



# County of Santa Cruz

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## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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## Press Release

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For Immediate Release  
Date: August 2, 2023

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### **SANTA CRUZ SEEKS COMMUNITY INPUT ON OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUND UTILIZATION**

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY –The Health Services Agency’s Substance Use Disorder Services Program is in its initial stage of gathering community feedback on how to best use the County’s Opioid Settlement Funds to treat and reduce the impacts of the opioid crisis on our community. RDA Consulting (RDA) was selected to assist with this process and help facilitate upcoming in-person and virtual townhall meetings in English and Spanish.

Santa Cruz residents can complete the survey and provide additional feedback by scanning the QR code below or visiting: [bit.ly/OSF\\_SCZ](https://bit.ly/OSF_SCZ)



The initial deadline for completing this survey is **Friday, August 4, 2023**. Responses are confidential and will only be visible by RDA.



Spanish-language survey/  
Encuesta en español:  
[bit.ly/Encuesta\\_Opioides\\_SCZ](https://bit.ly/Encuesta_Opioides_SCZ)  
Fecha limite para responder:  
**10 de agosto de 2023**

The County of Santa Cruz and cities in the county will be receiving an estimated \$26 million over the next 18 years. The State of California recommended that Opioid Settlement Funds be used in the following six high-impact activity areas:

- Matching funds or costs for substance use disorder (SUD) facilities with an approved project within the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure program (BHCIP).
- Creating new or expanded SUD treatment infrastructure.
- Addressing the needs of communities of color and vulnerable populations, such as the unhoused population, that are disproportionately impacted by SUD.
- Helping people with SUD into treatment programs and away from the justice system through community education and harm reduction strategies.
- Interventions to prevent drug addiction in vulnerable youth.
- Purchasing naloxone (Narcan®) for distribution and efforts to expand access.

Additional information regarding the settlement priority areas can be found at:

<https://bit.ly/3pNKI7D>

"I highly encourage all Santa Cruz community members to complete the opioid settlement funds survey. We need our residents' valuable feedback and insights to help guide program priorities," said Dr. Lisa Hernandez, Santa Cruz County Health Officer.

"The opioid crisis continues to have devastating impacts on individuals and families across our county. We have a historic opportunity through the opioid settlement funds to be thoughtful and intentional about how we address this epidemic and make meaningful investments to help change the trajectory of this crisis. Our community's voices are essential to helping ensure these funds are used best to meet our local needs," said Casey Swank, Behavioral Health Services' Director of Substance Use Disorder Services.

Survey results will be shared at in-person and virtual townhalls without identifying individual respondents. For questions about the survey or opioid settlement funds, contact:

[OSFquestions@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:OSFquestions@santacruzcounty.us).

Recovery resources are available for all Santa Cruz residents. Please call the 24-hour helpline at 2-1-1 or visit <https://www.santacruzhealth.org/RecoveryWave> .

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