

Children's Council Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2025

Council Member	Appointed Council Member or Alternate	Affiliation	Title	Present
Alejandro, Melissa	Alternate	Family and Children Services	Program Manager	X
Arreola, Jose	Member	Community Alliance for Safety and Peace	Director	X
Askew, Wendy	Member	District #4	Supervisor	
Astengo, Berenice	Alternate	Monterey County Free Libraries	Managing Librarian	X
Baldwin, Dan	Member	Community Foundation for Monterey County	President/CEO	
Bangs, Randy	Member	Soledad Unified School District	Superintendent	
Bhardwaj, Jaskiart "Jessica"	Alternate	City of Salinas		
Blitch, Susan	Member	County Counsel	County Counsel	
Boykin, Zulieka	Member	Housing Authority	Executive Director	
Butler, Ashley	Alternate	Public Defender Office	Public Defender	
Castagna, Katy	Member	United Way Monterey County	President and CEO	X
Castro, Michael	Alternate	Community Foundation of Monterey County	Director of Community Investments	X
Chapman, Susan	Member	Public Defender Office	Public Defender	
Cota, Caroline	Member	So Mo Co Joint Unified School District	Superintendent	X
Cutino, Annette	Alternate	County Counsel	Deputy County Counsel	
DaSilva, Charles	Alternate	Monterey County Sheriff's Office	Program Manager-Monterey County Jail	X

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Diffenbaugh, PK	Alternate	Monterey Peninsula Unified School District	Superintendent	
Dunn, Laura	Member	Child Care Planning Council	Chair	
Franks, Roderick	Member	Department of Social Services	Director	X
Guss, Deneen	Member	Monterey County Office of Education	Superintendent	X
Gomez, Claudia	Alternate	Door to Hope	Director of Family Services	
Jeronimo, Eva	Member	Department of Social Services	Deputy Director	X
Jimenez, Elsa	Member	Monterey County Health Department	Director of Health	X
Kenyon, Julie	Alternate	Probation Department		
Lal, Monica	Member	Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce	President/CEO	
Lavorato, Sam Jr.	Alternate	Superior Court, Juvenile Justice Division	Judge	
Luzader, Lori	Member	Special Kids Connect	Executive Director	X
Madfis, Josh	Alternate	United Way Monterey County	Vice President Community Investments	
McCabe, Ramona	Alternate	First 5 Monterey County	Director of Programs	
McCrae, Robin	Member	Community Human Services	Executive Director	
Moreno, Dr. Edward	Alternate	Monterey County Health Department	Health Officer & Director of Public Health	
Nassoura, Lana	Alternate	Monterey County District Attorney Office	Assistant District Attorney	

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Nieto, Tina	Member	Monterey County Sheriff's Office	Sheriff	
Netniss, Jennifer	Alternate	Special Kids Connect	Education Director	
Quinones, Vanya	Member	CSU Monterey Bay	President	
Pacioni, Jeannine	Member	Monterey County District Attorney Office	District Attorney	
Pierce, Virginia R.	Member	CAPC	Director	X
Porras, Ralph	Alternate	Monterey County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent	
Pulido, Ruben	Alternate	Chualar Union School District	Superintendent	
Ramirez, Jose	Alternate	Probation Department	Chief	X
Rhodes, Melanie	Member	Behavioral Health	Director	
Rodd, Francine	Member	First 5 of Monterey County	Executive Director	X
Reuther, Krista	Alternate	Ohana Montage Health		X
Swick, Susan	Member	Ohana Montage Health	VP/Chief Mental Health Officer	
Theyer, Hillary	Member	Monterey County Free Libraries	Director	
Wouden, Michelle	Alternate	Public Defenders Office	Public Defender	
Koehler, Sonja	Non-Member	Bright Beginnings	Director	X

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Perez Diaz, Mayra	Non-Member	United Way	Coordinator of MCCC and Community Impact Director, Early Childhood Investments	X
Diaz, Relindis	Non-Member	County of Monterey Children's Behavioral Health	RLP Facilitator	X
Gallegos, Annettee	Non-Member			X
Garrett, Jason	Non-Member			X

Item	Summary of discussion/review	Action/deliverable
1. Welcome and Introductions	Meeting called to order at p.m. by Deneen Guss	
2. Public Comment		None
3. Action Items a. Approve the minutes of the December 8, 2025, Monterey County Children's Council meeting b. Approve Designated Alternate Jason Garrett for Member Michael Gutierrez		<p>a. The minutes of the December 8, 2025, meeting were approved. Motion by Eva Jeronimo and seconded by Charles Da Silva.</p> <p>b. Designated Alternate Jason Garrett was approved. Motion by Virginia Pierce seconded by Elsa Jimenez.</p>

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4. Presentations/Discussions		
a. Bright Beginnings Summary	Sonja Koehler provide a brief summary of events and work the initiative was accomplished the past few months and upcoming events to attend and support.	<u>Bright Beginnings Summary Oct/Nov</u>
b. Context on Food Insecurity – CalFresh Program	Roderick Franks and Annette Gallegos from DSS presented an overview of the CalFresh program and upcoming eligibilities changes for families.	<u>CalFresh Presentation</u>
6. Meeting Adjourned		1:31pm