



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I'm excited to introduce the San Mateo County Human Services Agency's (HSA) new five-year Strategic Plan. This plan serves as our roadmap, reaffirming our unwavering commitment to building a thriving, resilient community where everyone has the opportunity and support they need to live safe, healthy and prosperous lives. It outlines our priorities and actions to maximize community impact while strengthening our internal capacity to serve our diverse residents.

The coming years present unique challenges to the vulnerable communities we serve. As I write this in January 2025, it is impossible to know the extent to which our programs and services will be impacted by the Federal government's changing priorities. Our strategic plan is intentionally designed with flexibility, anchored by a strong operational foundation to adapt to evolving needs in our communities.

Over the next five years, HSA will focus on four key areas:

- 1. Access:** Ensuring all community members are not only aware of available resources but have equitable access to them. HSA is committed to removing barriers and ensuring services are accessible and responsive to the needs of everyone in San Mateo County.
- 2. Stability:** Meeting people where they are, providing tailored support and helping them move toward long-term stability. Whether through housing support, financial assistance or workforce development, HSA will empower individuals and families to build a foundation for sustainable success.
- 3. Operations:** Working in a unified, strategic manner to continuously improve operations. By streamlining processes, enhancing coordination and embracing innovation, we will deliver services that are both efficient and effective.
- 4. Staff:** Recognizing that our employees are key to our success, we will provide clear expectations, necessary resources and continuous feedback to support professional growth and enhance service delivery.

Successful implementation of this plan relies on strong partnerships and active engagement with our stakeholders, community organizations and the people we serve. HSA is dedicated to fostering a collaborative environment where we listen, learn and adapt to the evolving needs of our community. Our commitment to transparency and accountability will ensure that we stay focused on our goals and continuously improve in our efforts to serve San Mateo County.

By focusing on these strategic priorities, HSA will create a more vibrant and supportive county where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



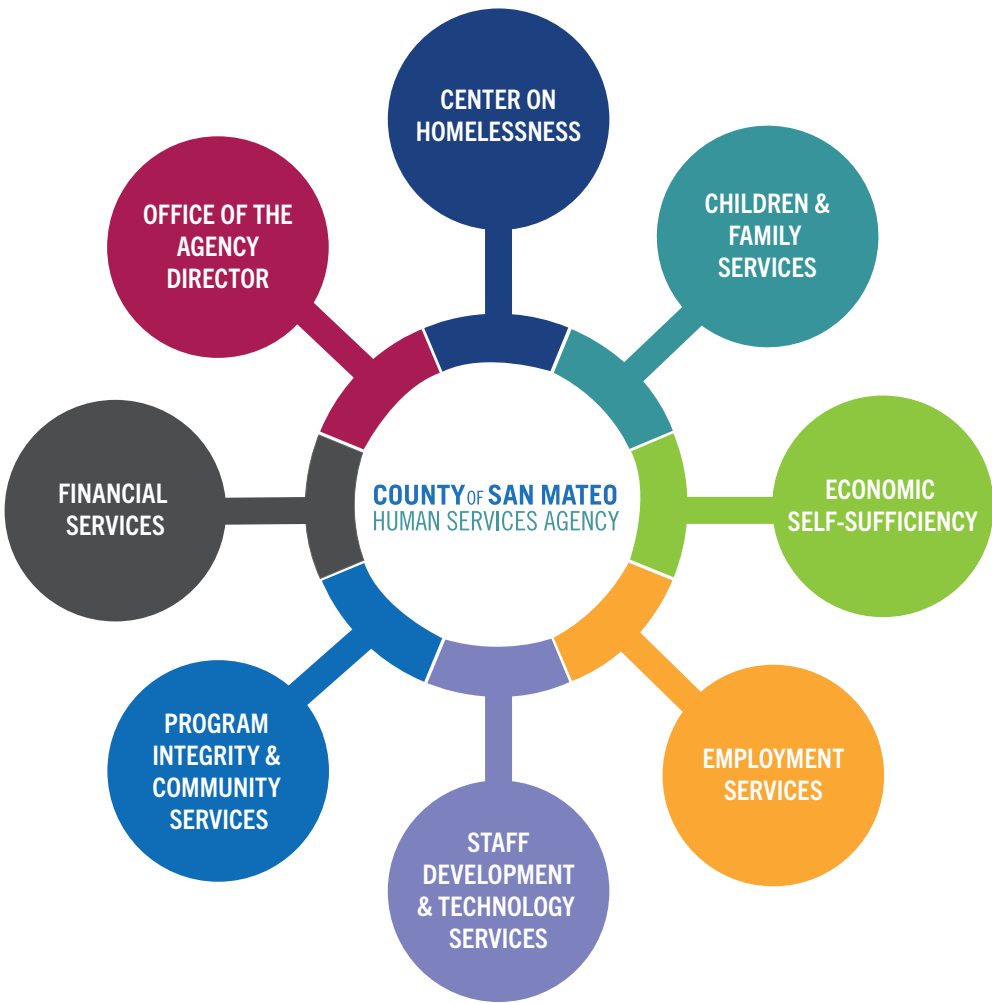
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire Cunningham". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Claire Cunningham (she/her)
Agency Director

BACKGROUND

Who We Are

The Human Services Agency (HSA) provides an extensive network of social services to San Mateo County residents, especially those in need or in crisis. HSA administers a variety of diverse and complex federal and state-mandated programs, along with locally funded supportive services, benefiting over 198,000 children and adults—approximately 27% of the county population. We offer a wide range of services designed to assist individuals and families with economic mobility, ensure child safety and well-being, and strengthen our communities through collaborative partnerships. The Agency’s diverse workforce workforce consists of over 800 employees across eight branches, all dedicated to empowering those in need and improving their quality of life.



OUR STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In the Spring of 2024, HSA embarked on the development of a new 5-year strategic plan, marking a pivotal moment in the agency's commitment to adapt and evolve in response to the changing needs of the community. To facilitate this critical process, HSA partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG), to envision a future that responds to the dynamic landscape of San Mateo County and to develop a roadmap for achieving that vision.

The previous strategic plan concluded in 2020, and a renewed process presented an opportunity to reassess and redefine HSA's mission, vision and values considering significant societal shifts. The leadership team recognized that factors such as the economy, remote work, the cost of living, housing affordability and an increasing aging population have profoundly influenced the demand for services and their delivery methods.

The strategic planning process guided leadership to set goals and objectives in alignment with community needs. HSA implemented a comprehensive community engagement strategy, inviting input from a diverse range of stakeholders, including HSA staff, clients and community partners. This robust engagement consisted of various activities, including executive interviews, visioning sessions, focus groups and client surveys administered in four languages, which collectively gathered valuable insights from **over 400 participants**.

Through this extensive collaborative effort, HSA leadership identified four key action areas that will guide the Agency's efforts over the next five years: Access, Stability, Operations and Staff.

Branch leadership engaged in strategic discussions to develop actionable plans that align with these priorities, fostering collaboration among programs to better serve HSA's clients. Furthermore, the strategic plan integrates existing initiatives focused on system improvement and racial and social equity, ensuring an intentional approach to service delivery.

The 2025-2030 strategic plan articulates HSA's renewed vision for a thriving San Mateo County – one where all residents have the opportunity and support they need to lead safe, healthy and prosperous lives. This plan not only sets forth specific goals and objectives but also serves as a guiding framework for HSA to adapt, innovate and fulfill its mission in an ever-evolving landscape.





VISION

A thriving San Mateo County community where everyone has the opportunity and support they need to live safe, healthy and prosperous lives.

MISSION

Promote the well-being of children, adults and families by providing effective services with compassion.

VALUES



Service



Collaboration



Making a Difference



Accountability

We see diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging as both woven throughout and a result of demonstrating values-based behaviors.

CORE VALUES DEFINITION

Service



We support each other to support others, by:

- ◆ Providing time, attention, and resources to staff, partners and people who need our help
- ◆ Delivering services in timely, effective, welcoming and caring ways
- ◆ Making our services accessible and equitable for everyone, regardless of their background, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or ability

Collaboration



We work together with compassion and commitment, by:

- ◆ Stepping up and empowering each other to tackle difficult challenges
- ◆ Cultivating shared purpose and a sense of belonging
- ◆ Recognizing our work as interconnected and working closely across branches and with partners
- ◆ Listening deeply to the people who need our help and working with them in a spirit of partnership
- ◆ Communicating and partnering closely with San Mateo County's varied and diverse array of communities

Making a Difference



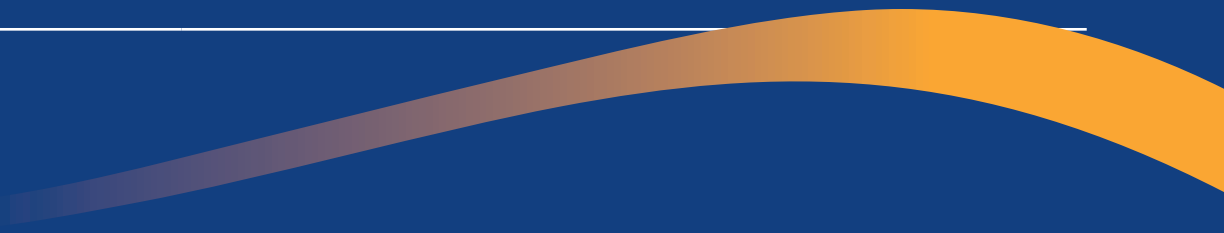
We uplift people, by:

- ◆ Innovating and adapting to meet the changing needs of our community
- ◆ Helping people experiencing trauma and poverty break generational cycles
- ◆ Empowering clients and staff to reach their full potential
- ◆ Supporting staff in their daily work and careers
- ◆ Supporting partners in their work on HSA's behalf
- ◆ Honoring each person's authentic self and inherent value

Accountability



We honor the trust placed in us by the people of San Mateo, by:

- ◆ Being responsible stewards of public funds
 - ◆ Operating with integrity and transparency
 - ◆ Following through on our commitments
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GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES



Over the next five years, HSA will focus efforts on four major action areas. Two of these areas will emphasize maximizing positive impact in the community, while the other two will focus on building the capacity needed to generate that community impact in alignment with our core values.



| **Access**



| **Stability**



| **Operations**



| **Staff**

I. ACCESS

Ensure community members are aware of available resources and have equitable access to them.

- a Increase our presence and visibility in the community.
- b Continuously improve community members' awareness of available benefits, who maybe eligible for them, and how to apply.
- c Provide culturally responsive services in equitable ways.
- d Remove barriers to service by using innovative ways to meet clients where they are.

HIGHLIGHTED ACCESS STRATEGIES

Implement new ways to connect HSA staff with people where they live, work and socialize while expanding on what has already worked well.

Amplify public awareness of programs, services and initiatives through targeted media campaigns and community partnerships.

Leverage technology, including AI generative tools, to provide more options for people to connect with HSA and community resources.

Strengthen awareness of community members' cultures and abilities to respond effectively to diverse language and accessibility needs.



II. STABILITY

Meet people where they are and help them move along a sustainable path.

- a Innovate safety net services to address emerging and critical needs.
- b Leverage partnerships at local, state and federal levels to promote equitable resource allocation and outcomes.
- c Empower clients by helping them to build capacity, enhance resources and move from surviving to thriving.

HIGHLIGHTED STABILITY STRATEGIES

Convene cross-program teams to meet specific population needs in holistic ways.

Build and strengthen relationships to inform and influence programs, policies and initiatives that meet local needs.

Develop and leverage robust partnerships to improve access to resources for people HSA serves.

Engage people with lived experience as partners in providing services and support to others, facilitating skill-building and professional development.



III. OPERATIONS

Work in a unified and strategic manner, committed to continuous improvement.

- a** Improve processes, workflows and tools to achieve operational efficiencies and support innovation.
- b** Strengthen data capacity for improved service delivery and effective reporting and analysis of community impact through an equity-focused, client-centered lens.
- c** Safeguard data security and privacy.
- d** Continuously improve communication and cooperation within branches, across branches, with partners, with the people we serve and with the community at large.
- e** Safeguard operational continuity through best practice approaches to knowledge management, transfer of learning, business continuity planning and emergency preparedness.

HIGHLIGHTED OPERATIONS STRATEGIES

<p>Evaluate benefits of new and emerging technologies and scale up their use in areas of demonstrated value.</p>	<p>Train staff in disaster preparedness to support effective response during emergencies and promote organizational resilience.</p>	<p>Analyze program demographic data to identify and address disparities in service access and outcomes.</p>	<p>Create and enhance mechanisms for regular communication with staff, partners and people we serve to guide decision-making and provide people timely information.</p>	<p>Deploy an evolving array of workgroups in continuous improvement efforts such as strengthening cross-branch referrals and streamline workflows.</p>
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IV. STAFF

Equip staff with clear expectations, resources and feedback to support growth.

- a** Equip staff and their teams for success by providing meaningful training and other professional development opportunities.
- b** Foster an environment where staff can navigate biases by promoting awareness, practicing cultural humility and providing tools and strategies to engage effectively with diverse perspectives.
- c** Promote staff well-being and actively cultivate belonging and community within the organization.
- d** Position ourselves as an “employer of choice” to attract and retain staff by cultivating a positive and caring work environment, work-life balance and connection to meaning in their work.

HIGHLIGHTED STAFF STRATEGIES

Implement a succession planning and staff retention-focused professional development program to provide staff with training, coaching, mentoring and other learning supports to help them succeed in their jobs and progress in their careers.

Enhance recruitment activities to attract candidates and promote career advancement opportunities through creative and innovative approaches including videos that uplift staff voices.

Incorporate staff wellness, engagement, and celebration activities into staff meetings, team offsites, and other departmental events with a focus on promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank all those who contributed along this journey. The following is a list of groups that participated in the strategic planning process. Additionally, we acknowledge all anonymous contributors who completed various surveys throughout the strategic plan development process that are not represented in the acknowledgements list below.

Client Focus Group Participants

- ◆ Foster Youth Advisory Board Members

Clients from the following programs:

- ◆ CalFresh
- ◆ CalWORKs
- ◆ Medi-Cal
- ◆ General Assistance
- ◆ Children & Family Services
- ◆ Service Connect
- ◆ Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- ◆ SMCWorks
- ◆ Homeless Services

Community Partner Focus Group Participants

- ◆ Amira Elbeshbeshy (Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County)
- ◆ Anita Rees (Pacifica Resource Center)
- ◆ Arlae Alston (Puente de la Costa Sur)
- ◆ Caitlen Vreeburg (Coastside Hope)
- ◆ Clara Boyden (Behavioral Health and Recovery Services)
- ◆ Chief John Keene (Probation Department)
- ◆ Corina Rodriguez (Puente de la Costa Sur)
- ◆ Edward Manio (CLC Partnership)
- ◆ Eric Valladares (Family Connections)
- ◆ Gladys Balmas (Agency & Adult Services)
- ◆ Heather Cleary (Peninsula Family Services)
- ◆ Jocelyn Michelsen (LifeMoves)
- ◆ Judith Guerrero (Coastside Hope)
- ◆ Karen Ferguson (CORA)
- ◆ Kitty Lopez (First 5 San Mateo County)
- ◆ Mariana Rocha (Behavioral Health and Recovery Services)
- ◆ Marmi Bermudez (County Health)

- ◆ Martha Bastarrachea (CASA of San Mateo County)
- ◆ Michelle Blakely (First 5 San Mateo County)
- ◆ Michelle Kozul (Probation Department)
- ◆ Mike Stancil (Daly City Partnership)
- ◆ Regina Moreno (Behavioral Health and Recovery Services)
- ◆ Teri Chin (City of Redwood City)
- ◆ Tracy Weatherby (Second Harvest Food Bank of Silicon Valley)
- ◆ Tseada Berhanu (Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County)
- ◆ Vivian Wan (Abode Services)

County & Agency Leadership Interviews

- ◆ David Canepa, Board of Supervisors
- ◆ Dave Pine, Board of Supervisors
- ◆ Noelia Corzo, Board of Supervisors
- ◆ Ray Mueller, Board of Supervisors
- ◆ Warren Slocum, Board of Supervisors
- ◆ Mike Callagy, County Executive Officer
- ◆ Iliana Rodriguez, Assistant County Executive
- ◆ Claire Cunningham, Agency Director
- ◆ Jacinta Arteaga, Assistant Agency Director (HSA)
- ◆ Ardee Apostol, Chief Financial Officer (HSA)
- ◆ Jennifer Valencia, Director of Employment Services (HSA)
- ◆ John Fong, Director of Children and Family Services (HSA)
- ◆ Navjeet Singh, Director of Economic Self-Sufficiency (HSA)
- ◆ Clarisa Simon, Director of Staff Development & Technology Services (HSA)
- ◆ Selina Toy Lee, Director of Program Integrity & Community Services (HSA)

Staff Focus Group Participants

Individual Contributors

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- ◆ Glenn Gonzalez
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- ◆ Jessica Cochran
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- ◆ Karla Serrano
- ◆ Karyn Collins
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- ◆ Laura Stovall
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- ◆ Melissa Kertz
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- ◆ Michelle Garde
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- ◆ Nelson Chen
- ◆ Olivia Bocanegra
- ◆ Rhonda Rayburn
- ◆ Ricardo Villa
- ◆ Roberto Gonzalez
- ◆ Ryan Capasso
- ◆ Samuel Wang
- ◆ Sherman Gee
- ◆ Tatiana Grelli
- ◆ Victoria Yeh
- ◆ Waaed Nmier

Supervisors

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- ◆ Christine Gomez
- ◆ Jeremiah Platon
- ◆ Jeremy Latta
- ◆ Jessica Aguilar-Romo
- ◆ Josephine Cosino
- ◆ Josh Rosales
- ◆ Kevin Salinas
- ◆ Kristine Cura
- ◆ Rommel Silva
- ◆ Rosana Castillo

Managers

- ◆ Amy Yun
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- ◆ Ayako Fukudome
- ◆ Bethany Hobbs-Helmus
- ◆ Brianna Perez
- ◆ Carine Verduco
- ◆ Carlos Arrecis
- ◆ Dawn Sparks
- ◆ Debra Pomeroy
- ◆ Desi Tafoya
- ◆ Donna Woche
- ◆ Ed Kiryczun
- ◆ Erika Martinez
- ◆ Heidi Aten
- ◆ Jackelyn Koo
- ◆ Jasper Lamadora
- ◆ Job Tamanaha
- ◆ Johnny Chao
- ◆ Karina Bravo-Salgado
- ◆ Katharine Sullivan
- ◆ Khalia Parish
- ◆ Kimberly Dung
- ◆ Leane Ferreira-Veevers
- ◆ Lei Lei Zaw
- ◆ LisaAnn Wolfskill
- ◆ Lulu Lopez
- ◆ Maggie Wong
- ◆ Marbren Vasquez

- ◆ Martha Vasquez
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- ◆ Mary Treanor
- ◆ Matthew Hayes
- ◆ Michele Tom
- ◆ Nancy Etman
- ◆ Nancy Rodriguez
- ◆ Nikki Sajise
- ◆ Pooja Keswani
- ◆ Rachel Turetsky
- ◆ Robert Antonio
- ◆ Saila Martinez
- ◆ Swati Deshpande
- ◆ Tammy Chan
- ◆ Todd Blair
- ◆ Wendell Kirkman
- ◆ Wendy Jordan





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