



# County Government and Operations

January 28, 2025





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# Agenda

- About the California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
- County Structure and Operations

*We are happy to take questions throughout the presentation.*

# About CSAC

*“The Voice of California’s 58 Counties”*

CSAC serves as the effective advocate and unified voice of California’s 58 counties.

## CSAC’s mission:

- Developing and equipping county leaders to better serve their communities.
- Effectively advocating and partnering with state and federal governments for appropriate policies, laws and funding.
- Communicating the value of critical work being accomplished by county government.



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# Our Membership

CSAC represents all 58 counties and the supervisors who serve on their boards.

58

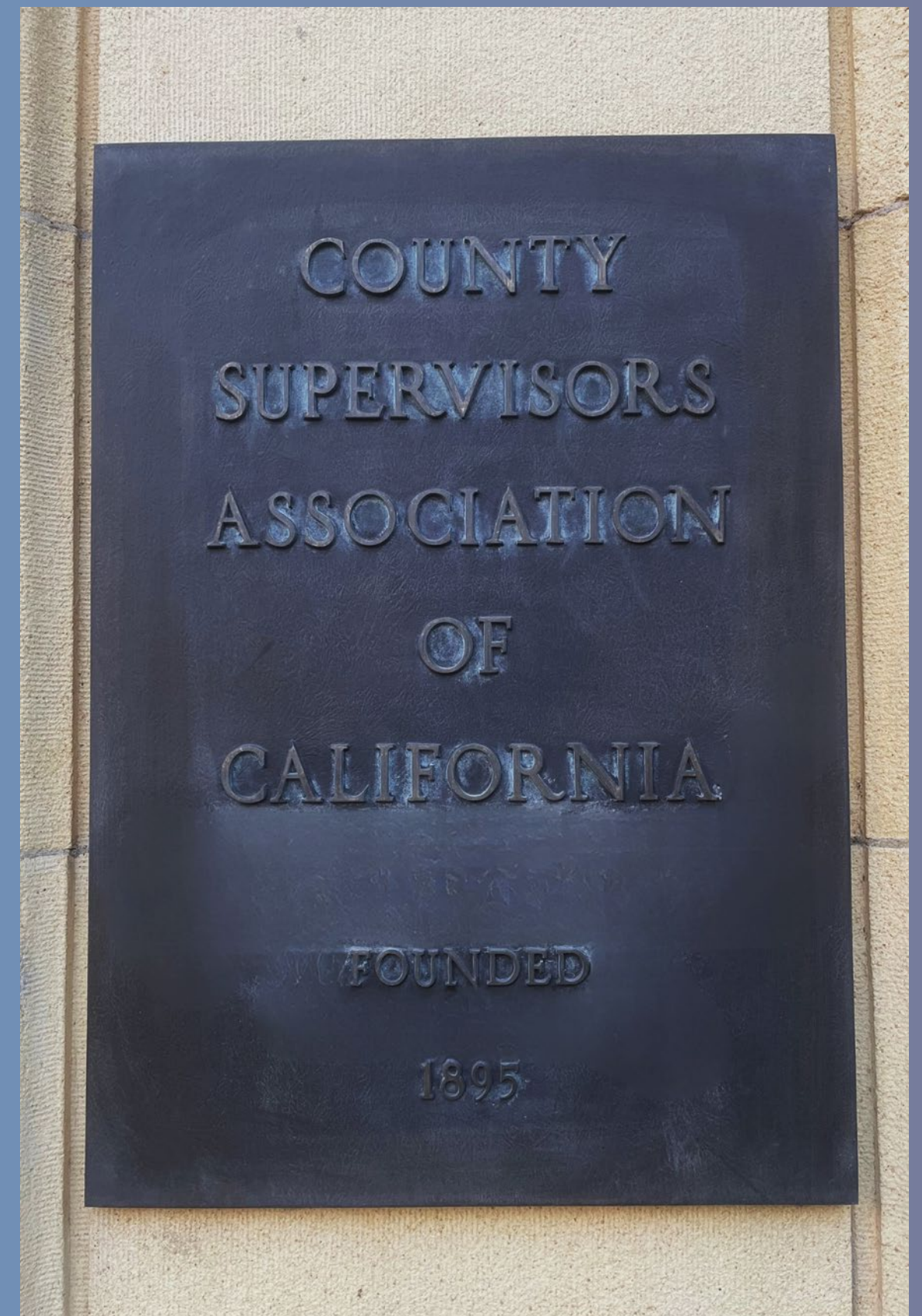
counties

296

supervisors

3

caucuses



*One of the oldest local government associations in California*

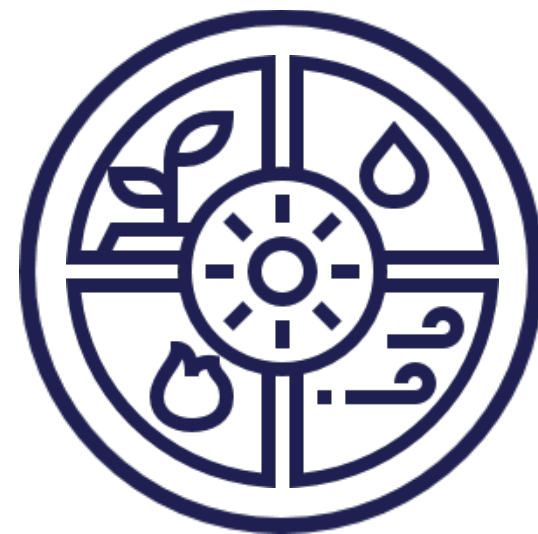
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# CSAC Policy Committees

The CSAC Policy Committees are responsible for policy development and are the first stop for review of policy, including the CSAC Platform, ballot initiatives, and member/affiliate/caucus proposals.



Administration  
of Justice



Agriculture,  
Environment  
& Natural Resources



Government, Finance  
& Administration



Health &  
Human Services



Housing, Land Use  
& Transportation

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# CSAC Policy Team

The CSAC Legislative Affairs team brings expertise in each of the five policy areas and beyond. The Legislative Affairs team is a resource for all things local government:

## CSAC Legislative Advocates

Jacqueline Wong-Hernandez, Chief Policy Officer, [jwh@counties.org](mailto:jwh@counties.org)

### **Ryan Morimune**

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### **Catherine Freeman**

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### **Eric Lawyer**

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### **Emma Jungwirth**

Government Finance  
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### **Justin Garrett**

Human Services and Homelessness  
[jgarrett@counties.org](mailto:jgarrett@counties.org)

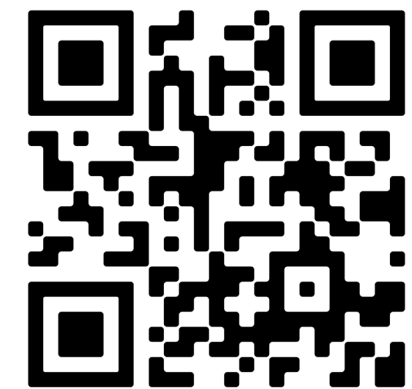
### **Jolie Onodera**

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### **Mark Neuburger**

Housing, Land Use, and Transportation  
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Scan this QR code to learn more about the CSAC Legislative Affairs Team:



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# CSAC Affiliates

More than 40 diverse affiliate organizations work with CSAC to support California's 58 counties and improve the quality of life for all residents.



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# County Structure and Operations

Roles, Responsibilities, and Departments





# What do counties do?

Each one of California's 39.1 million residents lives within the boundaries of one of the state's 58 counties.

California's counties serve a dual role. They provide a vast array of municipal services to residents, including roads, parks, law enforcement, emergency response services and libraries.

Counties also serve as a delivery channel for many State services, such as foster care, public health care, jails and elections.

# County Governance

- The basic provisions for the government of California counties are contained in the **California Constitution** and the **California Government Code**.
- A county is the largest **political subdivision** of the state having corporate powers.
- It is vested by the Legislature with the powers necessary to provide for the **health and welfare of the people within its borders** .



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# County Structure

The specific organizational structure of a county in California will vary from county to county. **Elected** positions/roles often include:

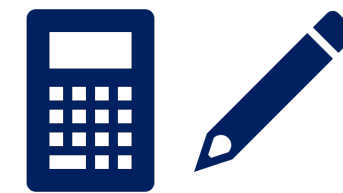
Board of Supervisors (5)\*



Assessor\*\*



Auditor -Controller



County Clerk



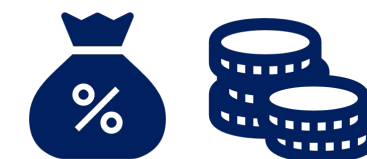
District Attorney\*\*



Sheriff-Coroner\*\*



Treasurer-Tax Collector



*\*Exception: City -County of San Francisco*

*\*\* Constitutionally elected official.*

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# County Structure

The specific organizational structure of a county in California will vary from county to county. **Statutory officers** often appointed by Boards of Supervisors:

Agricultural  
Commissioner



County Counsel



Planning  
Commissioners



Public Defender



Chief Probation  
Officer\*



Health Officer



\*Appointed by either the Board of Supervisors or by the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

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# County Structure

The specific organizational structure of a county in California will vary from county to county. Major departments/positions include:

Administrative  
Officer /  
Executive Officer

Environmental  
Health



Health and  
Human Services



Information  
Technology



Child Support  
Services

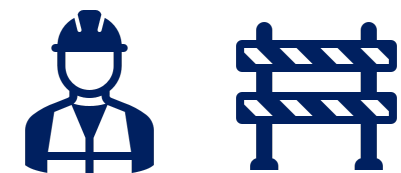


Personnel/Human  
Resources



Public Guardian -  
Conservator -  
Administrator

Public Works



# County services are all-encompassing

## Health & Human Services

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

- Homelessness Assistance
- Alcohol & Substance Use Disorder Programs
- Prevention Programs
- Mental Health Services for Medi-Cal Recipients

### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

- Employment & Financial Services
- Child & Adult Protective Services
- Nutrition Assistance Programs (CalFresh)
- Medi-Cal
- In-Home Supportive Services
- Adoption Assistance

### CHILD SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

#### PUBLIC HEALTH

- WIC Food Voucher & Nutrition Education
- Environmental Health & Management
- Hazardous Materials Monitoring
- Clinics
- Birth Records

#### LIBRARIES

#### VETERANS SERVICES

## Government Services

### TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR

- Safekeeping & Investment of Funds

### ASSESSOR / AUDITOR / TREASURER

- Property Tax Calculation
- Property Tax Collection/ Distribution

### COUNTY CLERK/RECORDER

- Marriage Licenses
- Death Records
- Passport Applications
- Voter Registration
- Recording of Official Records (Deeds, liens, etc.)

### COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

- Emergency & Disaster Management
- Economic Development

### GENERAL & SPECIAL ELECTIONS

## Public Safety

### FIRE

- Fire Suppression & Control
- First Response to Medical Emergencies

### SHERIFF

- Coroner
- County Jail
- Search & Rescue Services

### PROBATION

- Probation - Supervision
- Juvenile Hall
- Victim/Witness Assistance
- Intervention/Prevention Services

### PUBLIC DEFENDER

- Legal Representation for Indigent Defendants

### DISTRICT ATTORNEY

- Attorney & Prosecutors
- Criminal Child Support Investigations
- Child Abduction
- Welfare Fraud

## Infrastructure

### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

- Local Streets and Roads
- Storm Damage
- Flood Control
- County Landfill
- Recycling Information Household
- Hazardous Waste

### WATER RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

- Manage and Conserve Water and Other Resources for All County Residents

## Agriculture

### AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT

- Agriculture Law & Regulatory Enforcement
- Weights & Measures Enforcement
- Predatory Animal Control
- Pesticide Use Regulation

### FARM HOME & 4H ADVISOR

- Coordinate 4H Programs
- Provide Advice to Farmers & Gardeners

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# Fundamental Governance: Core County Services

Counties are directly responsible for, at a minimum, ensuring vulnerable populations have access to health and medical resources, providing for public welfare, and public safety.

As the front-line service-delivery entities, counties provide the on-the-ground staff and brick-and-mortar facilities necessary to carry out the state's programs.

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# Addressing Homelessness

**Homelessness is THE humanitarian crisis of our time.**

Counties are determined to work with federal, state, and local partners, and in partnership with the Governor and the Legislature, to create a comprehensive framework to help those who are unhoused or at risk of becoming unhoused in our communities.

## AT HOME

Accountability, Transparency, Housing, Outreach, Mitigation, and Economic opportunity

*Contact Justin Garrett, CSAC Senior Legislative Advocate, to learn more about the AT HOME framework: [jgarrett@counties.org](mailto:jgarrett@counties.org)*



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# Emergency Response

Counties continue to respond to the evolving realities of ongoing emergencies like the devastating Southern California wildfires.

Counties are on the frontlines of emergency response, working tirelessly to protect lives and support recovery.

Los Angeles County Disaster Recovery Centers are providing direct access to state and federal agencies to support fire victims; disaster assistance programs, finding housing and rental assistance information, meeting with state agency representatives, and more.

*Contact Catherine Freeman, CSAC Senior Legislative Advocate, to learn more about emergency response: [cfreeman@counties.org](mailto:cfreeman@counties.org)*



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# Questions?

*Want to stay updated on county governments?*  
Sign up to receive our weekly news bulletin!





# THANK YOU

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