



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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PRESS RELEASE

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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SELECTS NEW HEALTH OFFICER

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY – The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce that Dr. Lisa Hernandez has been selected as the next Health Officer of Santa Cruz County, pending approval by the Board of Supervisors.

Dr. Hernandez has 25 years of experience working in medicine and public health and comes to Santa Cruz County from the City of Berkeley where she served as Public Health Officer, playing a crucial role in leading the city's pandemic response. Dr. Hernandez advocates for data-driven solutions to address population-level health concerns, such as health disparities and unequal healthcare access, and has a deep interest in public health preparedness and communicable disease prevention.

"Dr. Hernandez is well-suited to lead the Health Services Agency through challenges and opportunities to improve the health status of county residents," said Health Services Agency Director Mónica Morales. "In addition to her other qualifications, she is also both bicultural and bilingual and is an ideal Health Officer for the County of Santa Cruz."

"I have great affection for Santa Cruz County and its residents," Dr. Hernandez said. "I look forward to working with the community to improve the health and wellness of all County residents."

Dr. Hernandez previously served as the Deputy Health Officer and Infectious Disease and Response Branch Director for the Santa Clara County Public Health Department. During her tenure in Santa Clara County, she led the County's essential public health services in disease control, overseeing programs such as the Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Program, Immunization and Travel Clinic, and the Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic. She also provided guidance and direction for Public Health Preparedness, the Public Health Pharmacy, and the Public Health Laboratory.

From 2013 to 2016, Dr. Hernandez was County Health Officer and Medical Services Director for the County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency. In this capacity, she assumed responsibility for the agency's Public Health Division and provided medical oversight for the County Clinics. Prior to this role, Dr. Hernandez served as the Health Officer/Director of Public Health for the Monterey County Public Health Department, where she previously worked as the Deputy Health Officer.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University, a Doctorate of Medicine from Georgetown University School of Medicine, and a Master of Public Health from the University of California, Berkeley. She has completed two medical residencies, one in Obstetrics and Gynecology and another in Preventive Medicine.

Once confirmed by the Board of Supervisors, Dr. Hernandez would replace Dr. Gail Newel, who is retiring in July to provide a transition period. Hernandez would start July 5.

Dr. Hernandez is a proud mother of two college-aged children, and she and her husband are enjoying their newfound empty nest status.

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