



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2019

Contact: Michael Workman 619-531-5450

## NEW COUNTY BUDGET REFLECTS NEW ERA

A new era in leadership is broadening the County of San Diego's outlook on how to grapple with some of our region's core issues, meet new challenges and remain prepared for whatever the future may bring.

The County's new \$6.21 billion recommended budget for fiscal year 2019-2020 reflects a new direction while maintaining the fiscal discipline that ensures we deliver important programs to our residents. The budget supports our Live Well vision of a County that is building better health, living safely and thriving.

Over the last two years, allocations of general purpose revenue to the County's Health and Human Services Agency have nearly doubled, representing the County's commitment to help our most vulnerable residents. This increase supplements the majority of HHSA's programs funded through other sources like state and federal revenue, while still providing necessary funding for public safety programs, which represent the County's largest allocation of general purpose, or discretionary revenues.

Key priorities in the new budget include helping people with mental health or substance use disorders, those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, lack of affordable housing, and children and families in the foster care system. The County will also continue its focus on transforming the juvenile justice system.

In terms of mental health, budget increases will support walk-in services for outpatients, fund 70 Psychiatric Emergency Response Teams and expand services for residents with severe mental illness who rotate in and out of hospitals. Additional psychiatric beds will help those needing long-term care. Extra funding will go to the [No Place Like Home](#) program for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness who need mental health services.

San Diegans will get continued access to [Drug Medi-Cal](#) systems treatment for substance use disorder after our investment tripled last year from \$54.6 million to \$179.6 million annually. The number of people treated is expected to jump 30% over that time period. Substance use disorder often exacerbates mental illness, homelessness and criminal behavior.



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 6, 2019

The County doubled the original \$25 million [housing trust fund to \\$50 million](#) to create affordable housing for homeless families and veterans, older adults with extremely low incomes, those with special needs and others at risk for homelessness. The full \$50 million trust fund could result in as many as 1,800 affordable units. Development of four excess County properties will create an additional 700+ affordable units in coming years.

More funding will go toward Child Welfare Services for investigations and carrying out recommendations by the new [Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board](#). The budget will also advance services for Alzheimer's disease. More staffing will help Public Health Services identify emerging trends and monitor infectious diseases such as measles.

Overall, the County is adding 338 staff positions with 270 slated for HHSA.

In the area of [juvenile justice reform](#), the County will create two new Achievement Centers for young people at risk of returning to juvenile hall. Continued funding for the recreational program Safe Destination Nights will keep 8,000 teens off the streets in the critical evening hours.

Continuing to fund the Fresh Start program will help adults with criminal records overcome barriers to success. The program can reduce felony convictions to misdemeanors, dismiss or expunge criminal records, and offer Certificates of Rehabilitation.

Sustainability remains a high priority. The County is exploring energy options such as community choice energy. The County will continue implementing its Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gases, including planting 3,500 trees on public lands and adding 500 acres of open space to the 41,000 acres already preserved.

The budget will fund capital projects like new Live Well Centers, parks, trails, fire stations and more. Partial funding includes the five-year renovation project for the historic County Administration Center, which kicked off in April.

The budget decreases 1%, or \$59.7 million, from last fiscal year primarily from reduced spending for one-time projects (\$381.9 million) such as capital, but anticipated spending for ongoing programs has increased by \$322.2 million.



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2019

Public hearings on the balanced budget will begin on Monday, June 10 at 9 a.m. An [evening hearing](#) will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 13.

The budget is part of a two-year operational plan. Budget deliberations and formal adoption of the first year of the budget plan are scheduled for June 25 at 2 p.m. At that time, the Board will also approve the second year in principle for planning purposes.

The public can learn more information through the [online budget portal](#) and the [recommended operational plan](#). The public can also submit comments to the Board using video or text options through an e-comment [website](#). The online comments, in-person and written feedback options will be available until budget hearings close at 5 p.m. on June 19.

###

**COUNTY**NEWSCENTER  

COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE  
1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 208 • SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2472