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News Release

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HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATES PUBLIC DASHBOARD

2025-26 Fiscal Year Data Brings Perspective on Community Services

In its ongoing commitment to government transparency and aim to improve the well-being of the community, the Human Services Department (HSD) recently updated its public data dashboard with fiscal year (FY) 2025-26 information, spanning July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

This public dashboard allows the public, government partners, and community-based organizations to access the agency's transparent, accurate and comprehensive data and performance trends. The updated data highlights service participation and program outcomes for those receiving help with employment and economic security, health and well-being, safety and care, and housing supports. It also provides insight into the critical social services and interventions HSD provides to nearly one-third of Santa Cruz County's population. Compared with the prior fiscal year, some of the most notable FY 2025-26 performance trends include:

- **JOB SEEKERS:** A 5 percent increase in employment within 6 months of program exits, coupled with a 21 percent earnings increase for adult job seekers assisted.
- **HEALTH BENEFITS & FOOD ASSISTANCE:** A 4 percent decrease in the number of unduplicated individuals receiving Medi-Cal, as well as a 4 percent decrease for those receiving CalFresh benefits at some point during the year.
- **IN-HOME SUPPORT SERVICES:** An 11 percent increase in older adults, people with disabilities, and dependent minors receiving in-home care.
- **CHILD WELFARE:** An 8 percent increase in the number of possible abuse or neglect referrals to the child welfare system, with an 11 percent decrease in open cases.
- **HOMELESSNESS:** The total number of households experiencing homelessness who enrolled in a housing program dropped by 5 percent, and nearly 50 percent of service recipients exiting services into permeant housing—which is a 3 percent decrease as compared with last year.

Nearly 90 percent of HSD's roughly $200 million annual budget is provided through state and federal dollars, for public benefits administration and a host of economic security and protective services supports for the most vulnerable, low-income residents in Santa Cruz County. As a result, HSD helps clients access health coverage, food assistance and cash aid benefits; offers workforce development to a range of eligible job seekers; helps those experiencing homelessness with evidence-based support programs that help lead to permanent housing; and protects vulnerable children and adults experiencing abuse and neglect.

Along with charts that describe HSD's programs, the dashboard also includes maps showing program data by Supervisorial District, Incorporated Cities, and School Districts, as well as the FY 2025-26 budgeted revenues and expenditures.

"We appreciate that our agency's dashboard can help the community understand HSD's service demands, assess program results, and identify areas needing attention," HSD Director Randy Morris said. "We hope our updated data sheds greater light on the year-over-year trends in the work to help vulnerable residents access vital programs and benefits for children, families, older adults and people with disabilities—especially as we face significant federal and state safety net cuts that could deeply impact those we serve."

To access the new Making A Difference data dashboard and learn more, visit: https://www.santacruzhumanservices.org/Home/AboutUs/MakingaDifference

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The mission of the County Human Services Department is to strengthen our diverse community by protecting the vulnerable, promoting self-sufficiency, alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life for all county residents. Learn more: www.santacruzhumanservices.org.