

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Expanded shelter and safe parking options in South County

In Santa Cruz County, we are committed to supporting individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The Association of Faith Communities (AFC) is expanding its services to provide sleeping accommodations for 35 individuals and safe parking for 70 each night across the county.

As part of this expansion, two new programs are being launched in Watsonville: Safe Spaces, a safe parking initiative, and the Faith Community Shelter, which offers up to 20 beds in a nightly rotating shelter. These programs, partially funded by the county and local community partners, aim to provide greater access to safe and supportive environments for those in need.

For more information about these programs, please visit www.afcsantacruz.org.

Safe Spaces: AFC operates Safe Spaces, a nightly safe parking program throughout Santa Cruz County, offering a secure place to park overnight. This program is available at several sites, **with parking hours from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.** Each site has sanitary facilities, and vehicles and participants are monitored for safety. As part of the program, assistance with job searches, benefit applications, and housing navigation is available.

Attendants must apply and receive approval before a vehicle is assigned to a site. For more information and to begin the South County application process, contact Cristina Gomez-Hernandez at 408-256-3493 or southcounty@afcsantacruz.org.

Faith Community Shelter: The South County Faith Community Shelter will open in early 2025 and provide a **nightly rotating shelter with 15-20 beds** for individuals in need. Hosted by local churches, the shelter changes location each night and operates from **5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.** AFC provides a warm dinner, a light breakfast, and essential services such as showers, available 4-5 nights a week, and laundry, twice a month.

Participants must assist with cleaning duties before leaving each site, and bus passes are provided if needed. **To join the South County waitlist for shelter,** contact Cristina Gomez-Hernandez at 408-256-3493 or southcounty@afcsantacruz.org.

ABOUT THE HOUSING FOR HEALTH PARTNERSHIP

The Housing for Health Partnership is a collaboration of the County and each city within Santa Cruz County, along with local homelessness service providers. It acts as the federally-designated continuum of care for Santa Cruz County and helps allocate State and federal funding to address homelessness. The County of Santa Cruz serves as lead agency for the H4H Partnership. For more information, visit our [website](#), [FaceBook page](#), and [Instagram account](#).