

Health & Human Services Coordinating Council Ex-officio Member Updates | January, 2026

Child, Family & Adult Services

New Updates from Key Initiatives & Projects

- **CPS:** In December, DCFAS honored foster families with a meal and ice cream sundaes at Leatherby's, and each received a gift card as appreciation.
- **SAS:** The Adult and Aging Commission is accepting nominations for the "5 Over 50 Volunteer Award" honoring five outstanding volunteers aged 50+ who make our community a better place. Deadline to submit nominations is February 9th. Volunteers will be recognized at a Board of Supervisors meeting in May.

Potential Action Items

- Amplify the "5 Over 50 Volunteer Award" or nominate someone. See website for more details: <https://dcfas.saccounty.net/SAS/Pages/Adult-and-Aging-Commission.aspx>

First 5 Sacramento

New Updates from Key Initiatives & Projects

- **Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI):** Free civics and leadership course that empowers parents and caregivers to become leading advocates for children.
 - A PLTI Alumni Chapter has been created, inviting alumni from the last three classes to continue their leadership journey. They can network, share ideas, and inspire each other. Applications for the next English and Spanish classes are now open for January 2026.
- **Free exhibit - "Potter the Otter, A Healthy Adventure":** First 5 Sacramento sponsored a Leo's Learning Lab exhibit at the Sacramento Children's Museum. Families with children 5 and under get free admission on January 15th. Nearly 1,000 guests attended the free exhibit days in September, October, and November.

Potential Action Items

- Promote PLTI Recruitment. Application is available at www.sacramentoplti.com. For more information contact Alejandra Labrado at labradoa@saccounty.gov.
- Spread the word about the exhibit. See website for more details: <https://sackids.org/potter-the-otter-a-healthy-adventure-coming-soon/>

Health Services

New Updates from Key Initiatives & Projects

- **Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Implementation (Effective 7/1/26):** Updates the Mental Health Services Act by revising fund allocations, broadening the target population to include those with substance use disorders, and promoting community-defined practices to reduce health disparities.

- Public feedback from Phases 1 & 2 of the Community Planning Process will shape the first BHS Integrated Plan (IP). The draft IP is due to Department of Health Care Services by March 31, 2026, followed by a 30-day community review. The final IP is due June 30, 2026.
- **Job Recruitment:** BHS is experiencing a workforce shortage and is recruiting new employees. Community members are encouraged to apply as many positions are available. Visit the BHS employment webpage for job listings, application details, benefits, and testimonials.
- **Jail Medical Improvements:** The Mays Consent Decree mandates the County to improve care and conditions for inmates in Sacramento jails.
 - In mid-November, DHS launched a new Flex Nurse position. The Flex Nurse quickly responds to medical requests from the Sheriff's Office, ensuring patient concerns are evaluated promptly. This role aims to reduce unnecessary outside send-outs and negative health outcomes. Early data shows a decrease in Health Service Requests and promising results.
- **2025-26 Flu Season:** Public Health reported the first flu-related death this season, involving a child with no underlying conditions. Public Health issued a news release, and Dr. Olivia Kasirye conducted media interviews. Guidance includes washing hands, covering coughs, staying home when sick, considering indoor masking, improving ventilation, and disinfecting surfaces. High-risk individuals should get tested and consult healthcare providers if sick. Flu vaccines are available at healthcare offices and local pharmacies.

Potential Action Items

- Spread the word about County Behavioral Health job recruitment: <https://dhs.saccounty.gov/BHS/Pages/Employment/Jobs-in-Behavioral-Health.aspx>.
- Amplify County Public Health guidance for flu and other respiratory illnesses.

Homeless Services & Housing

New Updates from Key Initiatives & Projects

- **Flexible Housing Pool (FHP):** Coordinates rental subsidies, housing navigation, case management, supportive services, and landlord engagement for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Brilliant Corners will be the County's operator. Read more in the County's media release: <https://www.saccounty.gov/us/en/articles/2025-articles/board-approves-flexible-housing-pool-to-address-homelessness.html#gsc.tab=0>
- **Encampment Resolution Funds:** The Board approved grant funding for 50 beds for unhoused individuals from the American River Parkway (ARP). The program opened its first scattered site on December 22nd, welcoming three participants into shelter from ARP.

Human Assistance

New Updates from Key Initiatives & Projects

- **ABAWD Implementation:** Following rescission of the statewide Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) waiver, Sacramento County did not receive a replacement waiver. The California Department of Social Services has indicated that the earliest the ABAWD requirements could be implemented is June 1, 2026, once state systems are ready. Counties have been directed not to take any action now and to wait for final guidance.
 - When these rules do take effect:
 - They will only be reviewed when someone first applies or renews their CalFresh benefits, not in the middle of a benefit period.
 - Some eligibility exemptions are expected to change, including updates to age limits, household circumstances involving children, and certain categories that previously qualified for automatic exemptions.
 - A new exemption is anticipated for people eligible for Indian Health Services.
 - Sacramento County is actively working with state partners and other counties to review these changes and provide coordinated feedback to ensure community impacts are considered. We will continue to share clear, timely updates as more information becomes available.
- **CalFresh Error Rate Initiative:** Effective October 1, 2027, states will be required to pay a percentage of CalFresh benefit allotments if they have a Payment Error Rate above 6%. A dedicated team continues working to reduce the program’s error rate and is implementing the first wave of recommended strategies.
- **Office Closure:** The 1725 28th Street office will close, following lease expiration. Relocation will begin in January, and the department remains on track to close the office to the public by the end of March.

Potential Action Items

- Amplify County messaging around changes in Federal entitlement benefits and how residents can access community resources.

Health & Human Services Agency

New Updates from Key Initiatives & Projects

- **CBO Capacity Building Initiative:** Sacramento Regional Community Foundation will lead a county-sponsored project to strengthen the operational, fiscal, and leadership capacity of local nonprofits serving under-resourced communities. Planning is underway to select cohorts who will participate in the program.
- Hiring an interim Executive Director and a consulting firm to assess and **improve Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency (SHRA) governance and operations.**