



SONOMA COUNTY AGING & DISABILITY COMMISSION

Commission Meeting



Location: Carnelian Conference Room,
3725 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa 95403

Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Public Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97845062226?pwd=2LdD46H2bzPmbir6F7FFerP9E563Aj.1>

Agenda

- 1:00 1. Welcome and Commission Member Introductions Helman
Commission Members, whether in person or virtually, will introduce themselves. Member introductions will include their Name, City of Residence, District (1-5), and Supervisor's Name.
- Members of the public will have the opportunity to introduce themselves during Public Comment.*
- Mission: The Aging & Disability Commission gives voice to the diverse needs of Sonoma County's older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers.**
- 1:05 2. Approval of the 10.15.2025 Commission Meeting Minutes Helman
The Commission will review the meeting minutes and may approve them as presented or with modifications.
- 1:07 3. Public Comment and Commission Member Open Forum
The public may address the Commission on items not listed on the agenda. Public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker. Note: The Commission cannot take action on items not on the agenda.
- 1:10 4. Chair Updates Helman
The Chair will provide updates for the Executive Committee to review and discuss.
- Acknowledgements
Jaime for completing his PhD program and Cody for one year of service.
 - Reminder on January Meeting
An extra hour will be added to the January meeting as a follow-up for the August planning day.

- CDA Program Monitoring Summary
Provide a high-level summary of the CDA Program Monitoring that took place the week of October 20th.
- Area Plan Updates
Commissioners are asked to review the Area Plan Update and submit questions by January 9, 2026.

1:20	5. Director/Staff updates:	Dunaway, Milner, Huntsperger
	<p>Director Update: <i>The AAA Director will provide updates on relevant matters for the Commission, including recent developments or upcoming events.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Reopen – Passing of the Continuing Resolution • PSA Update • SB 1249 <p>Staff Update: <i>The AAA Staff will provide updates on relevant matters for the Commission, including recent developments or upcoming events.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: July – December 2025 due January 15, 2026 <p>MPA and LADAP Update: <i>The MPA Program Manager will provide updates on relevant matters for the Commission, including recent developments or upcoming events.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPA Regional Work 	
1:35	6. Veterans Program Presentation <i>Presentation by Matt on Veteran Services.</i>	Jensen
2:00	**BREAK**	
2:05	7. California Senior Legislature Assembly Member Presentation <i>Mary Flett, senior CSL Assembly Member, will report on the recent annual meeting.</i>	Helman, Flett
2:15	8. Written Report Discussion <i>The Commission will discuss the written reports attached to the agenda.</i>	Helman
2:25	9. Board of Supervisors Meeting Updates <i>Each District is to provide a status update on the scheduling of their meeting with their Board of Supervisors</i>	Helman
2:30	10. Standing & Ad Hoc Committee Report <i>Standing and Ad Hoc Committee Members will provide updates on their activities, progress on assigned tasks, and recommendations or actions for the Commission.</i>	Helman, Edwards

- Standing Committee: No Wrong Door
The Committee will provide an update on the progress of the work.

- Ad Hoc Committee:
 - Community Convening Topics
Ad Hoc to convene disability service providers for a discussion about shared experiences and challenges and how the Commission can better represent their voices.
Lead: Eddie Estrada
Due: February 4, 2026

 - Commission Recruitment Plan - **Action**
Ad Hoc to develop and recommend recruitment activities based on outreach priorities.
Lead: Jenny Helman
Due: 10/29/2025

 - Research Report
Ad hoc will research and summarize the ways older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers learn about services and supports.
Lead: Trayce Beards
Due: 1/7/2025

3:00 11. Adjourn

Helman

Attachments:

Minutes (10.15.2025) and Commission Membership Plan (Recruitment Ad Hoc)

Written Reports:

TACC Report and C4A Conference Report

Supplemental materials related to an agenda item are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the Adult & Aging Office, 3725 Westwind Blvd., Suite 101, Santa Rosa. All listed times are approximate and subject to change. Agenda items are scheduled for consideration by the Commission, which may or may not choose to act. Breaks may be called at the discretion of the Chair. If you need any accommodation to effectively participate, please contact aaa@schsd.org or (707) 565-5238 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. To receive the AAA Newsletter: AAA@schsd.org.

<p>Aging & Disability Commission Members:</p>

Chair: Jenny Helman

Vice Chair: Robin Thompson

Secretary: Deanna Shaat

Former Chair: Diane Spain

Parliamentarian: Trayce Beards

Commission: Rick Baum, Monte Cimino, Suzanne Edwards, Sandra Hoevertsz, Denise Johnson, Terry Kelley, Jaime Peñaherrera, Alain Serkissian, Priyanka Varma, Eddie Estrada

AAA Director: Paul Dunaway

Community Services Program Manager: Cody Milner

Upcoming Meetings:

- No Meetings in December 2025
- Executive Meeting: Tuesday, January 13, 2025, from 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
- Commission Meeting: Wednesday, January 21, 2025, from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
 - One hour will be added to work on follow-up from August 2025 Planning Day

Upcoming ADRU Table Events:

- None at this time



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Minutes

Wednesday, October 15th, 2025 | 1:00PM-3:00PM

Carnelian Conference Room, 3725 Westwind Blvd. Santa Rosa 95403

In-person Attendance: Deanna Shaat, Trayce Beards, Denise Johnson, Suzanne Edwards, Jenny Helman, Alain Serkissian, Eddie Estrada, Sandra Hoevertsz, Priyanka Varma, Terry Kelley, Don Streeper (*Emeritus Member*)

Virtual Attendance: Diane Spain, Robin Thompson

Absent: Monte Cimino (*Leave of Absence*), Rick Baum, Jaime Penaherrera

Staff Attendance: Paul Dunaway, Cody Milner, Cassandra Denson (Zoom), Joni Huntsperger, Kathleen Cortez, Annie Silverman

1. Welcome & Commission Member Introductions (Helman) (1:05PM)

2. Commission Participation by Zoom

3. Approval of the 9.17.2025 Commission Meeting Minutes (Helman)

- Edits:
 - "AAA is partnering with..." should be CDA.
 - Eddie Estrada was absent.
- Approved with Edits.

4. Public Comment and Commission Member Open Forum

- Terry Kelley- Provided updates on current projects of the CA Senior Legislature.
- Megan Kelly- Selected as the Executive Director of Petaluma People's Services Center.
- Paul Dunaway- Introduced Susi Avila as the new division Secretary.
- Jamie Escoubas- Shared information on the Nov. 14th Holiday Stress Workshop.
- Cody Miner- Announced a November Pre-Meeting Lunch with AAA Staff.

5. Chair Updates (Helman)

Commissioner Recognition

- Sandra Hoevertsz will not be renewing her Commission appointment.
- The Commission extends its appreciation to her for her dedication and valuable contributions.

FY 25/26 Goals and Priorities

- Reviewed the updates to the 25-26 Objectives Tracking document.



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6. Director/Staff Updates (Dunaway, Milner, Huntsperger)

Director Update:

- Updates on the Federal Budget.
- Provided updates to SB1249.
 - Implementation in 2030.
- Coastal Seniors Update:
 - Site visit conducted on Oct. 14th.
 - Mendocino County AAA and Sonoma County AAA will be writing up the findings from the site visit.

MPA and LADAP Update:

- Starting an Action Team in Cloverdale that meets monthly.
- Exploring with the Catalyst Team and Supervisor Hermosillo, a volunteer service navigator program.

Transportation Action Team:

- Main focus is on mobility management, connecting people to transportation resources.
- Jessica Alcazar is working on mobility management/ transportation through ADRH.
- Exploring data on transportation needs and unfulfilled rides.
- Members are assigned to connect with service providers.

Housing Action Team:

- Exploring opportunities that allow people to age together, strengthening advocacy efforts, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).

7. Ombudsman & HICAP Program Presentation (Barnett Nelson)

- Reviewed the Ombudsman program through Senior Advocacy Services (SAS).
 - Advocates for older adults in Assisted Living or Skilled Nursing facilities.
 - Investigates Elder Abuse reports in those facilities.
- Reviewed the Health Insurance Counseling Advocacy Program (HICAP) through SAS.
 - Medicare Open Enrollment starts October 15th.
 - Program offers educational seminars and provides technical support for Medicare applications.



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8. TACC Report (Helman)

- Discussed the lack of public awareness regarding evacuation centers. AB 1069 addresses disaster planning and service coordination by requiring Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to collaborate with evacuation sites to ensure shelters are accessible.

9. Board of Supervisors Meeting Updates (Helman)

D1: Will reconnect as a group to schedule.

D2: Will send email this week to schedule.

D3: Meeting scheduled.

D4: Meeting completed.

D5: Meeting needs to be scheduled.

10. Standing & Ad Hoc Committee Report (Helman)

No Wrong Door Committee: (Edwards)

- Committee will meet Oct. 28th

Ad Hoc Committee:

- Community Convening Topics (New) – **Action**
Commission to discuss moving forward with a new Ad Hoc to develop new community meeting topics. Due: 2/4/2026

Motion: Stand up the Community Convening Topics Ad Hoc Committee.

1st Motion: Priyanka Varma, **2nd Motion:** Eddie Estrada, **Vote Result:** Passed

Lead: Eddie Estrada

Ad Hoc members: Trayce Beards, Deanna Shaat, Suzanne Edwards, Terry Kelley.

- Commission Recruitment Plan
Ad Hoc will develop a Commission recruitment plan and list of activities based on outreach priorities. Due: 10/29/2025
 - Reviewed the Commission recruitment 5x7 card.
 - Eddie Estrada will provide translation for a Spanish version.
- IIIB Support Service Program Prioritization
Ad Hoc will develop a prioritized list of IIIB Support Services to recommend to the Executive Committee. Due: 10/31/2025



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- The ranked program recommendations and decision-making criteria have been finalized and will be presented at the November Commission meeting.
- Research Report- **Action**
Ad hoc will research and summarize the ways older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers learn about services and supports. Due: 1/7/2026

Motion: Stand up the Research Report Ad Hoc Committee.

1st Motion: Diane Spain, **2nd Motion:** Robin Thompson, **Vote Result:** Passed

Lead: Trayce Beards

Ad Hoc members: Eddie Estrada, Diane Spain, Robin Thompson, Priyanka Varma, Alain Serkissian

11. Adjourn (Helman)(2:52PM)

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To submit items for the AAA Newsletter, or to receive the AAA Newsletter: AAA@schsd.org

Upcoming Meetings:

- Executive Committee: Tuesday, November 4th, 11:00AM – 12:30PM
- Commission Meeting: Wednesday, November 19th, 1:00PM - 3:00PM

Upcoming ADRU Table Events:

N/A



MEMBERSHIP PLAN RECCOMENDATION

NOVEMBER 2025-FEBRUARY 2026

Focus Areas

- Age 60+
- People with Disabilities
- Indigenous Communities
- LGBTQIA+

Activities

1. In person contacts (focus areas) –5 pairs of Commissioners reach out to two assigned contacts provided
2. Public postings (general info) – Two Commissioners will reach out to suggested newsletters and postings
3. Presentations – oral presentations to suggested groups such as Section on Aging and CARA

Tools provided

- Assigned groups and focus area contacts provided by 11/21
- Introductory email (contact info provided) provided by 11/21
- Discuss meeting topic/information gathering questions provided by 11/21
- Membership card
- ADRH card and resource directory

Report due at the February 2026 Commission meeting. Allow 5 minutes for presentation and questions per group.

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For questions: please contact Jenny Helman – jennyh720@gmail.com * 707.236.2030

Report from 11/5/25 joint meeting of
the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) and the Triple-A Council of California (TACC)
Attended by Trayce Beards on behalf of Jenny Helman

Attendees

- **CCoA** is a state commission of appointed volunteers who advocate and advise on state and federal legislation related to older adult programs and services. CCoA staff also provide administrative support for TACC.
- **TACC** is a coalition of the chairpersons of California AAA advisory councils to encourage communication and collaboration between advisory councils.

Status of the California Master Plan for Aging (MPA)

- **Primary goal of the MPA is to develop a No Wrong Door system of LTSS.** Working in four areas:
 - **Navigation** – the system is fragmented; people don't know where to go for help.
 - **Access** – ensuring that range of services are available in all areas.
 - **Workforce** – direct care (training, pay) and support for unpaid caregivers.
 - **Financing** – we have a long way to go to develop funding for LTSS.
- Visit <https://www.mpaprogress.org/> for current statewide MPA status.

Advocacy

- Keep our eye on local decisions regarding **Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) funding**. Who at that table is advocating for aging and disability interests? Are AAA staff involved in those decisions? **How can BHSA funding help strengthen our workforce?**
- A comment about the role of advisory committees: staff don't want to speak to the committee, they want to hear from the committee. **Advisory members should be speaking up and sharing our own stories and observations.** How do we make room for this?
- Working together requires building and maintaining relationships – regular communication with community partners. **We need networks in these uncertain times.**
- **Develop relationships with staff in the offices of elected representatives.** Ongoing communication will strengthen your advocacy.
- We should be asking, “**Are the voices of older adults and people with disabilities ‘at the table’ when local decisions are being made?**” e.g. housing and food? Who speaks up for aging and disability interests so this population is prioritized when resources are allocated?
- **Share stories of how funding cuts are impacting Sonoma County residents.** Personal stories are powerful.

C4A Report by Denise Johnson

The highlight of the conference was connecting with the AAA team on a more personal level. There's something truly special about sharing a meal and meaningful conversation with the people you collaborate with every day—it deepens both trust and connection.

Hearing the Voices of Older Adults

Joint presentation by LeadingAge California (Meredith Chillemi) and LifeSTEPS (Bruce Kuban).

Focus: Elevating older adults' voices in California's Master Plan for Aging (MPA) and local housing initiatives.

Listening to Older Adults

- Ongoing stakeholder engagement is critical for MPA success.
- Local master plans are most effective when shaped by direct participation of older adults.
- Advocacy success stories include:
 - AB 2694 – consistent application of density bonus laws.
 - AB 474 – expanding home-share opportunities for older adults without affecting Medi-Cal or CalFresh eligibility.

LifeSTEPS: Model of Engagement

- Serves 119,000 residents (26% older adults) in 465 communities.
- Provides on-site social services in affordable and supportive housing.
- Mission: Help older adults thrive and age in place safely and independently.

Programs & Services

- Health & Housing partnerships, case management, and crisis assistance.
- Education & Social Programs: nutrition, fitness, financial literacy, community activities.
- Specialized Older Adult Support: grief, caregiver planning, family reunification, end-of-life support.
- Regular feedback via surveys, town halls, and resident councils.

The Importance of Impact Stories

Key Takeaways for Local Master Planning

- Engage with local AAA advisory commissions.
- Include housing providers, service coordinators, and residents in planning.
- Actively listen to older adults to shape equitable, community-driven housing and aging strategies.

Intergenerational Innovations

- Olive Community Services served older adults; Orange Crescent School had students seeking purpose.
- Combined efforts birthed Golden Connections, a high school club bridging generation through friendship instead of “volunteering.”

Vision & Model

- Aging is universal — the goal: connection over age.
- Partnership between school + youth club + community-based organization (CBO) created the “Intergenerational Trifecta”: Continuity · Credibility · Capacity

Impact

- Engaged hundreds of seniors and students.
- Media coverage: AP News, CNN, GDLA.
- MIT AgeLab provided scholarship and mentorship.
- Two new Golden Connections chapters launched.

Replication Steps

1. Identify a school, youth group, and senior organization.
2. Develop a shared calendar and defined roles.
3. Launch a simple 4-week pilot.
4. Reflect, adapt, and share success stories.
5. Scale and invite new partners to join.

Call to Action

- Identify local partners to bridge generations.

- Every collaboration strengthens a multigenerational culture of belonging.

Meeting the Moment – Key Highlights

- California has long been a birthplace of movements that change the world.
- Emphasis on innovation, leadership, and collaboration to shape the future of aging.
- Core message: *“The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”* — **Steve Jobs**
- Focus on modernizing California’s aging network to meet evolving needs of older adults, caregivers, and communities.
- Call to action: Engage, subscribe, and stay involved in the Master Plan for Aging (MPA) and CDA initiatives.

Overview

- Presented by: Sarah Steenhausen (CDA), Bertha Sanchez Hayden (Bet Tzedek), and Vivianne Mbaku (Justice in Aging).
- Focus: Strengthening collaboration across systems to protect and empower older adults and adults with disabilities.

Opportunity to Partner – A closer look at California’s Elder Disability Coordinating Council

- By 2040, California’s 65+ population will grow 59%, reaching over 9 million.
- There will be 38 older adults per 100 working adults, reshaping state demographics.

Master Plan for Aging (MPA)

- Launched January 2021 with 100+ action-ready initiatives.
- Elder justice is a core MPA priority—protecting against abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Aligned with Goal 3: Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation.

Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council

- Modeled after the Federal Elder Justice Coordinating Council (2010).
- Mission: Coordinate statewide efforts to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation, and fraud.
- Structure:
 - Quarterly 3-hour meetings (open to the public, recorded, educational updates).
 - Subcommittees: Legal Services, Conservatorship, Adult Abuse Response.

Membership

- Includes state agencies, law enforcement, advocates, academia, and county representatives.
- Co-Chairs: Susan DeMarois (CDA) & Bertha Sanchez Hayden (Bet Tzedek).
- Active partners: Justice in Aging, C4A, APS, District Attorneys, UCSF, Disability Rights CA, and others.

Equity Principles

1. Everyone deserves to live free from abuse and exploitation.
2. Center equity and lived experience in all decisions.
3. Recognize systemic racism, discrimination, and bias.
4. Distinguish and honor the unique needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

Council Highlights

- Conducted listening sessions, hosted national presentations, and contributed to the National Plan on Aging.
- Supported legislative collaborations and statewide network-building efforts.

How to Get Involved

- Attend quarterly meetings.
- Join a subcommittee.
- Apply to serve on the Council.
- Partner on outreach, policy, or advocacy efforts.

Data Snapshot (2023)

- 8.6 million Californians aged 60+.
- 12% live below the poverty line.
- 22% live alone.
- 31% remain in the workforce.

Disaster Response and Recovery For Older Adults and People With Disabilities in California

- Older adults and people with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by natural disasters.

- Majority of fatalities in the Eaton and Palisades fires were individuals over 65 or living with disabilities (median age 76).
- CCoA conducted a 2025 hearing and issued a report on improving preparedness and recovery for aging Californians.

Key Findings

- Emergency alerts and evacuation procedures often lack accessibility.
- Limited mobility and lack of data hinder rapid emergency response.
- Evacuation centers were unprepared—poor coordination, missing equipment, and overwhelmed staff.
- Housing recovery is especially difficult for low-income seniors and those with reverse mortgages.
- Disaster recovery disrupts long-term care services, DME replacement, and increases fraud and scams targeting elders.

Preparing for the Future

- More frequent disasters expected due to climate change and aging demographics.
- Need for cross-sector coordination, accessible infrastructure, and community-based support networks.

Recommendations:

Local Administrative Actions

- Pre-designate accessible evacuation centers in emergency plans.
- Partner with local aging and disability organizations.
- Include older adult representation on emergency planning boards.

State Administrative Actions

- Create a state disaster registry for vulnerable populations.
- Launch a DOJ Task Force on disaster scams.
- Reestablish a Disaster Recovery Housing Aid Program.
- Expand Access & Functional Needs (AFN) emergency training.

Legislative & Budgetary Actions

- Establish a State Long-Term Care Mutual Aid System.
- Fund AAAs and Independent Living Centers for disaster preparedness.
- Create a State Disaster Legal Services Fund.
- Require reverse mortgage servicers to provide counseling referrals.

Progress

- AB 1069 (Bains) – Improves emergency shelter access for older adults.
- SB 582 (Stern) – Enhances licensing flexibility for care facilities during disasters.

Closing Message

- Building resilience requires planning, inclusion, and empowerment.
- Every emergency response must center the needs and voices of older adults and people with disabilities.

Wiser Dining for Congregate Meals: *The Lunch Buddies Bistro Story*

- A Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) initiative transforming congregate meal sites into welcoming, health-promoting social spaces.
- Focused on older adults' feedback, dignity, and connection at the Benicia Center.

Wiser Dining Framework

Five focus areas:

1. Client feedback
2. Social and community connections
3. Site environment
4. Nutrition education
5. Policies and procedures

Transforming Mealtime

- Older adults expressed feeling unheard and dissatisfied with food and atmosphere.
- Changes implemented:
 - Real plates & dinnerware instead of disposables
 - Self-serve condiment stations
 - Spa water, tablecloths, and seasonal décor
 - New branding: "Lunch Buddies Bistro"

- Result: Greater autonomy, dignity, and joy during meals.

Health & Community Connection

- Nutrition education sessions on bone and eye health, budgeting, and healthy holidays with tastings.
- Partnerships for food access, waste reduction, transportation, and grocery distribution.
- Special tasting events re-engaged the community and drew new participants.

Growth & Outcomes

- Participants increased from 2 to 20–40 daily, welcoming new diners weekly.
- Addressed challenges like technology integration, paperwork simplification, and cost management.
- Built trust, engagement, and community pride.

Looking Ahead

- Collaboration with nursing students to teach portion control, hydration therapy, and choking precautions.
- Vision: A holistic approach to aging—linking nutrition, education, wellness, and social connection.