

ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, October 27, 2025
2:30 p.m.

Supervisor Lena Tam, Chair
Supervisor Nikki Fortunato Bas

Location: Susan S. Muranishi County
Administration Building
Board Chambers
1221 Oak Street, 5th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Summary/Action Minutes

I. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program – 2024 Tax Season Update [Attachment](#)

Presenters

Andrea Ford, Agency Director, Social Services Agency
Pamela Powell, Executive Program Coordinator, Office of Public Affairs, Social Services Agency
Marissa Hollenback, Secretary II/Lead VITA Liaison, Office of Public Affairs, Social Services Agency

Summary

SSA presented a detailed update on the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program and its 2024 tax season outcomes. VITA provides free tax preparation services to low- and moderate-income residents who often face barriers to filing, including limited English proficiency, digital literacy challenges, or lack of access to professional tax services. As described in the presentation, VITA is a major anti-poverty tool, helping residents access the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit (CTC), Education Credits, and other refundable supports that can significantly increase household income.

The presentation reviewed the multi-phase VITA operations process—including planning, volunteer recruitment, IRS certification, training, site logistics, appointment scheduling, and quality control. Staff described operational enhancements implemented during the 2024–25 cycle, including improved volunteer onboarding, expanded Saturday hours, and enhanced cross-agency coordination.

The presenters shared extensive data by site: the Gail Steele Multi-Service Center, Enterprise Self-Sufficiency Center, San Leandro Marina/Senior Community Center, and Thomas L. Berkley Square. These sites collectively returned over \$3 million to Alameda County households through refunds, EITC, CTC, and education credits. Site-level breakdowns illuminated differences in community needs, including variations in age distribution, income levels, and languages spoken—English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, Tagalog, and Vietnamese were all represented at meaningful levels.

SSA reported a 16% increase in total returns from the prior year and noted that VITA now ranks second in the region in total returns processed. Presenters highlighted strong youth volunteer engagement, including high school and UC Berkeley students who contributed to intake, translation, and tax preparation assistance.

The update concluded with opportunities for further expansion, including multilingual marketing materials, deeper collaboration with libraries, senior centers, and immigrant-serving nonprofits, and broader outreach in districts that historically underutilize the EITC.

Purpose:

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education
- Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Speakers

There were no speakers on this item.

Committee Feedback

Supervisor Bas requested that staff send VITA outreach and promotional materials to her office so that her team can help distribute them and increase awareness among residents.

Action

This item was informational only and required no committee action.

II. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and Public Authority Update

[Attachment](#)

Presenters

Andrea Ford, Agency Director, Social Services Agency
Nicole Hayes, Division Director, Department of Adult and Aging Services
Jacquie Pugh, Program Manager, Department of Adult and Aging Services

Summary

SSA presented an in-depth update on the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program and Public Authority. As one of the largest County-administered programs, IHSS supports older adults and individuals with disabilities by authorizing in-home personal care and domestic support that allows recipients to remain safely in their own homes.

The update emphasized substantial program growth: as of September 30, 2025, 32,731 recipients were enrolled in IHSS, marking a 32% increase since January 2020. Provider enrollment also expanded—31,694 active providers, a 39% increase—but demand continues to outpace workforce capacity, creating operational pressure. Applications have increased by 30% since FY 20–21, and social worker caseloads have risen 71%, a level staff described as unsustainable without additional staffing.

Demographic and caseload visuals showed the complexity of IHSS populations, reinforcing the need for timely reassessments, adequate provider matching, multilingual communications, and disability-responsive supports.

Program updates included the rollout of telehealth reassessments, which streamline certain evaluations, the expansion of e-forms, updated provider sick leave, and ratification of the SEIU Local 2015 MOU. SSA also reviewed its Quality Improvement Action Plan (QIAP), designed to improve timeliness and reduce overdue tasks.

A major focus of the presentation was the Community First Choice Option (CFCO) penalty structure. Starting FY 25–26, counties must cover up to 100% of CFCO penalty costs for overdue reassessments. Alameda County incurred substantial penalties in July, August, and September 2025; the County's 50% share ranged from \$355,975 to \$416,854 monthly. Staff outlined strategies to reduce overdue CFCO cases, including mass mailings, timely terminations, telehealth reassessments, and targeted assignments.

SSA concluded with a staffing needs analysis:

- To meet CFCO compliance → 30 social workers + 4 supervisors
- To manage full caseload responsibly → 60 social workers + 9 supervisors

- No funded positions currently exist.

Purpose

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education
- Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Speakers

Cara Williams, Chapter President, SEIU 1024, commented on the IHSS and Public Authority Update
Committee Feedback

There was no committee feedback on this item.

Action

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Workforce Development Board Update

[Attachment](#)

Presenters

Andrea Ford, Agency Director, Social Services Agency
Rhonda Boykin, Director, Workforce Development Board
Latoya Reed-Adjei, Assistant Director, Workforce Development Board

Summary

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) provided an update on local workforce programs administered under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Staff reviewed the program structure, which is organized into four regional service areas—Tri-Valley, Eden Area, Tri-Cities, and North Cities—and includes specialized supports for adults, dislocated workers, youth, individuals with disabilities, justice-involved participants, and those seeking industry-recognized training opportunities.

Enrollment and performance data for Program Year (PY) 2024–25 were presented. Adult and Dislocated Worker programs served 620 participants across the regions. Staff reported on credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and the types of occupational training funded. Youth programs served 188 participants, providing work-based learning, digital literacy, mental health supports, paid work experience, and pre-apprenticeship opportunities. WDB described the program design used for youth services, which integrates both academic and employment readiness components.

The presentation also included information on Senate Bill 617, recently signed into law in October 2025. WDB staff participated in the bill’s development, which updates requirements under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act. Under the new provisions, employers issuing WARN notices must indicate whether they intend to engage with local Workforce Development Boards and must include information about Rapid Response services. Staff described these changes and how they may affect local coordination when layoffs occur.

WDB reported on current WARN activity and the county’s Rapid Response process, which involves outreach to affected employers and workers, on-site informational sessions, and referrals to retraining and reemployment services. The update included trends in recent WARN notices and the industries in which they occurred.

The presentation also covered programs funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These initiatives focus on areas such as vocational ESL, small business development, digital literacy, resource navigation, and early childhood education pathways. Staff provided examples of participant engagement levels, services delivered, and the types of supports provided (e.g., stipends, training equipment, digital devices, and tuition assistance).

Staff also highlighted specialized training partnerships:

- STEP Forward, serving students with disabilities with paid work-based learning
- Metrix Learning / EMS Corps, supporting participants in EMT certification pathways
- Marine Trades High Road Training Partnership, projected to train 300 participants in skilled trades such as welding, ship-fitting, painting, and scaffolding

The update reinforced the value of aligning workforce programs with employer demand, regional economic priorities, and equity goals.

Purpose

- Report progress
- Advocacy or Education
- Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Speakers

There were no speakers on this item.

Committee Feedback

There was no committee feedback on this item.

Action

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kelly A. raised concerns over the lack of uniformity in the branding of Alameda County and all its agencies.

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