



***December 3, 2025 COMMISSION MEETING
AGENDA PACKET ATTACHMENTS***

Attachments:

ITEM 2: Consent Agenda

- a) October 22, 2025 Minutes (Draft)
- b) 2026 Commission Meeting Calendar

ITEM 3: Memo re: Evaluation Report
(NOTE: Report attached separately)

FIRST 5 SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

October 22, 2025 (DRAFT)

Current Commissioners Present

Dawn Ortiz-Legg (Chair)
Leslie Mehigan (Vice Chair)

SLO County Board of Supervisors
Community at Large

Michelle Auran, MD
Penny Borenstein, MD
Patty Clarkson, EdD (remote)
Joe Koski, EdD
Nancy Kuster
Erica Ruvalcaba-Heredia, EdD

Medical Representative (AAP)
SLO County Public Health Department
Early Care & Ed Planning Council
SLO County Office of Education
SLO County Dept. of Social Services
Community at Large

Commissioners Absent/Excused

Alison Ventura, PhD

Community at Large

Staff Present

First 5 Staff: Wendy Wendt, Jason Wells, Misty Livengood, Maggie Payne

First 5 Intern: Elizabeth Goebel

Commission Counsel: Craig Steele

Call to Order

Chair Ortiz-Legg called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Chair Ortiz-Legg announced that Commissioner Clarkson is attending the meeting on Zoom due to a medical condition. Legal Counsel Craig Steele confirmed that in this case remote attendance is allowable according to current State public meeting regulations. He reminded that all votes will need to be roll call. Commissioner Clarkson confirmed that she was in a room with no one else present.

ITEM 1 - Public Comment – Items not on the agenda

None.

ITEM 2 (ACTION ITEM) - Consent Agenda

- a. Approve September 24, 2025 minutes
- b. Approve Q1 25-26 Financial Report

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Mehigan made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Borenstein and passed unanimously.

ITEM 3 (ACTION ITEM): Commission Review, Accept FY24-25 Annual External Audit

Ms. Wendt introduced this item. First 5 SLO County has contracted for a sixth year with Moss Levy Hartzheim (MLH). A three-person team from MLH was on-site at First 5 for 1 day. Firm Assurance Manager Christopher Padilla attended the Commission meeting on Zoom to make a brief report and answer questions. Ms. Wendt shared that the audit included no compliance findings and no internal controls findings. She briefly summarized the agency's financial position at the end of FY 2024-25.

Mr. Padilla concurred with Ms. Wendt's summary, and commented that the audit process was straightforward and clean. He commended Ms. Wendt and her staff for their thoroughness, helpfulness and overall accuracy.

Ms. Wendt pointed out that audit standards of practice recommend that First 5 switch auditors at least every six years. This is the sixth year with MLH. Next year will likely involve a process to consider contracting with a new audit firm.

Public Comment: None.

Commissioner Kuster made a motion to accept the External Audit. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ruvalcaba-Heredia. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4 (PUBLIC HEARING/ACTION ITEM): Commission Review and Approval of FY2024-5 Annual Report to First 5 California

Compliance exercise every year. Ms. Wendt does financials, Mr. Wells does program data.

Comment on duplication issue – duplicate sliding scale.

AR-1 is Revenue/Expenditure Section

AR-2 is Demographic Worksheet

AR-3 is County Evaluation Summary plus County Highlights

Mr. Wells outlined programmatic and fiscal data to be submitted to First 5 CA by October 31, 2025 in compliance with state Annual Report requirements, and in alignment with the annual audit report. He emphasized that the report exercise gives us a chance to celebrate the work of the staff, families, and children in our community. In addition, our numbers contribute to a state report, part of telling a statewide story.

He noted that the annual report information contributed to First 5 CA through this process is somewhat distinct from the evaluation work being performed by the local consultant team (Becca Carsel et al).

Mr. Wells also summarized the County Highlights narrative submitted to First 5 CA as part of the report. Topics include activation of the 2024-28 Strategic Plan; new funded initiatives in parent-child engagement and child care workforce development; creation of a six-county Child Care Coalition as part of Uplift Central Coast; and launch of an Early Childhood System Stabilization Fund.

Public Comment: None

Commissioner Mehigan made a motion to approve First 5 SLO County's FY2024-5 State Annual Report submission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ortiz-Legg and passed unanimously.

ITEM 5 (ACTION ITEM): Staff Recommendation re: Tolosa Children's Dental Center Contract Amendment

Associate Director Jason Wells presented on this item, which is a recommendation to approve a First Amendment to First 5 SLO County's contract with Tolosa Children's Dental Center. Tolosa has been a funded partner for over a decade. Until now, First 5's investment has supported preventive oral health visits at Tolosa's San Luis Obispo office. Recent challenges with staff recruitment and other funding losses have led to an internal decision to close the San Luis Obispo site and focus all services at the North County clinic.

Tolosa staff have submitted a request to reassign the current First 5 funding support toward services at the North County clinic. All other contract elements will remain the same. The only change will be to remove geographic restrictions, and update the scope of service to remove one activity that is no longer relevant.

Tolosa Children's Dental Center Executive Director Alexandra Chamberlain was present and provided additional details. The national healthcare workforce shortage also affects local providers. It is very difficult to attract and retain medical professionals in San Luis Obispo due to the cost of living and other factors. She shared good news that the buyer of the San Luis Obispo-based clinic is a pediatric provider who takes MediCal. Meanwhile, since June 2025, one hundred and twenty-three (123) patients from the San Luis Obispo Tolosa clinic location have transferred to the Paso Robles location. Tolosa patients covered through CenCal are able to access transportation through Ventura Transit Systems.

Commissioner Borenstein asked if there is any overlap between Tolosa and the County Public Health Department's Oral Health Program. Ms. Chamberlain responded that there is a lot of collaboration between the two. She gave an example of a joint effort to conduct screenings in the San Miguel and Shandon public schools.

Chair Ortiz-Legg commended Tolosa for its safety net pediatric dental care, and was glad to hear that the new SLO-based pediatric dentist accepts CenCal.

Public Comment: None.

Commissioner Koski made a motion to approve a contract amendment with Tolosa Children's Dental Center to shift Scope of Work to focus on preventive oral health services at the North County-based clinic location. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Borenstein and passed unanimously.

ITEM 6: 2026 Commission Meeting Calendar Discussion

Chair Ortiz-Legg and Executive Director Wendy Wendt opened a discussion regarding optimal dates and times for Commission meeting in 2026. The existing pattern of fourth Wednesdays (January, March, May, June, September, October) and first Wednesday (December) has been in place for over a decade.

There has been concern during several meetings in 2025 that quorum might not be met with some Commissioners' calendar conflicts. Before confirming the 2026 calendar, Commissioners are urged to let staff know if one or more meeting dates will pose a significant problem.

All Commissioners present expressed comfort with continuing the same pattern in 2026. Commissioner Ortiz-Legg pointed out that she will be absent at the June meeting. Commissioner Borenstein has conflicts in January and October.

The 2026 calendar will be included as a consent item at the December 3, 2025 Commission meeting. Ms. Wendt encouraged Commissioners to put the dates in their calendars now.

Public Comment: None.

ITEM 7: Program Updates on WIC/BABES Programs

Commissioner Borenstein introduced this item. She pointed out that WIC holds a special connection for her, given that the program was first pioneered in Baltimore in 1972 by her professor at Johns Hopkins University, Dr. David Paige.

Shannon Massey (WIC Program Director) and Jennifer Miller (County Health Promotion Division Manager) provided a joint presentation on the status of the WIC program and its First 5-funded BABES initiative.

WIC offers free healthy foods, nutritional counseling, breastfeeding support, and referrals. It empowers parents to have confidence and knowledge; and provides a community for families.

WIC families are now able to use an app (as opposed to vouchers) for purchases. The app also allows for communication with WIC staff for appointments, etc.

BABES funding is from First 5 to provide specialized breastfeeding support for local moms with a team that includes International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC), Peer Counselors, and Designated Breastfeeding Experts.

WIC BABES IBCLCs work closely with the hospital IBCLCs (texting each other to check in about families post-discharge)

One hundred and fifty-six (156) pumps were loaned out of the hospitals last year by WIC to breastfeeding mothers

Breastfeeding rates in SLO County are higher than the state average, in part due to the BABES program.

Recent Budget Reductions in the County included cuts to the WIC program. Four clinics closed (Nipomo, Morro Bay, Cambria and Paso Robles). The staff has adjusted to help continue meeting community needs, including increased telehealth (90% of current appointments), and mobile pop-up clinics in partnership with local libraries and the SLO County Food Bank.

Lessons learned/challenges from the clinic closures:

- Paso Robles clinic had seen the most walk-ins, often Mixteco speaking and/or low digital literacy. These families need additional support to use the app.
- Telehealth is not optimal for BABES families who rely on in-person breastfeeding support. Most women with breastfeeding support appointments are making the effort to travel further to the remaining open WIC clinics (Atascadero, San Luis Obispo, Grover Beach).
- Overall, WIC caseload has remained relatively consistent despite the clinic closures and recent immigration enforcement concerns.

In November 2025: the Paso clinic location will have a partial reopening. WIC will be co-located with the field-nursing program, which is a good match because the client populations overlap.

WIC staff is keeping an eye on:

- Modern WIC Act which would make telehealth permanent (current telehealth option is scheduled to end September 2026).
- HR 1 Impacts: reductions to fruit/vegetable benefits and loss of health coverage for some immigrant families
- Expanding Access to Local Foods legislation - supporting farmers and market managers with eWIC setup to allow year-round use of WIC benefits at farmers' markets
 - Outreach to farmers to be able to accept WIC benefits at farmers' markets year-round
 - Legislation aims to streamline and expand access to nutritious food for vulnerable populations while supporting local farmers and markets

Commissioner Borenstein asked for clarification on the effects of the Federal Government shutdown on WIC benefits. Ms. Miller explained that California has funds to help the program

stay open through November 30, after which contingency plans are being anticipated. WIC has more of a cushion at present than does CalFresh.

Public Comment –

First 5 Special Projects Coordinator Maggie Payne offered comment as a former “WIC mom.” She praised the WIC app, and expressed excitement about year-round access to Farmers Markets.

Jane Pomeroy, Help Me Grow at CAPSLO, inquired if there is anything we can do to help as community partners. Answer: Food Bank may need additional volunteers.

Chair Ortiz Legg expressed appreciation for WIC staff’s tenacity. The thing that keeps coming up is people having to travel further to get to their WIC appointments. If the program is able to meet people where they’re at or provide transportation, that is a step.

Commissioner Mehigan described the pump loaner contract between WIC and local labor and delivery units as a connector for families.

ITEM 8: MediCal Updates

Ms. Wendt introduced this informational item. Two presenters shared materials as part of this topic. CenCal CEO Marina Owen shared perspectives on the changing landscape within the Medicaid system at the local, state and federal levels. County DSS MediCal Program Manager Jennifer Nitzel summarized upcoming changes related to MediCal eligibility. Ms. Owen provided the following information:

- CenCal serves 1 out of 4 residents in San Luis Obispo County, and 1 out of 3 residents in Santa Barbara County
- There are some worrisome provisions within anticipated changes to Medicaid that will impact local hospitals and how they will get paid for services.
- Some important considerations:
 - There will be some opportunities to shape implementation
 - Some timelines could be flexible
- Good news:
 - 1-year eligibility for children will remain in effect
 - Funding for Enhanced Case Management under CenCal has actually expanded, not decreased
 - Starting in January 2026, up to 6 months of transitional rental assistance will be offered to eligible CenCal members

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg commented that many don’t know how much CenCal really does; she is proud of how CenCal is being creative and leveraging relationships and partnerships; San Luis Obispo County is fortunate to be in a Managed Care Plan that only serves 2 counties.

Ms. Wendt added two other points:

- First 5 looks forward to partnering again with CenCal on its 2026 Pediatric Town Hall.
- First 5 looks forward to working with CenCal to promote and reinforce opportunities related to the doula benefit that is now included in the CalAIM package

Ms. Nitzel provided the following comments on Upcoming Medi-Cal Changes (State & Federal Legislation):

- CalFresh benefits are going to be on hold for November due to the government shutdown; CDSS is texting participants to inform them of this gap in funds; CalFresh work requirements are going to be reinstated January 2026 (one year prior to the MediCal work requirement change)

2026 Changes:

- January 1 -- Asset Limits will be Restored (individuals with disabilities, those over 65, certain family based MediCal members)
- January 1 -- Enrollment Freeze for Individuals without Satisfactory Immigration Status (individuals without MediCal that are age 19 and older without Satisfactory Immigration Status)
 - Children regardless of immigration status will still be eligible for MediCal
 - Full scope can be restored if discontinued with a 90-day grace period
 - Social Services is sending out materials regarding these coming changes; Ms. Nitzel encourages providers working with immigrant families to urge completion of any renewal packets, forms, verifications, requested by DSS
 - She also reminded of the importance to update DSS of address changes as soon as possible to ensure that clients are receiving mail

Ms. Nitzel emphasized two actions to take for immigrant adults

- ***Important to apply before January 1, 2026 to ensure full scope MediCal***
- ***Ensure that all paperwork required is submitted with initial application or during renewal process to local DSS in a timely fashion to ensure continued eligibility***
- July 1 -- Loss of Adult Dental Coverage for Undocumented Adults
- October 1 -- Amended Definition of “Qualified Non-Citizen” (MediCal members with refugee, asylee, parole or other similar humanitarian immigration classifications)

Qualified Non-Citizen status will change and only these categories will have federal funding

- *Legal Permanent Resident in the US for more than 5 years*
- *Specified Cuban or Haitian Entrants*
- *Residents under a Compact of Free Association (Palau, Micronesia, Marshall Islands)*

2027 Changes:

- January 1 -- Work/Community Engagement Requirement
 - 80 hours monthly; MediCal members age 19 to 64 at application and each redetermination
- January 1 -- Six-Month Renewals
 - (Ms. Wendt: this creates issues for patients and their relationships with their providers because sometimes it takes longer than 6 months for approval of procedures or services)
- July 1 -- Monthly \$30/month Premium Fee for Undocumented Adults
 - Will be discontinued if they do not pay

2028 Changes:

- Oct 1st: Cost Sharing Expansion for Adults
 - Copay will be required for certain medical services for individuals above 100% Federal Poverty Level

Discussion and Questions ensued.

Commissioner Ruvalcaba inquired if there is any idea of the percentage of those who will lose MediCal. Answer: It is not possible to anticipate how many will lose coverage. An estimated 23,000 in San Luis Obispo County will be affected by the 2027 work requirement, and over 5,000 related to immigration status.

Commissioner Mehigan asked if there are resources for Mixteco speaking families to ensure their renewals are being completed. Answer: MICOP and the Promotores Collaborative are partnering with DSS to support Mixteco-speaking families.

Commissioner Mehigan asked if children will have to be recertified every six months? Or does this only apply to adults? Answer: Children will have an annual renewal requirement (as currently). As of now, MediCal is based on individual eligibility—Parents could lose coverage, but children retain coverage.

Commissioner Ruvalcaba commented that videos have been created in the past for Mixteco speaking families on topics related to health access; could some be created for these changes? Chair Ortiz-Legg asked if Public Health and/or MICOP can partner on this type of option.

Public Comment:

Lisa Fraser, Center for Family Strengthening Executive Director, announced that the Promotores Collaborative has contracted with MICOP (Oxnard-based team) to create videos on this topic.

ITEM 9: Staff Reports

Misty Livengood, First 5 Communications Coordinator, updated on the following activities:

- First 5 SLO County Highlights in Annual Report
- First 5 (media coverage of) \$100k contribution to The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County's "Together for SLO County: A Critical Response Fund"
- Uplift Child Care Coalition – new logo and upcoming Learning Communities
- Family-Friendly Workplaces Program move to Atascadero Chamber is now complete; their website reflects this change
- First 5-sponsored event: Breast Milk Donor Drive (Central Coast Breastfeeding Coalition)
- First 5-supported event: CHC Candy Buy-Back Day
- Dia de los Muertos and Halloween events across the county
- First 5 funded partner Parent Pods fall classes up and running

Wendy Wendt, Executive Director, provided an update on the following:

- First 5 staff are developing and will release in early November a Request for Applications as Phase 2 of the Early Childhood System Stabilization Funding initiative.
- The First 5 Association is offering two upcoming opportunities for Commissioners:
 - November 18 – Regional Commissioner Roundtables
 - January 22 – Commissioner Onboarding

Public Comment: None

ITEM 10: Future Agenda Items

Commissioner Ortiz-Legg encouraged Commissioners to offer suggestions at any time. There is always room for topics to include in future meetings.

Public Comment: None

ITEM 11: Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Ruvalcaba announced that the Latino Outreach Council will be hosting a Dia de los Muertos celebration at Mission Plaza on the afternoon of November 1st.

ITEM 12: Adjourn

5:14 pm

To: First 5 Commission

From: Staff

Date: December 3, 2025

Re: ITEM 2b: 2026 Commission Meeting Calendar

Background

First 5 San Luis Obispo Commission meetings have followed the same calendar pattern for over a decade. This pattern -- which includes 7 meetings per year -- is 3:00-5:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the months of January, March, May, June, September and October; and the first Wednesday of December.

During the October 22 Commission meeting, staff facilitated a discussion with Commissioners regarding anticipated availability for proposed 2026 Commission meeting dates. This discussion included consideration of possible alternative dates to the traditional pattern if any or all of the traditional dates would pose an attendance/scheduling challenge. Commissioners confirmed that the traditional pattern will remain in place. The final 2026 Commission Calendar is being submitted for Commission approval at today's meeting.

PROPOSED 2026 Commission Meeting Dates**January 28****March 25****May 27****June 24****September 23****October 28****December 2**



payday
(bold)



Commission
Meeting

2026

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To: First 5 Commission of San Luis Obispo County

From: First 5 Staff

Date: December 3, 2025

Re: Item 3: Approve First 5 San Luis Obispo County Annual Evaluation Report
FY 2024-25

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Commission approve the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Annual Evaluation Report.

Background

First 5 San Luis Obispo County's Annual Evaluation Report 2024-25, has been completed by the Carsel Consulting Group and is attached (under separate cover). The Carsel team will present an overview of the report at the Commission meeting. Commissioners are encouraged to review the report in advance of the meeting, and to note the following.

- An updated Theory of Change, introduced at the October 2025 Commission meeting (a visual that outlines how current and future efforts contribute to our desired outcomes).
- A new structure for the evaluation findings, which now includes an overview of the year and progress in each of the three focus areas from the Commission 2024-28 Strategic Plan.
- New visuals (e.g., thermometers and continuums) to help more clearly track progress across efforts.