



SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY
GRAND JURY

[scgj] 2025 Human Trafficking Grand Jury Report- SCPD Response

1 message

Bernie Escalante <bescalante@santacruzca.gov>

Fri, Aug 29, 2025 at 12:16 PM

To: "katherine.hansen@santacruzcourt.org" <katherine.hansen@santacruzcourt.org>, "grandjury@scgrandjury.org" <grandjury@scgrandjury.org>

Good Afternoon,

Attached you will find the responses from Santa Cruz PD to the Santa Cruz Grand Jury Report, 2025.

Bernie Escalante

Chief of Police

City of Santa Cruz | Police Department

[155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060](#)

Direct: 831-420-5813

Email: bescalante@santacruzca.gov

Web: cityofsantacruz.com



 2025 Human Trafficking in Santa Cruz County Grand Jury Report- SCPD Response.pdf
232K



The 2024-2025 Santa Cruz County Civil Grand Jury

Invites the

Police Chief, City of Santa Cruz

to Respond by August 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. 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

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

X PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

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

The City does not have details on how many businesses throughout the County are in compliance with SB 1193, but I assume that as a County there could always be opportunities to improve community awareness and education of the problem.

F9 . Annual inspections are required of massage businesses in jurisdictions with massage business ordinances, but inspections are generally not being conducted. This can result in undetected human trafficking activity.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

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

I agree the lack of inspections could result in undetected human trafficking activity. The Santa Cruz Police Department typically conducts regular inspections of massage businesses; however, recently due to significant staffing shortages we have not been able to conduct these inspections as regularly as we would prefer. With the recent increase in recruiting, hiring and retention efforts, the Santa Cruz Police Department intends to increase inspections.

F12 . There has been a lack of human trafficking presentations to law enforcement. Local law enforcement jurisdictions could request the no-cost training that is available from local human trafficking service providers. This can lead to officers learning to identify human trafficking victims and reduce further victim trauma.

AGREE

PARTIALLY DISAGREE

DISAGREE

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

The Santa Cruz Police Department hosted a 4-hour Human Trafficking training by the District Attorney's Office in 2022. In 2023, we sent two detectives and our Victim Advocate to a 3-day seminar on Human Trafficking. In 2023 and 2024, we sent our Victim Advocate to a one-day Human Trafficking symposium. Our Victim Advocate has provided training to our patrol and investigations staff of key indicators of Human Trafficking. This training season (2025-2026), we have an 8-hour training session lined up for our entire department.

Recommendations

R4 . Each law enforcement agency in Santa Cruz County, including the Sheriff's Office, Santa Cruz Police Department, Scotts Valley Police Department, Capitola Police Department, and Watsonville Police Department, should require law enforcement officers to receive an annual human trafficking awareness training, preferably led by human trafficking survivors. This should commence by December 31, 2025. (F12)

- 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:

Required annual training could be a challenge with all the other legally required training. The feasibility of this recommendation will depend on, among other factors, the length and cost of the training. A required human trafficking training every other year could be more feasible. We are conducting an 8-hour training this year and understand the importance of providing more training in the future.

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
- X **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 Santa Cruz Police Department, which is a Department of the City of Santa Cruz, has no ability to control whether the County Board of Supervisors passes an ordinance. Additionally, my understanding is that County ordinances apply to unincorporated County. City Ordinances apply to the City of Santa Cruz.

R10 . Local law enforcement agencies, including the Sheriff's Office, Santa Cruz Police Department, Scotts Valley Police Department, Capitola Police Department, and Watsonville Police Department, should enforce massage business licensing, certification, and inspection requirements. This should include compliance with SB 1193 signage requirements. Enforcement of existing ordinances should commence by September 30, 2025. However, if/when the Board of Supervisors agrees to the Jury's recommendation to adopt a countywide ordinance, law enforcement should come into compliance with this new ordinance within 30 days of adoption. (F9)

X

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 Santa Cruz Police Department has historically enforced massage business licensing, certification, and inspections. We have only recently been challenged to maintain these due to our staffing challenges, but our intentions are to resume them once staffing allows. We fully understand the importance of these actions.