



# Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities

701 Ocean Street, Room 510, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
P: (831) 454-2772 F: (831) 454-2411 TTY/TDD 711  
commissions@santacruzcountyca.gov  
www.scccod.net

## Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

DATE: Thursday, March 12, 2026  
TIME: 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM  
LOCATION: Santa Cruz County Building, Coastlines Conference Room  
701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**\*\*As a courtesy to those who are affected, kindly attend the meeting *scent-free* and *smoke-free*.\*\***

### AGENDA

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. Agenda Review
3. Approve *February 12, 2026 Minutes*
4. Public Comment: *Any person may address the Commission for a period not to exceed three minutes on any issue within the jurisdiction of the Commission.*
5. New/Continuing Business/Action Items:
  - 5.1. Consider IHSS Commission Representation
  - 5.2. Consider Advocating for a Disabilities Policy and Services Coordination Council
6. Commission Priority Reports
  - 6.1. Accessibility Awareness Report
  - 6.2. Accessible Recreation Report
  - 6.3. Affordable Accessible Housing Report
  - 6.4. Affordable Accessible Transportation Report
7. Ad Hoc Subcommittee Reports
  - 7.1. Legislative Priorities Ad Hoc Subcommittee Report
8. Correspondence
9. Staff Report
10. Announcements/Emerging Matters
11. Adjournment

**Next Regular Meeting:** Thursday, April 9, 2026, from 12:30 – 2:00 PM

*The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability, and no person shall, by reason of a disability, be denied the benefits of its services, programs, or activities. If you have a disability and require assistance to participate, please contact 454-2772 or TDD/711 at least 72 hours in advance to make arrangements.*



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## Meeting Minutes

DATE: Thursday, February 12, 2026  
TIME: 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM  
LOCATION: Santa Cruz County Building, Fifth Floor – Coastlines Conference Room  
701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
PRESENT: John Daugherty (*1<sup>st</sup> District*), Tymothie Hale (*2<sup>nd</sup> District*), Brenda Gutierrez Baeza (*4<sup>th</sup> District Co-Chair*), Jessica Liddy Hayford (*4<sup>th</sup> District*), David Molina (*5<sup>th</sup> District Co-Chair*), Mitali Weiglein (*5<sup>th</sup> District*)  
EXCUSED: Becky Taylor (*3<sup>rd</sup> District*), Richard Gubash (*3<sup>rd</sup> District*)  
ABSENT: None  
STAFF: Kaite McGrew (*Commissions Manager*)  
GUESTS: Stephanie Auld (IHSS Commissioner) and no members of the public were present.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call  
Meeting convened at 12:47 PM.
2. Agenda Review
3. Approve January 8, 2026 Minutes  
**Motion to approve minutes as written**  
Motion/Second: Molina/Daugherty  
**Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Public Comment
5. New/Continuing Business/Action Items:
  - 5.1. Review Disability Rights California's (DRC) 2026 Budgetary Priorities  
Commission discussed the budgetary priorities identified by the DRC and considered potential opportunities for advocacy. Local priorities included IHSS budget cuts and Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) budget cuts. Staff will invite representatives from IHSS (Morales) and Housing for Health (Ratner).
  - 5.2. Consider Establishing an Ad Hoc Legislative Priorities Subcommittee  
**Motion to establish an ad hoc Legislative Priorities Subcommittee**  
Motion/Second: Molina/Liddy-Hayford  
**Motion passed unanimously.**  
  
Molina appointed Molina and Hale.

5.3. Consider Establishing an Ad Hoc Kudos Subcommittee  
Commission pended the Kudos event to July 2027.

6. Commission Priority Reports:

6.1. Accessibility Awareness Report: No Report

6.2. Accessible Recreation Report: No Report

6.3. Affordable Accessible Housing Report: No Report

6.4. Affordable Accessible Transportation Report: No Report

7. Correspondence: None

8. Staff Report: None

9. Announcements/Emerging Matters: None

10. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kaite McGrew, *Commissions Manager*

## **Topic: Exploring a Countywide Disabilities Policy & Services Coordination Body**

**Purpose:** To provide context for discussion on establishing a disability-focused county-wide community collaborative to align policy across agencies/stakeholders and coordinate service delivery to optimize efficiency and impact while leveraging existing infrastructure.

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### **1. Background**

There has been discussion about whether the County should create a “Disabilities Council,” similar in structure to the Seniors Council (the governing body of the Area Agency on Aging) to coordinate programs and services serving people with disabilities in Santa Cruz County. While the idea reflects a desire for centralized coordination and decision-making on disability issues, there are structural and legal limitations that make a direct replication of the Seniors Council model infeasible.

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### **2. Why the Seniors Council Model Won’t Work**

- **Statutory Basis:** The Seniors Council exists as the governing body of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), which is mandated by federal law (Older Americans Act) and designated by the State of California. Its legal authority, funding, and planning responsibilities are all tied to statutory requirements for older adults.
- **Funding & Authority:** The Seniors Council has statutory authority to allocate federal and state funds for senior programs. A new, similarly structured “Disabilities Council” would not automatically receive funding, staffing, or decision-making authority, and without a formal mandate establishing reporting requirements, agency participation, or a process for Board consideration of its recommendations, it would likely have limited practical impact.

**Conclusion:** A direct “copy” of the Seniors Council model is not structurally, financially, or legally feasible for a Countywide disabilities policy and services coordination body.

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### **3. The ILC Hybrid Model: A Feasible Alternative**

An **Independent Living Center (ILC) Hybrid Model** offers a practical path forward.

#### **a. Why an ILC is the best choice to host the Council:**

- Federally funded under the Rehabilitation Act (Title VII)
- Cross-disability, serving people of all ages
- Provides independent living services, peer support, and systems advocacy
- Already coordinates with County, regional, and state programs
- Operate from a disability rights framework
- Consumer-controlled (majority of their board and staff are required to be people with disabilities.)

## b. Proposed Hybrid Model

1. **Board-ILC Partnership:** The County Board of Supervisors would enter into a **formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** with the ILC, designating the ILC as the host and staff entity for the Disabilities Policy & Coordination Council.
2. **ILC as Convening Body:** The ILC would provide staffing, coordination, and facilitation for the Council. The Council would be clearly identified as a community collaborative, rather than as a legislative body under California's Ralph M. Brown Act.
3. **Board/County Participation:** The Board would direct County departments to participate, giving the Council procedural authority without transferring fiscal or statutory control. The County staff membership would simply be participants in the community collaborative.
4. **Membership:** The Council membership should include representatives from **local organizations and groups with expertise, lived experience, and direct service provision** to ensure broad representation and cross-system coordination.
  - Broad strokes of membership would be included in the MOU, but the ILC would invite members who would not be appointed by the Board.
  - Membership could be a mix of voting and advisory/ex-officio roles to balance decision-making authority with inclusivity.
  - Peer representation (individuals with lived experience of disability) should be embedded in the Council structure. Participation from these stakeholders ensures the Council reflects the full spectrum of disability needs in the County while remaining actionable and locally grounded.

Key Stakeholder Members could include representation from:

- County departments (Human Services, Health Services, Behavioral Health, Housing, Planning, etc.)
  - County Commissions (IHSS Advisory Commission, Commission on Disabilities, Seniors Commission)
  - Regional Centers or other state-mandated disability programs and services (AAA/Seniors Council, CCAH-Alliance, etc.)
  - Community Service Providers and Advocacy Partners (Vista Center for the Blind, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center, RTC's E&D/TAC, UCSC and Cabrillo Disabilities Resource Centers, Shared Adventures, SPIN, National Alliance on Mental Illness, etc.)
5. **Scope:** The Council could:
    - Identify barriers and gaps across county-wide disabilities programs and services
    - Align policy and coordinate planning across County and community stakeholder organizations and agencies

- Recommend solutions and policy priorities to the County Board of Supervisors
- Align recommendations with current budgetary constraints
- Develop, monitor, and periodically update a multi-year strategic plan outlining priority goals and recommended actions to improve policies, services, and outcomes for people with disabilities.

6. **Authority:** Authority derives from:

- **Formal MOU** between the Board and ILC
- Board direction requiring County agency participation
- Regular reporting and recommendations to the Board

This structure allows the Council to have **real influence** while leveraging an existing, funded organization (ILC) and maintaining the County’s engagement.

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#### 4. Next Steps for the Commission

1. **Invite ILC Representatives:** Schedule a meeting to:
    - Understand their current services, staffing, and capacity
    - Determine their interest/capacity for hosting a Disabilities Policy & Coordination Council
  2. **Consider Advocacy Opportunity with the Board of Supervisors:** Following discussions and pending interest from the ILC, the Commission could draft a letter to the Board outlining and advocating for the establishment of a County-wide Disabilities Policy and Services Coordination Council, including proposed:
    - Purpose and scope
    - Membership and staffing
    - County agency participation expectations
    - Reporting and accountability mechanisms
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#### Summary

- While a direct Seniors Council-style body is **not feasible** due to statutory and funding limitations, an **ILC Hybrid Model** is practical, builds on existing infrastructure, and leverages County engagement for authority.
- A **formal MOU between the Board and the ILC** would ensure the Council has procedural legitimacy, structured participation from County agencies, and required reporting to the Board of Supervisors.
- Initial engagement with the ILC is the concrete first step to explore interest, feasibility, capacity, and structural broad strokes before considering any advocacy with the Board of Supervisors.



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## Scheduled Meetings

Unless otherwise specified below, regularly scheduled Commission on Disability meetings are generally held as follows:

DAY: Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Thursday\*  
MONTH: Every month except July and December  
TIME: 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM  
LOCATION: Santa Cruz County Building, Fifth Floor – Board Chambers or Redwood Room\*  
701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**\*Meetings will be held in either of these rooms unless noted otherwise below**

Changes to the schedule, including special meetings, changes of location, or meeting cancellations, will be listed on the website at [www.scccod.net](http://www.scccod.net) as soon as information becomes available.

2026 MEETING DATES		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION
January 8, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
February 12, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
March 12, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
April 9, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
May 14, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
June 11, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
August 13, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
September 10, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
October 8, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room
November 12, 2026	12:30 – 2:00 PM	Coastlines Room

### Public Participation

- Please check the meeting agenda to learn details about how to participate in the commission meeting.
- If you need special accommodations, please call 454-2935 or TDD: 711 (California Relay Service) at least 48 hours before the meeting.