



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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FIRST DISTRICT

KIMBERLY DE SERPA
SECOND DISTRICT

JUSTIN CUMMINGS
THIRD DISTRICT

FELIPE HERNANDEZ
FOURTH DISTRICT

MONICA MARTINEZ
FIFTH DISTRICT

September 24, 2025

The Honorable Katherine Hansen
Santa Cruz Courthouse
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: Response to the 2024-2025 Grand Jury Report “Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County: Voices Unheard, Signs Unseen”

Dear Judge Hansen,

The purpose of this letter is to formally transmit the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors' response to the 2024-2025 Grand Jury Report “Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County: Voices Unheard, Signs Unseen.”

Sincerely,



FELIPE HERNANDEZ, Chair
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors

Attachments

CC: Clerk of the Board
Santa Cruz County Grand Jury



**The 2024-2025 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury
Requires the**

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors

to Respond by September 29, 2025

**to the Findings and Recommendations listed below
which were assigned to them in the report titled**

Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County

Voices Unheard, Signs Unseen

Required Responses apply to elected officials, elected agencies or department heads, elected boards, councils, and committees. The respondent is **required** to respond and to make the response available to the public under California Penal Code ([PC §933\(c\)](#)). A required response will be considered **compliant** under [PC §933.05](#) if it contains an appropriate comment on **all** findings and recommendations **which were assigned to you** in this report.

Invited Responses are encouraged but are not required by the California Penal Code.

Please follow the instructions below when preparing your response.

Instructions for Respondents

Your assigned [Findings](#) and [Recommendations](#) are listed on the following pages with check boxes and an expandable space for summaries, timeframes, and explanations. Please follow these instructions, which paraphrase [PC §933.05](#):

- 1. For the Findings, mark one of the following responses with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **AGREE with the Finding**, or
 - b. **PARTIALLY DISAGREE with the Finding** – specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and include an explanation of the reasons why, or
 - c. **DISAGREE with the Finding** – provide an explanation of the reasons why.
- 2. For the Recommendations, mark one of the following actions with an “X” and provide the required additional information:**
 - a. **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – provide a summary of the action taken, or
 - b. **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – provide a timeframe or expected date for completion, or
 - c. **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – provide an explanation, scope, and parameters of an analysis to be completed within six months, or
 - d. **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – provide an explanation of why it is not warranted or not reasonable.
- 3. (For groups or boards) Please confirm the date on which the assigned responses were approved during an official meeting:**

We approved these responses in a regular public meeting as shown in our minutes dated September 9, 2025.

- 4. Please attach a PDF version of your completed responses to an email sent to:**

The Honorable Judge: Katherine Hansen Katherine.Hansen@santacruzcourt.org and

The Santa Cruz County Grand Jury: grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

If you have questions about this response form, please contact the Grand Jury by calling (831) 454-2099 or by sending an email to grandjury@scgrandjury.org.

Findings

F1 . There is currently no consolidated data being collected on Santa Cruz County human trafficking cases. This causes an understatement of the problem and makes it difficult for stakeholders to obtain additional funding.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

Data needs to be clearly defined in both scope and purpose. Crime data is collected and analyzed by each law enforcement agency in the county. The District Attorney's Office maintains consolidated data on all cases submitted for filing, along with their dispositions. Crime data differs significantly from anecdotal information gathered by community-based organizations, and no analysis of these differences is currently being conducted. Prosecution of human trafficking cases is funded through the District Attorney's budget, not through grant funding, and has not been affected by data reporting. Community-based organizations seeking grant funding from California Victim Compensation Board's (CalVCB) current or future programs may benefit from additional data collection.

F2 . The potential passage of AB 379 may provide grants for the District Attorney's Office for the prosecution of traffickers and grants for community-based organizations for direct services and victim outreach. This could provide the resources necessary to ultimately reduce human trafficking and reduce the likelihood of victims returning to trafficking.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

F3 . The tri-county CSEC steering committee for the prevention of human trafficking has not met for a full year as of the publication of this report. Therefore, there is no active body that could potentially monitor trafficking cases across the tri-county area.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The former child welfare directors dissolved the tri-county CSEC steering committee after establishing effective collaborative practices for monitoring and supporting youth at risk of, or who were victims of, trafficking. Since then, collaboration between the three counties has continued on an as-needed, case-by-case basis. The relationships and ongoing communication among tri-county directors and staff allow for effective monitoring. In Santa Cruz County, the AB 2083 System of Care committee—established in 2018 pursuant to Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 16521.6 and comprised of key child-serving agencies and local organizations—has assumed responsibility for ensuring coordinated, multi-disciplinary, and trauma-informed services for youth impacted by commercial sexual exploitation.

F4 . The County Family & Child Services CSEC-required monthly multidisciplinary team meetings have not been held since November 2023, despite biennial reporting otherwise to the State Department of Social Services. Therefore, known cases of human trafficking have not been properly overseen.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

CSEC MDT meetings were not held between November 2023 and June 2025. The biennial report indicates that meetings occur on an emergency basis, through case consultations with the CSEC coordinator, and monthly when new referrals are received. Emergency and case consultation meetings have continued without disruption. Coordination for CSEC MDTs is also incorporated into the AB 2083 System of Care meetings, as outlined in the corresponding MOU. Known cases of human trafficking are overseen by each client's Child & Family Team, with involvement from the assigned social worker and their supervisor.

F6 . Very few businesses in Santa Cruz County are in compliance with SB 1193 signage requirements. This results in the reduction of community awareness of the problem and the likelihood that trafficking victims will be able to reach out for help.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The Sheriff's Office has not conducted an independent verification of the level of business compliance with SB 1193 (Civil Code section 52.6) signage requirements. Therefore, the Sheriff's Office cannot confirm the accuracy of the compliance rate reported by the Grand Jury.

F7 . Existing human trafficking signs at farm worker contractor sites are not readily accessible to farm workers and are in poor condition. This can result in farm workers being unaware of available resources and an inability to reach out for help.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

To the extent human trafficking signs are not readily accessible and in poor condition, the County agrees that this could result in farm workers being unaware of available resources and an inability to seek assistance. However, it is unclear how pervasive this problem is.

F8 . The mix of County and local municipal ordinances regarding the licensing and inspection of massage businesses varies, possibly causing confusion and inconsistent enforcement of existing regulations.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

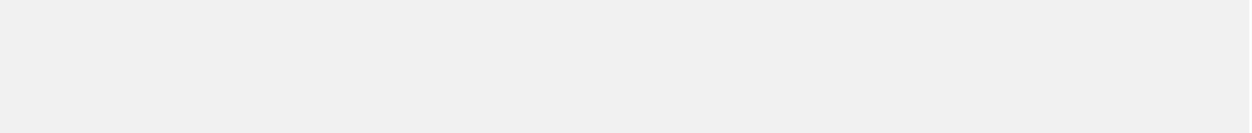
It is correct that local jurisdictions maintain different municipal ordinances regarding the licensing and inspection of massage businesses. The County cannot confirm whether, and to what extent, these differences result in confusion or inconsistent enforcement of applicable laws across jurisdictions.

F10 . Calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline on existing signs have unacceptably long wait times and can result in a lost opportunity to assist human trafficking victims.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):


F11 . Local nonprofit organizations have 24/7 hotline numbers that are staffed, and calls can be answered immediately or within minutes, greatly increasing the likelihood of contacting victims and providing assistance in real time.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

F13 . Law enforcement task forces focused solely on human trafficking are very effective methods of detecting and preventing human trafficking activities. Such task forces could increase the rate of interdiction and the successful prosecution of human trafficking cases.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

Response explanation (required for a response other than **Agree**):

The District Attorney's Office has been collaborating with the Sheriff's Office as they explore the creation of a regional task force dedicated to investigating sexual assaults and related crimes, including human trafficking. In addition, the District Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Office will participate in quarterly County Sexual Assault Investigator meetings where cases such as human trafficking can be discussed.

Recommendations

R1 . The Department of Human Services should designate a qualified staff member to take the lead in forming a countywide human trafficking coalition, including the District Attorney and the Sheriff's Office. Members should include stakeholders discussed in this report who are involved in the prevention and interdiction of human trafficking. The focus should include the consolidation of human trafficking data and the procurement of additional funds, potentially to fund law enforcement task forces. This should be completed by December 31, 2025. (F1,F2,F13)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- ✗ **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

Meetings will be scheduled prior to December 31, 2025, with representatives from the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Department of Human Services, and other relevant stakeholders to share summative data and discuss possible gaps in serving individuals who have experienced human trafficking in Santa Cruz County. Discussions will focus on opportunities for further collaboration, coordination of services, the potential need for a Memorandum of Understanding, and considerations regarding the function of a countywide human trafficking coalition. The Human Services Department will coordinate and lead these meetings; however, it will not be responsible for forming a countywide coalition.

R2 . The Program Manager of Family & Child Services should coordinate with Monterey and San Benito County peers for the purpose of reconvening the tri-county Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children steering committee. This team would meet regularly to review and track intercounty human trafficking cases and activity in our region and participate in regional prevention activities. This should be completed by December 31, 2025. (F3)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- ✗ **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Child Welfare Director of Santa Cruz County has coordinated with the child welfare directors of Monterey and San Benito counties to gather historical information on the tri-county CSEC Steering Committee and its prior function. The Santa Cruz director will continue discussions with Monterey and San Benito to gauge interest in renewing the MOU for the committee. If renewed, the team would determine the appropriate meeting frequency to review and track intercounty human trafficking cases, assess regional activity, and participate in regional prevention efforts where appropriate. While the three directors mutually agreed to dissolve recurring tri-county meetings due to the effectiveness of ongoing communication and coordination, engagement meetings to revisit this topic will occur before December 31, 2025.

R3 . The Program Manager of County Family & Child Services should resume and maintain monthly multidisciplinary team meetings, required as a condition of receiving Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children funding, to review ongoing human trafficking cases and discuss other potential cases involving high-risk youth. This should commence by August 31, 2025. (F4)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- ✗ **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

CSEC MDT meetings resumed on July 21, 2025, with a follow-up meeting held on August 18, 2025. Stakeholders discussed whether monthly multidisciplinary meetings should continue or if the current approach—case management by individual Child & Family Teams and oversight through the AB 2083 Inter-Agency Leadership Team—remains sufficient. Further evaluation is needed to determine the most effective meeting schedule going forward.

R6 . Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should adopt an umbrella countywide ordinance requiring human trafficking signage currently mandated by the State to be part of all existing permitting and licensing procedures for affected businesses. This should be completed by June 30, 2026. (F6)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- X** **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The County does not have legal authority to adopt an umbrella countywide ordinance regarding this subject matter.

R7 . Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should require that county-specific human trafficking awareness and support signs include at least one 24/7 local hotline number, and staff should collaborate with local non-profits providing support to human trafficking victims to develop an effective sign for countywide posting and distribution. This should be completed by June 30, 2026. (F10, F11)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- X** **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The County appreciates the intent of this recommendation and agrees that connecting trafficking victims to local resources is important. The County Human Services Department currently partners with nonprofits to support human trafficking victims through prevention-focused outreach, including several contracts to serve Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC). The County will continue to focus resources on prevention activities and work with local nonprofits to develop signs with local hotline numbers where feasible, but making signage mandatory would divert resources from more effective, upstream interventions such as prevention, education, and early identification training for schools, hospitality businesses, and community partners. Please see the attached correspondence from Monarch Services for additional detail.

R8 . The Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner should come into compliance with SB 1193 by ensuring that existing human trafficking signs are refreshed annually. In addition, it should require all farm labor contractors to include the SB 1193 sign in employee handbooks for easy accessibility. A review for compliance should be done on an annual basis. This should commence by September 30, 2025. (F7)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- X** **WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

The Agricultural Commissioner's Office does not have statutory authority to enforce the signage requirements of SB 1193 (California Civil Code §52.6) and is therefore not responsible for ensuring signage placement, condition, or inclusion in employee handbooks. While the Agricultural Commissioner's Office will continue to collaborate with partners to support farm worker health and safety, the specific actions described in this recommendation are outside of its legal jurisdiction.

R9 . Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors should adopt a countywide ordinance regulating the licensing, employee certification, and inspection requirements for massage businesses consistent with California Massage Therapy Council certification and licensing requirements. This should be completed by June 30, 2026. (F8)

- **HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED** – summarize what has been done
- **HAS NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED BUT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE** – summarize what will be done and the timeframe
- **REQUIRES FURTHER ANALYSIS** – explain the scope and timeframe (not to exceed six months)
- WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED** – explain why

Required response explanation, summary, and timeframe:

Outside of very specific circumstances allowed under State law, incorporated cities are not subject to County ordinances. Therefore, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors does not have legal authority to adopt a massage business ordinance that would be enforceable within city jurisdictions.