

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

COVID-19 and Economic Recovery in San Mateo County: Housing, Childcare, Youth Programs, Business Relief

Redwood City – Three years after the first COVID-19 [shelter-in-place orders](#), the County of San Mateo has invested approximately \$360 million on recovery initiatives focused on assisting those hit hardest by the pandemic.

The total includes \$188 million toward housing, \$76 million toward food security and more than \$16 million in direct financial relief to individuals and families. Financial support also targeted small businesses, childcare providers and youth programs.

“The pandemic shined a light on the gap between the haves and the have nots here in San Mateo County,” said Dave Pine, president of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. “What we have tried to accomplish with these investments is to really focus on programs and projects that address the most basic needs in our community to close that gap.”

Peggy Jensen, the County’s assistant chief executive, [presented a report](#) to the Board this morning on the allocation of pandemic recovery funds over the past three years after COVID-19 resulted in numerous health orders and other steps that pinched the economy.

The response was initially informed by [workgroups](#) first convened in April 2020 to develop strategies for helping the community cope with what many feared would be an economic crisis. That workgroup, which involved dozens of community-based organizations, residents, civic and business groups and other partners, aimed “to build a more equitable, healthy, and connected San Mateo County” with support for residents in need and economic relief efforts.

Since a [local emergency](#) was declared following discovery of the first local COVID-19 cases, this strategy influenced how a combination of \$400 million in federal, state, local and

privately donated funds were invested in relief efforts. (A total of \$36 million remains unallocated for emerging issues).

Investments involving these funds include:

- **Housing Security**
 - \$26 million: Emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities, and transportation supported by County, city and private donors assisted 8,807 households
 - \$109 million: Emergency rental assistance funded by the state assisted 7,400 households
 - \$55 million: Affordable Housing Fund generated 2,500 new units in the housing pipeline
 - \$21 million: Creating housing for residents experiencing homelessness by adding 283 non-congregate interim housing units and 52 new permanent housing units
 - \$1.5 million: Farmworker housing for a 40-plus unit senior housing development that will include a farmworker resource center

- **Food Security**
 - \$64 million: Great Plates funded by the state and operated by County staff provided 2.9 million meals served to 4,683 older adults
 - \$3.9 million: Second Course funded by a County allocation of federal recovery funds provided 99,600 meals to 759 older adults
 - \$8.5 million: Second Harvest Food Bank funded by a County allocation of federal recovery funds helped provide 37 million pounds of food annually distributed to more than 36,000 households

- **Small Business and Nonprofit Relief**
 - \$33 million: SMC Strong small-business grants; Microenterprise Home Kitchen grants; Restaurant, Winery and Brewery Grants; and other local business-relief grant programs supported by County, city, foundation and other donations and a County allocation of federal recovery funds assisted more than 7,000 businesses

- **Financial Assistance**
 - \$16 million: Grants for those not eligible for federal assistance (\$1,000 grants to 16,017 individuals) supported by a \$5 million allocation of County funds



- **Childcare**
 - \$4 million: Childcare Relief Fund supported by a County allocation of federal recovery funds
 - \$4.1 million: Childcare Grant Fund supported by a County allocation of federal recovery funds
 - \$870,000: Child Care Coordinating Council supported by a County allocation of federal recovery funds (87 family childcare home providers).

- **Youth Programs**
 - \$10.7 million: Summer enrichment programs, Learning Hub Expansion, Out of School care (care outside of school hours) supported by a County allocation of federal recovery funds (220 programs funded)

- **Broadband Expansion**
 - \$6 million: 284 new public Wifi sites, Wifi hotspots in low-income communities and subsidized in-home services supported by a County allocation of federal recovery funds

Since reaching a high of 11.7 percent in May 2020, [unemployment in San Mateo County](#) has fallen to 1.9 percent as of December 2023.

View the entire report from today's Board meeting: [Briefing on San Mateo County Pandemic Recovery Programs](#).

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