

The CEO Report

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October 21, 2025

Government

Departments

Residents

Business

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

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This month, Public Health is raising awareness, reminding individuals to schedule regular screenings, sharing support and resources with the community. WIC supports the reduction of risk for breast cancer by promoting breastfeeding.

By breastfeeding for 12 months, a breastfeeding person can reduce their risk of breast cancer by 26%, this is according to an article published in 2015 (Chowdhury et al.) In many studies, including a 2016 report from *The Lancet*, which stated that breastfeeding directly prevents nearly 20,000 deaths from breast cancer every year, and another 20,000 lives would be saved annually by increasing breastfeeding practices worldwide.

Early Detection Saves Lives

Learn more about prevention and early detection:

www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-cancerawareness-month/



**Here are some tips to start now
and take charge of your health:**

- ✓ Schedule your screening
- ✓ Talk to your provider about risk factors
- ✓ Share resources with your loved ones

Mendocino County Strategic Plan

In May 2022, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors approved the first five-year strategic plan that will help guide the critical decisions the Board of Supervisors will face over the next five years with the ultimate goal of improving the quality of life for County residents. Departmental reporting will align with the strategic plan.

Click [HERE](#) to download the Strategic Plan.

Departments and Divisions

Agriculture

The fall agricultural harvest season in Mendocino County is a vibrant time of celebration, education, and community engagement centered on agriculture and the area's natural bounty. Late fall is the perfect time for planting cover crops, winterizing the land to promote soil health and erosion control. Our wine grape harvest was plentiful with fine quality fruit. County residents can also participate in apple picking and pumpkin patches, fostering a connection with local farms. In addition to these activities, the Agricultural Department emphasizes the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship. We will be working with the UC Cooperative Extension in developing best management practices for long-term vineyard management, including a type of "mothballing" when not harvesting.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Animal Care Services

This month has been a period of significant activity and progress for our Animal Care Services program. Our dedicated team has continued to provide essential services to the community, ensuring the well-being of animals and promoting responsible pet ownership. The Animal Care Services program areas include Shelter, Clinic and Animal Protection Services. These programs provide animal education outreach, adoptions, volunteer opportunities, fostering, lost and found services, feral cat trap-neuter-release programs, dog licensing, low-cost spay and neuter, veterinary care, animal health education, rabies vaccinations, micro-chipping, impounding of lost and stray animals, responding to injured, ill and suspected cruelty complaints, and promoting responsible pet ownership.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Spotlight on Lilly

Lilly is a beautiful brown tabby kitten with bright eyes full of wonder and just the right dash of sass. A little independent by nature, she enjoys her solo adventures around the house, exploring every nook and cranny like the curious kitty she is. But don't be fooled—when the toys come out, Lilly's playful side shines! Feather wands, jingly balls, and crinkly tunnels are her jam, and she's always up for a good game (on her terms, of course). Lilly is the perfect companion for someone who appreciates a kitten with a mind of her own, but who's always nearby, keeping an eye on the fun—and occasionally pouncing right into it.



Behavioral Health & Recovery Services

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

**Behavioral Health & Recovery Services (BHRS) recognizes:
Domestic Violence Awareness Month: All of October**

BHRS is raising awareness and sharing ways to support victims and survivors. Domestic violence can take many forms, including intimate partner violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and other types of harm between people in close relationships.

24/7 Crisis Line: [855-838-0404](tel:855-838-0404)

Warm Line for Non-Crisis Emotional Support [707-472-2311](tel:707-472-2311) or Toll-Free: [833-955-2510](tel:833-955-2510)

National Domestic Violence Hotline: [800-799-SAFE](tel:800-799-SAFE) (7233), text “START” to 88788, or chat online at www.thehotline.org

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Cannabis

In September 2025, the Mendocino Cannabis Department (MCD) reviewed and granted local authorization for 11 active Cannabis Cultivation Business License (CCBL) applications. In addition, the Department executed the last Local Equity Entrepreneurial Program (LEEP) direct grant agreement with a local cannabis business operator, distributing \$7,645 to the qualified equity applicant.

Below are several key accomplishments of MCD in September 2025:

- Issued and renewed approximately 45,000 square feet (1.03 acres) of commercial cannabis cultivation.
- Published the [Mendocino County Cannabis Equity Assessment](#) update.
- Updated the [LEEP Direct Grant Manual](#).
- Completed 20 physical inspections of proposed or existing CCBL sites.

Department Fiscal Updates

- The Department collected 19 fees, totaling \$25,071.
- Fee revenue helps offset staff time dedicated to specific, fee-related tasks.
- Staff time is allocated based on time studies conducted for each individual task.
- MCD received direction and approval at the September 9th Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting for a new fee schedule. These approved fees will become effective on November 22nd.

Please find the updated fee schedule [HERE](#).

For more information on MCD’s Monthly Activity, please click [HERE](#).

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Child Support

The Mendocino County Department of Child Support Services strives to “Help Parents Invest in their Children”. Our mission is to serve children and their families by establishing parentage and enforcing support orders in a fair and equitable manner.

Effective County Government Organization

California Department of Child Support Services is committed to working with our partners at CDSS to reduce misconceptions of child support participation – which includes awareness of opportunities to be excused from participation, as well as improving awareness. We are happy to report that the BenefitsCal website, the unified application for multiple public benefits, [now has reference to child support eligibility](#) and a link to our simplified enrollment.

A Thriving Economy

The Mendocino County Department of Child Support Services collected a total of \$497,002.04 in court-ordered child support payments. Of this amount, \$37,046.23 was passed on to families rather than being recouped for State and Federal debt. A total of 807 children currently have medical coverage.

Employee Benefits

The Open Enrollment period for calendar year 2026 will be held from October 20 through November 7, 2025.

Beginning January 1, 2026, Navitus will administer pharmacy benefits for employees enrolled in the County health plan. To prepare for this change, please join the Navitus webinar on October 27, 2025. Click [HERE](#) to learn more and view Open Enrollment information.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health division continues to progress toward the strategic initiative to digitize Land Use, Solid Waste, and Consumer Protection files. Once completed, the public and regulated communities will benefit from faster access to records, enhanced transparency and service delivery even as the department operates with reduced staffing.

Over the past 2 fiscal years, Environmental Health has received support to fill vacant positions, but very few qualified candidates applied to fill the various vacancies. As a result, staff resources are being shifted internally to assist with program mandates prioritized by public health risk factors. Field inspectors are conducting multiple program inspections when on-site to utilize time more efficiently. Management staff are assisting with field work assignments as well as project plan reviews. All staff are supporting the public administrative needs whether that is via email, at front counters, or on the phone.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Executive Office - Budget/Fiscal

Sales Tax Update Mendocino County Unincorporated 2Q 2025 (April-June)

The unincorporated county's gross receipts from April through June 2025 were down 6% compared to the second sales period in 2024. After adjusting for reporting modifications from audit adjustments and delayed payments, actual sales were 7.2% lower. 2025 sales tax returns remain modest, reflecting broader economic volatility. Click [HERE](#) to read more...

State Controller Cohen - Monthly Cash Report

State Controller Cohen has released her monthly [cash report](#) for September. As noted in the Controller's [Monthly Statement of General Fund Cash Receipts and Disbursements](#), receipts for the fiscal year through September exceeded estimates contained in the 2025-26 Budget Act by \$4.5 billion, or 9 percent. Fiscal year-to-date expenditures were higher than Budget Act estimates by \$2.1 billion, or 3.3 percent. Click [HERE](#) to view the Press Release.

Executive Office - Contract Unit

The Contract Unit works directly with departments Countywide to execute contracts and amendments to ensure alignment with County Policy. Since April of 2024, the Contract Unit has administered review processes for over 2,250 contract items, including over 390 items with effective dates on or after July 1, 2025. Additionally, the Contract Unit processed and routed contracts for distribution of funding to the twenty-one local fire districts/agencies that receive funding from Measure D, Measure P, and Prop 172. These contracts distribute Q4 funding for Fiscal Year 2024-25. Finally, as a result of the Board's first review of revisions to the County's Leasing and Contracting Policy (Policy No. 1) on October 7, 2025, the Contract Unit began updating Cobblestone approval workflows to align with new requirements.

Public Resources:

Mendocino County maintains a publicly accessible portal where fully executed contracts can be viewed. The initial search screen of the portal allows users to search all County contracts by Department, Contract Number, Approving Authority, Contractor, and/or Keyword. The list generated by the initial search request can be further refined if needed.

<https://contracts.mendocinocounty.org>

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Executive Office - Economic Development

In September 2025, the Economic Development Division officially launched the Microenterprise Technical Assistance Program, met with stakeholders to advance projects developed from industry sector meetings, met with Sonoma County staff and stakeholders regarding the future of SMEDD, and held the Forest Health Sector Meeting (9/17). Visit the [Economic Development Division](#) page for more details.

Economic Development by Industry: Upcoming Sector Meetings

Division staff continue to hold meetings for the economic development by industry sector series to foster collaboration and create actionable goals for economic sustainability and growth. Five meetings have been held in 2025. The final meeting for 2025 will be held in November for the Tourism sector – bringing together Arts, Culture and Recreation for sustainable tourism. Details are available on the Economic Development Division webpage.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Executive Office - Grants Unit

In September, the Grant Unit advanced several key County projects. The unit partnered with the Prevention, Recovery, Resiliency, and Mitigation (PRRM) Division to submit a \$9.5 million application for the Sherwood Corridor Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project. At the same time, team members continued to develop grant applications for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Income projects, secured site access, and initiated vendor selection for the Covelo Community Clean-Up Project. These actions demonstrate the unit's ongoing commitment to securing grant funding, fostering resilience, and enhancing both community well-being and economic opportunity.

During fiscal year 2025-26, the Grants Unit partnered with County departments to submit 3 grant applications totaling \$11.3 million. Additionally, the unit supports management of 15 grants exceeding \$16.2 million for the Executive Office.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Facilities and Fleet

Facilities and Fleet Mission: To provide an accessible, efficient, safe, clean and comfortable working environment for all employees and the general public who use our buildings and properties.

Facilities and Fleet maintains vital infrastructure and related services that enable County employees to serve the citizens of Mendocino County.

The Bower Park Restoration and Improvement project was awarded, and construction will begin in October. The SB844 Jail expansion and Psychiatric

Health Facility projects are progressing, with both expected to finish in early 2026.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Human Resources - Wellness

MCWOW continues to support County employees' health and well-being through a variety of programs:

- **EAP Counseling Services:** Staff and their household members can access **FREE virtual counseling via BetterHelp**, making mental health support more convenient for our rural communities.
- **Wellness Incentive Program:** County employees can earn up to **\$500 off their 2026 County health plan premiums**. The program deadline is November 15th.
- **Flu Shot Clinics:** **MCWOW vaccine clinics** provide an easy way for employees to protect their health while **earning incentive points**.
- **Biometric Health Screenings:** The 2025 screening season ended on September 25th, with over 500 County employees participating!
- Employees who missed a screening can still have it completed by their physician by **November 15th** to qualify for the Wellness Incentive Reward.
- **MCWOW Data Dashboard:** This County webpage contains a **data-driven view of the Wellness Program's performance** and helps guide program improvements.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about MCWOW's employee offerings.

Library

Banned Books Week launched in 1982 in response to a sudden surge in the number of book challenges in libraries, schools, and bookstores. The theme for 2025's Banned Books Week was, "Censorship Is So 1984. Read for Your Rights," and took place from October 5 – 11. While books have been and continue to be banned, part of the Banned Books Week celebration is the fact that, in most cases, the books have remained available. This happens only thanks to the efforts of librarians, teachers, students, and community members who stand up and speak out for the freedom to read.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Office of Emergency Services

Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services (OES) is the primary local coordination agency for emergencies and disasters affecting residents, public infrastructure, and government operations in the Mendocino County Operational Area (OA). The Mendocino County OA includes the county and its cities, towns, and special districts, in coordination with tribes.

The Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services (OES) hosted a booth at the Mendocino County Fair and Apple Show in Boonville to enhance community safety by providing preparedness materials. OES took part in a PG&E communications exercise for the Potter Valley Project. OES staff submitted the annual integrated preparedness plan to Cal OES to help guide the county's training and exercise priorities.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Planning and Building

The Department of Planning and Building Services ("Department") continues to advance the County's mission of effective governance, community safety, economic vitality, and long-term resilience. This month's report highlights key developments, including the use of metrics to evaluate organizational performance, progress toward a modernized permit management system, and active recruitment to strengthen departmental capacity.

As a part of the County's efforts to streamline operations, improve coordination across departments, and provide consistent service to the public, the Department is pleased to announce the integration of the Mendocino Cannabis Department into Planning and Building Services. During the next several months, the Cannabis Department will continue to operate as usual while staff and resources are integrated into the new framework.

Code Enforcement remains focused on addressing community concerns with an emphasis on health and safety, while Planning staff advance policy updates and stakeholder engagement initiatives that promote sustainable economic development. Additionally, the Department remains committed to advancing disaster preparedness and coastal planning initiatives that strengthen Mendocino County's long-term resilience.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Prevention, Recovery, Resiliency, and Mitigation

During September and October 2025, the Prevention, Recovery, Resiliency, and Mitigation (PRRM) team made significant progress across a range of projects designed to enhance Mendocino County's disaster preparedness and resilience. These projects are funded through various grants aimed at enhancing community resilience and disaster preparedness. Specific funding sources include FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), CAL FIRE grants, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, and Community Development Block Grant

Planning and Public Service (CDBG-PPS) funds. Staff also finalized proposals, issued and reviewed RFPs, and prepared contracts for Board approval. Despite ongoing challenges such as federal funding uncertainties and project delays, the team remains on track to meet critical upcoming milestones through late 2025 and into 2026.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Public Health

October is SIDS Awareness Month

Public Health encourages everyone this month and year-round to help promote #safesleep practices and raise awareness about reducing the risk of SIDS.

Here are some steps you can take to reduce risk and protect your baby:

- Always place babies on their backs to sleep for naps and at night.
- Use a firm, flat sleep surface (crib, bassinet, or portable play yard) free from soft bedding, pillows, or toys.
- Keep baby in your room, but on their own sleep surface — avoid bed-sharing.
- Breastfeeding, when possible, helps reduce risk.
- Keep the baby's sleep environment cool and avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

Social Services

As of April 2025, all CalFresh households should have been mailed a chip-enabled Electronic Benefit Transaction (EBT) card. Old magnetic-strip cards will stop working either when a new card is activated or six (6) months after issuance of the chip card, therefore, all pre-chip-enabled cards will be deactivated by October 25, 2025.

Please see the full report for more details and how to report if you have not received your new card yet.

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) is one of the largest programs with the Adult & Aging Services division. We are pleased to share a program update in our full report.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...

University of California Cooperative Extension

Tribal Youth Exchange Promotes STEM and Cultural Knowledge at Hopland

Research & Extension Center

In July 2025, the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) hosted the Scotts Valley Tribal Youth Exchange at the Hopland Research and Extension Center (HREC), located on the ancestral lands of the Shóqowa People. The two-day program brought together 25 Native youth from the Scotts Valley and Hopland Bands of Pomo Indians for hands-on learning that blended STEM education with Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

Click [HERE](#) to read more...



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