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Santa Cruz County
Women's Commission

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# Santa Cruz County
# Women's Commission
# 2024 - 2025 Biennial Report

## 1. The Role of the Commission

The Women's Commission is an advisory body to the Board of Supervisors on issues affecting women and girls in Santa Cruz County. The Commission was established to:

a. Advise the Board of Supervisors on matters affecting any current inequalities suffered by citizens of this County

b. Make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors to rectify any such inequalities;

c. Make available to the public information and resources concerning equal rights and opportunities. The Commission shall also maintain a current file of services and resources useful to the community;

d. Review Santa Cruz County's equal employment opportunity plan and policies and recommend to the Board of Supervisors and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission any revisions which may be necessary to eliminate employment discrimination against women;

e. Review Santa Cruz County's rules and job descriptions and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and to the Civil Service Commission, as necessary, to assure that any unnecessary barriers to the employment of women are removed;

f. Study the present and projected needs of women. Develop comprehensive goals to achieve present solutions and effective future planning;

g. Review pending Federal and State legislation which would impact upon women and, where appropriate, advise the Board of Supervisors of its recommendations;

h. Exercise any other responsibilities related to the needs and concerns of women and as set forth in the Commission's bylaws as approved by the Board of Supervisors.

## 2. Meetings Dates, Time, and Location

Women's Commission regular meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of every month except July and December, from 6:00 until 8:00 PM. During the reporting period, the Commission met at the County Government Building (701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060).

- During 2024, seven regularly scheduled meetings were canceled for lack of quorum. Persistent unfilled vacancies made forming a quorum incredibly difficult. In some instances, there were not enough members seated to form a quorum.

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- During 2025, six regularly scheduled meetings were canceled for lack of quorum. However, by the close of 2025, all but two seats on the Commission were filled, so 2026 attendance bodes well.

## 3. Commission Structure

The Women's Commission is composed of ten voting members: two appointed by each of the five County Supervisors. New officers are elected each year during the April regular meeting.
On December 31, 2025, the Women's Commission membership was as follows:

| District | Commissioners |
|---|---|
| 1st District | Amanda Crowder<br>**Paige Gordon (Co-Chair)** |
| 2nd District | Brenda Rogers<br>Seat Vacant |
| 3rd District | **Suzanne Doty (Co-Chair)**<br>Allison Albert |
| 4th District | Rita Sanchez<br>Seat Vacant |
| 5th District | Ariel Young<br>Kate McGrath |

The Commissioners who were appointed during the reporting period were Paige Gordon, Brenda Rogers, Claire Protti, Suzanne Doty, Amanda Safi, Rita Sanchez, Allison Albert, Ariel Young, and Kate McGrath. The Commissioner(s) who completed their terms, resigned, or were replaced during the reporting period were Jennifer Martin, Heather Lenhardt, Claire Protti, Jennifer Smith, Amanda Safi, Alicia Danna, Sheila De Lany, and Karina Moreno. Commissioners Crowder, Gordon, and Rogers were reappointed during the reporting period.

In 2024, Doty and Protti were elected to serve as Co-Chairs. In 2025, Doty and Gordon were elected to serve as Co-Chairs.

## 4. Commission Staff

Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Manager)* staffed the Commission for the entirety of the reporting period.

Between Commissions meetings, County Staff was available by phone, email, or in person for information and referrals. The County EEO Commissions Office is located in the County Government Center (701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060).

## 5. Attendance

Please see attached *Santa Cruz County Women's Commission 2024-2025 Attendance Report.*

## 6. Commission Activities and Accomplishments

The Commission's priorities and subsequent activities are determined by the Commission's mandate and emerging needs as expressed by the community and identified by the Commissioners.

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**During the reporting period, Commissioners conducted the following business:**

- Held seven regularly scheduled meetings
- Held one special meeting
- Maintained a current, informative Commission website to support Commission outreach and advocacy efforts
- Reviewed new County position descriptions as they became available
- Received reports and reviewed correspondence from members of the public about issues of interest to women in Santa Cruz County
- Provided a platform for County and community partner speakers to present on information of interest to women and girls in Santa Cruz County

**During the reporting period, the Commission heard reports on the following community agencies, County programs, and other organizations of interest to women:**

- Shane McKeithen (District 1 Analyst) on Supervisor Koenig's effort to establish Santa Cruz County as a *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) community
- Eva Holt-Rusmore (*Consultant for DatashareSCC*) on developing DataShareSCC's *2024 Women's Wellbeing Spotlight*
- Tricia Webber (*County Clerk*) on new changes in federal legislation impacting voter registration for women
- Sarah Marschall (*Family Justice Center Consultant*) on the new Family Justice Center under development
- Gina De Martini-Kuhns (*CEO Senior Administrative Analyst*) on the County's Strategic Planning outreach efforts and focus areas

## 7. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

**During the reporting period, Commissioners served on or were affiliated with the following commissions or organizations:**

- 100 Women Who Care
- Ben Lomond Village Alliance
- Bonny Doon Neighbors
- Boulder Creek Business Association
- Coalition Against Human Trafficking
- Democratic Women's Club of Santa Cruz County
- Highlands Park Senior and Community Center
- Model United Nations of the Far West, Inc.
- San Lorenzo Rotary Club
- Santa Cruz Mountains Art Center
- Save Pleasure Point Committee
- Valley Women's Club
- Women in Leadership for Diverse Representation (WILDR)

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- Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency
- Santa Cruz County Clerk's Office
- Santa Cruz County Seniors Commission
- Nonprofit Connection Santa Cruz County
- The Wisdom Center.

## 8. COMMISSION SUBCOMMITTEES

**During the reporting period, the Commission authorized the following ad hoc subcommittees to complete specific projects their subject matter jurisdiction within finite periods of time:**

**Ad Hoc CEDAW Resolution Review Subcommittee**

Subcommittee tasked with working with County staff to provide feedback on the Board Memo and CEDAW (*Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*) Resolution language. As of December 31, 2025, the subcommittee had completed its task and been dissolved.

**Ad Hoc 2025-2027 Equal Employment Opportunity and Cultural Responsiveness Plan Review Subcommittee**

Subcommittee tasked with reviewing the County's 2025-2027 EEO/CR Plan and providing feedback via a gender lens. As of December 31, 2025, the subcommittee had completed its task and been dissolved.

**Ad Hoc Trailblazers Awards Ceremony Planning Subcommittee**

Subcommittee tasked with planning a Trailblazers Awards ceremony for March 2026. As of December 31, 2025, subcommittee members included Albert, Gordon, McGrath, Doty and Sanchez.

## 9. COMMISSION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

**During the reporting period, Commissioners took the following actions to address emerging issues:**

- Provided feedback on the County's *2025-2027 Equal Employment Opportunity and Cultural Responsiveness Plan*

- Consulted with their District Supervisors to advocate in support of the Board honoring Women's Equality Day (August 26th ) with a proclamation commemorating the certification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920, which granted women the right to vote.

- Promoted women's civic engagement and attendance to WILDER forums and events

**During the reporting period, the Commission participated in the following special projects:**

- The majority of the Commission's efforts in 2024-2025 were in service to the Board of Supervisors' directive to recommend priorities related to the County's recent resolution establishing Santa Cruz County as a Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) community. The Commissions efforts were hindered by the many vacancies resulting in most meetings having to be canceled for lack of quorum. Despite this difficulty, the Commission successfully compiled and presented their recommended CEDAW priorities to the Board of Supervisors.

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- Promotion of and participation in Women in Leadership Diverse Roles (WILDR) March *2024 InspireHer* event.

- Worked with a consultant to develop *DataShareSCC*'s *2024 Women's Wellbeing Spotlight*

## 10. FUTURE GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**In the next reporting period, the Women's Commission will endeavor to accomplish the following:**

- Continue to support the County's implementation efforts related to the Commission's CEDAW recommendations.

- Update at least one section of the Status of Women and Girls Report annually

- Increase public attendance to Commission meetings and public engagement with social media platforms

- Update Commission Bylaws to incorporate changes to Brown Act notice requirements and add language related to fundraising for special projects. Standardize language as appropriate.

- Continue to monitor implementation of the County Equal Employment Opportunity and Cultural Responsiveness Plan including offering feedback for future plans.

- Continue to develop an easily accessible library of resources for women and girls in Santa Cruz County.

**In the next reporting period, the Women's Commission recommends that the Board of Supervisors take the following actions:**

- Actively recruit to fill Commission vacancies.

- Continue to monitor and advance implementation of the following CEDAW recommendations as appropriate:
  - Direct the County Administrative Office to commission an independent consultant to conduct a comprehensive gender analysis of County workforce compensation to identify and address pay disparities.
  - Establish a task force of County Health Services Agency staff and community partners to examine the root causes of the scarcity of OB/GYN providers in South County and propose solutions that address those systemic root causes (such as provider compensation, cost of living, and the lack of affordable housing).
  - Adopt a resolution to protect reproductive and gender-affirming health care rights.
  - Support legislation, policies, and programs that address Santa Cruz County's disproportionately high prenatal substance use affecting women and fetuses.
  - Direct the County Executive Office to work with County departments to assess potential funding shortfalls resulting from federal withdrawal of funds from DEI-aligned programs and identify alternative sources of support.

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- Establish a community task force to identify which community partner safety net services for women and children will be most impacted by federal withdrawal of funds and identify alternative sources of support.
- Direct the Sheriff's Office/Corrections to revisit the recommendations made in the 2017 report by Susan Greene, "Gender Matters: A Profile of Women in Santa Cruz County Jail", to determine if they have been implemented, assess the effectiveness of those that have been, and evaluate opportunities to implement outstanding recommendations.
- Support efforts by the Sheriff's Office, Public Defender's Office, and Probation Department to implement and fortify gender-responsive, trauma-informed policies and reentry support programs for incarcerated women in Santa Cruz County.
- Direct the Housing for Health Division to conduct a comprehensive analysis of housing trends to identify any disparities disproportionately impacting women (particularly unhoused women) and women-led households and implement housing programs that prioritize support for women and families.
- Work with the Human Services Department to expand funding for affordable childcare programs, particularly for single-income, women-led households, and explore additional state and federal grant-funding to expand such programs.
- Establish a task force to consider how best to support women and their families who have become justice-involved due to their immigration status.
- Require County departments to collect and report gender-disaggregated data in submissions to the Board as appropriate, ensuring Board awareness of any gender-based disparities when making funding and policy decisions.
- Draft and adopt a CEDAW ordinance to further formalize the County's commitment and enhance accountability, transparency, and alignment with community partners, to ensure ongoing commitment to gender equity goals.

Approved by the Women's Commission on January 15, 2026 at their regularly scheduled meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Signed by:
Suzanne Doty
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Suzanne Doty
*Co-Chair, Women's Commission*

January 15, 2026
Date

Signed by:
paige gordon
9245B535944F485...

Paige Gordon
*Co-Chair, Women's Commission*

January 15, 2026
Date

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## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY WOMEN'S COMMISSION

### 2024 ATTENDANCE REPORT

| District/ Supervisor | Commissioner | Jan 2024 | Feb 2024 | Mar 2024 | April 2024 | May 2024 | June 2024 | July 2024 | Aug 2024 | Sept 2024 | Oct 2024 | Nov 2024 | Dec 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st District Supervisor Manu Koenig | Amanda Crowder | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | P | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | NO MEETING SCHEDULED | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | NO MEETING SCHEDULED |
| | Jennifer Martin | | E | P | | | | | | | - | | |
| | Paige Gordon | | - | - | | | | | | | - | | |
| 2nd District Supervisor Zach Friend | Heather Lenhardt | | P | P | | | | | | | - | | |
| | Brenda Rogers | | - | P | | | | | | | P | | |
| | Claire Protti | | - | - | | | | | | | P | | |
| 3rd District Supervisor Justin Cummings | Jennifer Smith | | P | E | | | | | | | - | | |
| | Suzanne Doty | | - | - | | | | | | | P | | |
| | Amanda Safi | | - | - | | | | | | | - | | |
| 4th District Supervisor Felipe Hernandez | Karina Moreno | | P | P | | | | | | | P | | |
| | Alicia Danna | | P | P | | | | | | | P | | |
| 5th District Supervisor Bruce McPherson | Sheila De Lany | | P | P | | | | | | | - | | |
| | Seat Vacant | | - | - | | | | | | | - | | |

**Attendance:** **P**=Present **A**=Absent **E**=Excused **( - )** = Not Seated

### 2025 ATTENDANCE REPORT

| District/ Supervisor | Commissioner | Jan 2025 | Feb 2025 | Mar 20 2025 | Mar 26 2025 | April 2025 | May 2025 | June 2025 | July 2025 | Aug 2025 | Sept 2025 | Oct 2025 | Nov 2025 | Dec 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st District Supervisor Manu Koenig | Amanda Crowder | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | NO MEETING SCHEDULED | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | MEETING CANCELED - LACK OF QUORUM | P | NO MEETING SCHEDULED |
| | Paige Gordon | | P | | P | | P | | | | P | | E | |
| 2nd District Supervisor Kim De Serpa | Brenda Rogers | | P | | P | | P | | | | P | | P | |
| | Claire Protti | | P | | P | | - | | | | - | | - | |
| 3rd District Supervisor Justin Cummings | Suzanne Doty | | P | | P | | P | | | | P | | P | |
| | Allison Albert | | - | | p | | P | | | | P | | P | |
| 4th District Supervisor Felipe Hernandez | Karina Moreno | | A | | E | | A | | | | A | | E | |
| | Rita Sanchez | | P | | E | | P | | | | P | | A | |
| 5th District Supervisor Monica Martinez | Ariel Young | | - | | - | | - | | | | - | | P | |
| | Kate McGrath | | - | | - | | - | | | | - | | P | |

Submitted by:

Kaite McGrew

Kaite McGrew
*Commissions Manager*

December 31, 2025
Date