

Superior Court of California County of Santa Clara

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Statement from Santa Clara County Superior Court

SAN JOSÉ, Calif. (March 3, 2026): Yesterday Governor Newsom identified Santa Clara County as one of 10 underperforming counties to successfully implement CARE Court, based on the rate of petitions on a per capita basis.

At the outset, it is important to note that CARE Court petitions are not filed by the Court so the Court does not control the caseload. In addition, at the time CARE Court was implemented in December 2024, Santa Clara County Superior Court already presided over programs in the following collaborative court departments which involve multi-disciplinary teams including Behavioral Health Services Department (BHSD) to provide wrap-around services to justice-involved individuals (treatment, housing, benefit assistance):

Mental Health Diversion

Mental Health/Drug Treatment Courts

Veterans' Court

Dependency Wellness Court

In addition, Santa Clara County Superior Court partners with the County to hold Outreach Court once a month at the County's Re-Entry Center in San Jose. Outreach Court allows individuals, including those who are unhoused, opportunities to petition the court for record clearance, resolve outstanding criminal matters, and be referred to the Mental Health Treatment or Drug Treatment Courts.

Approximately 60 days ago, the CARE Court legislation changed to expand eligibility requirements. As a result, Santa Clara County Superior Court expects to receive an increase in petitions for CARE Court services; based on the first two months of 2026, we may expect to see as many as 80 petitions this year, almost twice the number of petitions filed in 2025. The Court holds a dedicated calendar for CARE Court reviews with participants every Friday afternoon.

Finally, the State of California Accountability website documenting housing and behavioral health services has every county listed with statistics for affordable housing, unhoused population and behavioral health services delivered. <https://www.accountability.ca.gov/county/all/> Santa Clara County's statistics for individuals in "Full-Service Partnerships" demonstrates the Court's commitment to supporting individuals in CARE Court as well as those involved in our justice system with access to behavioral health services.

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