



COUNTY OF VENTURA

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Second District

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March 3, 2026

County Board of Supervisors
800 S. Victoria
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Direction to Pause Proposed Transition of Area Agency on Aging Administration and Evaluate Service Options

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Direct the Human Services Agency (HSA) to pause the transition of the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) away from County administration.
2. Direct HSA to maintain the County's Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) accreditation pending further evaluation and Board direction.
3. Direct the County Executive Office (CEO), in coordination with HSA and the California Department of Aging (CDA), to withdraw the pending Request for Proposals (RFP) related to AAA administration.
4. Direct the CEO to return to the Board with a comprehensive analysis and options for AAA service delivery, including but not limited to:
 - a. Public-private partnership models;
 - b. A reduced-size County oversight structure with lower General Fund exposure;
 - c. An assessment of local community-based organization (CBO) capacity and readiness to assume full programmatic responsibility; and
 - d. Any additional service delivery models identified by the CEO that ensure continuity, accountability, and service quality.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with the recommended actions. Expenditures necessary to continue current services will be funded within existing appropriations. Any future fiscal implications will be evaluated as part of the requested analysis and reported back to the Board for consideration and direction.

DISCUSSION:

Current State and Background

The Ventura County Area Agency on Aging (VCAAA), housed within the Human Services Agency (HSA), provides critical services to older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers throughout Ventura County. These services include information and assistance, caregiver support, nutrition programs, legal and financial assistance, health and wellness programs, employment support, and operation of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), which serves as a centralized access point for long-term services and supports.

Following the merger of AAA into HSA approximately two years ago, HSA undertook a significant restructuring of AAA operations. This effort focused on stabilizing service delivery, increasing community participation, and reducing General Fund expenditures. Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations, cities, and other entities, HSA reports that General Fund support for AAA services was reduced from approximately \$5 million annually to approximately \$1.2 million annually, with no reported break in services to clients and no loss of County employment.

In light of ongoing federal and state budget pressures and anticipated reductions associated with recent federal legislation and reimbursement decisions, HSA leadership announced its intent to exit the County's agreement with the California Department of Aging (CDA) to administer core AAA programs, effective June 30, 2026. Under this proposal, CDA would contract directly with a non-County entity to administer AAA services, and the County would relinquish its AAA and ADRC accreditation.

Emerging Concerns

The proposed transition reflects a well-intentioned response to unprecedented fiscal pressures facing health care and human services programs at all levels of government. However, as the County moves rapidly toward this new service delivery model, community stakeholders and service partners have raised substantive concerns regarding potential risks and unintended consequences.

If the transition proceeds as proposed, Ventura County would be required to relinquish its ADRC accreditation and would be ineligible to seek recertification for approximately 18 months. During this period, service continuity and quality assurance would rely entirely on an external CBO selected through the CDA process.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the readiness and capacity of potential CBOs to assume full responsibility for administering AAA programs at scale. In other County service areas, transitions to CBO-led models have presented significant challenges, including at least one instance in which a CBO was unable to fulfill its obligations, requiring CDA intervention. Additionally, CDA does not deploy County-level



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caseworkers, program managers, or operational staff locally in the event a contracted CBO is unable to perform, limiting the State's ability to rapidly stabilize services if issues arise.

Need for a Deliberate Evaluation and Board Direction

Given the essential nature of AAA and ADRC services, the potential loss of accreditation, and the uncertainty surrounding outcomes under a fully externalized model, it is appropriate for the Board to pause the proposed transition and request a more deliberate evaluation of options.

The recommended actions allow the County to preserve its current accreditation status while directing the CEO, HSA, and CDA to collaboratively develop and present a range of viable service delivery models for Board consideration. This approach ensures that fiscal realities are addressed while maintaining continuity, accountability, and public confidence in services relied upon by some of the County's most vulnerable residents.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

The recommended actions support the County's Strategic Plan goals related to health and well-being, organizational excellence, and responsible stewardship of public resources by ensuring informed decision-making, continuity of essential services, and careful evaluation of alternative service delivery models.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel. If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact Supervisor Gorell at jeff.gorell@venturacounty.gov.

Sincerely,

Jeff Gorell
Chair of the Board