sharing food or drinks, or exposure coughs or sneezes. People are contagious for two days before symptoms appear and while they are ill. As with other diseases, people who are immune compromised or otherwise vulnerable face higher risk.

Mumps symptoms include body aches, loss of appetite, fatigue, headache, and fever followed by inflammation or

swelling of the salivary glands in the cheeks, testicles (orchitis), the ovaries (oophoritis) and can progress to infection in and around the brain (meningitis/encephalitis). Inflammation of the reproductive organs can lead to sterility in both males and females. Vaccination with the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine lowers the risk of complications.

Vaccination is the most effective strategy to prevent and control mumps outbreaks, however it is known that immunity may wane over time. After the U.S. mumps vaccination program started in 1967, there has been a more than 99% decrease in mumps cases in the United States.

More information about the mumps is available at the CDPH website . For more information related to the SDSU mumps exposure please visit Mumps Outbreak & Information | Student Affairs and Campus Diversity | SDSU.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 18, 2026

COUNTY

Second CDC Health Survey Underway in South Bay

The County of San Diego and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched a second Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER) survey in neighborhoods adjacent to the Tijuana River Valley.

The survey follows an earlier CASPER conducted in October 2024 and will focus on impacts from the ongoing

Tijuana River Valley sewage pollution crisis.

“We appreciate that the CDC recognizes the value of continuing to document community health concerns created by the ongoing flows of pollution across the border,” said County Public Health Officer Sayone Thihalolipavan, MD, MPH. “New information collected will allow us to check in on how people are doing, learn about any new concerns and any resource needs while work on a permanent solution to flows moves ahead.”

From Sept. 17 through Sept. 19, volunteers wearing vests and official badges will be visiting randomly selected neighborhoods near the Tijuana River Valley. Residents will be invited to participate in a nine-minute survey at their homes .

The survey asks about residents’ experiences, concerns, and any physical or behavioral health effects that may be linked to sewage pollution in local water and air.

The new effort will help public health officials understand how sewage pollution continues to affect South Bay communities and identify any changes over the past two years.

Survey responses will come from a new group of households in the same general area and will guide public health planning, emergency response, and support efforts to secure additional state and federal funding and action.

Results from the second CASPER will be shared once

available. Results from the first CASPER can be found on the County’s website .

County of San Diego news release · Sep 17, 2026

COUNTY

San Diego County Probation CalAIM Program Secures Full State Approval

The San Diego County Probation Department recently earned full approval from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) for its CalAIM 90-day pre-release program for youth in custody.

San Diego is the second county in California to reach full approval for its CalAIM Justice-Involved Reentry Initiative and is the first probation department in the State to achieve this level of progress.

“Full DHCS approval strengthens our ability to deliver comprehensive, coordinated care for youth returning home and reinforces our commitment to improving outcomes for the communities we serve,” said Tamika Nelson, chief probation officer.

The CalAIM Initiative reimburses Probation for a targeted set of Medi-Cal services delivered to youth 90 days before they are released.

Last October, San Diego County Probation became the first in the region to get a conditional approval to put its program into use. Since then, 315 youth have been released and connected with expanded reentry services which include medical, behavioral health and

community support.

“This major milestone recognizes the department’s comprehensive, high-quality system designed to support youth transitioning back into the community,” said Dr. Lou Gilleran, medical director for Probation.

Probations Operation Director Cyndy Trinh-Keo added, “This achievement reflects the dedication and collaboration of our staff and partners.”

To move from conditional approval to full approval, Probation built and put strong reentry systems in place. These systems include implementing new processes for identifying, enrolling and coordinating care for youth; securing data sharing; deploying a new electronic health record; and integrating with contract pharmacy services to ensure timely delivery and tracking of medications.

The department also strengthened partnerships with Behavioral Health Services, Medi-Cal managed care plans, and community-based providers. Staff received extensive training in CalAIM procedures, substance use disorder care, medically assisted treatment and use of the new electronic health record.

Probation is getting solid use of the program, and staff are effectively coordinating and following-through with community partners. These results played a key role in the State granting full approval.

County of San Diego news release · Sep 17, 2026