



**AMADOR COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

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August 22, 2023

The Presiding Judge – Amador County Superior Court
500 Argonaut Lane
Jackson, CA 95642
Amador County Civil Grand Jury
PO Box 249
Jackson, CA 95642

Re: Grand Jury Report Responses 2022-2023

Dear Judge:

Please find below the County's response to the 2021-2022 Grand Jury report. We appreciate the Grand Jury's time and consideration and would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that you or they might have.

AMADOR COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES

Findings

F1: The Veteran Services page of the Amador County website has little information.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F2: The services that Terry Sanders provides to Veterans is invaluable, but not widely known among local veterans with whom we spoke.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F3: Amador County receives funding from the California Department of Veteran Affairs for every claim that is filed and receives additional funding if the claim is accepted (See Appendix G).

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F4: The Volcano Telephone and Amador County phone directories both have a disconnected phone number listed for Veteran Services.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Recommendations

R1: The Grand Jury recommends the County website be updated with the most commonly used links to Veteran Services. These links would enable veterans to reach services while they wait for local staff assistance. These should include Benefit Fact Sheets- Agent Orange.pdf, Burial and Plot Interment Allowance.pdf, Burial Benefits.pdf, Calvet Fee Waiver.pdf, Calvet Home Loan.pdf and CHAMPVA Benefits.pdf, Commissary Card.pdf, DMV Registration Exempt DV Plate.pdf, Employment.pdf, Fishing and Hunting License.pdf, Honor Guard.pdf, Incarcerated Veterans.pdf, TRICARE.pdf, VA Compensation Claim.pdf, VA Debt Management.pdf, VA Dependent no Indemnity Compensation.pdf, VV Loan.pdf and VSD001.pdf. Links and information should also be provided for Clinics, Medical Facilities, Veterans Associations and CalVet services.

Response: The recommendation has not been implemented but will be partially implemented in the future. The County does not have a website manager, but each department is responsible for controlling the information on its website. The VSO will assemble the information that he considers appropriate here and will work with other staff to get that information on the website. A schedule for completion is unknown.

R2: The Grand Jury recommends that the County consider marketing Amador County Veteran Services with regular local and social media advertising. A sample proposed advertisement follows (See Appendix H).

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The VSO will be allocated an additional \$1,000 annually to spend marketing his services as he so desires.

R3: The Grand Jury recommends that a portion of the funds received from the California Department of Veteran Affairs be used to market Amador County staff services. Better marketing should result in more Veterans seeking and receiving benefits, and it should result in receipt of more funds from the California Department of Veteran Services to Amador County (See Appendix F and G).

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. See the response to Recommendation #2. The county does not receive more funds from the Federal Government than it spends, so the County's General Fund must pick up the difference, which it does. Moving money from one pot to another accomplishes nothing unless it is accompanied by a spending cut, and the impact to the General Fund remains the same. The increase to the VSO Budget that is identified here will be borne by the General Fund alone.

R4: The Grand Jury recommends that County staff coordinate with telephone directories to update the phone numbers for Veteran Services. Both the Volcano Telephone and the Amador County telephone directories have old, disconnected phone numbers listed, and both were published April 2023.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. It is unfortunate, but the Veterans Services Officer had to relocate from the Veterans Hall in Martell due to decisions made by the landlord, not a result of actions by the County or the VSO. As a result of the move to the HHS building, the phone number changed. All various phone services are aware of the change, and if you call 411 today, you will get the correct number.

AMADOR COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Findings

F1: Amador County has the second highest rate of suicide in California

Response: Amador County agrees with the finding

F2: The Medical Assistant position turned over 3 times in Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Response: Amador County partially agrees with the finding. The medical assistant position was a new position added to the Behavioral Health Department in February of 2022. Prior to this change, the department had a Behavioral Health Nurse position. Due to difficulties with hiring nurses, a decision was made to recruit for a medical assistant to expand recruitment. In Fiscal Year 2021-2022 the department hired a Psychiatric Technician in the Behavioral Health Nurse position in September of 2021, which did not work out for personnel reasons after only a few days. The department was unsuccessful with recruitment for a nurse and began the process to add a medical assistant position. The first medical assistant started with Behavioral Health in February 2022. Five months later this staff member resigned and the department recruited and hired another medical assistant in August of 2022. Although there was turnover in the position, there was only one nurse/psychiatric technician and one medical assistant that left the agency during Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

F3: In 2021, less than 2% of Mental Health Beneficiaries accounted for approximately 18% of total claim dollars. The cost for 13 patients was \$551,538 out of a total \$3,091,888 expenditure. In 2020, less than 2% of Mental Health Beneficiaries accounted for over 20% of total claim dollars. The cost for 13 patients was \$591,691

Response: Amador County agrees with the finding

F4: The year-end Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health External Quality Review Report-Amador MHP Final Report has an excessive number of acronyms making it extremely difficult to read and requiring the reader to go back multiple times to understand the content.

Response: Amador County agrees with the finding

F5: The Grand Jury understands that the Mental Health crisis and lack of Mental Health patient beds are national problems but believes there is room for improvement in our community to make the stay in the Emergency Room shorter, less frequent, and less traumatizing to 5150 patients.

Response: Amador County agrees with the finding

Recommendations

R1: The Grand Jury recommends Mental Health Services research the issue of suicide as it specifically relates to Amador County. To address this issue, more information is needed about causation and victim description (*e.g.*, foster child, veteran, teenager, senior). This is a startling statistic that reflects negatively on Amador County.

Response: The recommendation has already been implemented

Summary regarding implementation action: Amador County Behavioral Health has been aware of the suicide rate in Amador County for several years and efforts have been ongoing since 2014 when the Amador County Public Health Department completed an analysis of suicide and overdose deaths in Amador County for 2011-2013. Initially it was difficult to engage the community with the topic of suicide, but this seemed to shift in 2018 when Capital Public Radio did a story on rural suicide with Amador County as a focus. Amador County Behavioral Health worked closely with Capital Public Radio and this process seemed to be a critical turning point that assisted reaching a larger part of the community. Following the release of the Capital Public Radio series on rural suicide, Amador SPEAKS (Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Knowledge Support), a suicide prevention coalition was formed and continues to be active today. There have been various outreach efforts since that time and they continue. Attached is an overview and summary of the suicide prevention and awareness efforts in Amador County. A presentation that was given to the Amador County Board of Supervisors for Suicide Prevention and Awareness month in September 2022 is also attached.

R2: In recognition of the importance of the Medical Assistant position in processing and obtaining timely medications, the Grand Jury recommends that the salary and benefits of the position be reviewed so they are in keeping with the importance of the position. Cost savings could be realized in the prevention of high-cost crisis intervention or hospitalization. The Grand Jury recognizes the efforts of Mental Health staff and recommends they continue to expand their efforts to retain these critical staff members and to implement cross-training to lessen the impact of turnover.

Response: The recommendation has already been implemented

Summary regarding implementation action: Prior to having a Medical Assistant position, Amador County Behavioral Health had a Behavioral Health Nurse position. From 2018 to 2021 this position was held by a Psychiatric Technician, as the department was unsuccessful in hiring a nurse. In 2021, the department recruited for a Behavioral Health Nurse and only received two applicants and neither of them were nurses, they were both Psychiatric Technicians. After recruitment for a nurse continued to be unsuccessful due to workforce shortages and a high demand for nurses in the medical field due to the pandemic, Amador County Behavioral Health began to research the value of a medical assistant in this role, with the hopes to be able to recruit and retain this position more easily. Amador County Behavioral Health completed a review of salaries of medical assistants in various neighboring counties and the current pay range was determined based on the average pay. After Board of Supervisor approval to add the medical assistant position, our first medical assistant was hired in February of 2022. In response to efforts to retain critical staff members, Amador County Behavioral Health participates in loan repayment programs to assist staff in paying off any student loans. If staff apply and are awarded funds to pay for their outstanding student loans, the staff would agree to a 1-2 year service commitment depending on the program. Amador County Behavioral Health is also in the process of proposing a Workforce Innovations Project to the Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission at the state level to assist in various ways that may help to recruit and retain staff. If this project is approved there will be opportunity for various incentives to support our workforce.

R3: The Grand Jury recommends that Mental Health staff examine the treatment plans of these High-Cost Beneficiaries that are specified in reports to determine if different plans or medications may benefit the patient and perhaps even help realize a cost savings. If a unique category of High Cost Beneficiaries is identified, this could help target areas or populations for improvement.

Response: The recommendation has already been implemented

Summary regarding implementation action: Amador County Behavioral Health reviews this data quarterly. All high cost beneficiaries, also referred to as over-utilizers are reviewed during our quarterly Quality Improvement Committee Meeting. The Quality Improvement team reviews the beneficiaries' services and to determine if the level of service is appropriate, if there is something more needed or if there needs to be further clinical discussion to ensure that the beneficiary is getting what they need. The majority of the beneficiaries that are in this category are those that are receiving multiple services, such as psychiatric services from the psychiatrist, therapy services from the clinician, and case management services from a Personal Services Coordinator. Some may be youth that are receiving intensive services as well, such as Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) and Intensive Home Based Services (IHBS). Some of these beneficiaries are part of the Full Service Partnership program and are identified as in need of intensive services due to level of risk. Some of these high cost beneficiaries are those that have been in crisis and seen for crisis intervention services and may have been placed on a 5150 involuntary psychiatric hold. Placements in psychiatric facilities are very costly and contribute to those costs. The intensive services that Amador County Behavioral Health provides also include our mobile support crisis

intervention service to assist in preventing hospitalization and re-hospitalizations. The Quality Improvement Committee also reviews the low cost beneficiaries or under-utilizers on a quarterly basis to determine potential barriers and reasons why they may have not returned to services. This data is reviewed annually during the External Quality Review as well.

R4: The Grand Jury recommends removing acronyms from the public reports. If acronyms are deemed necessary, a glossary should be provided.

Response: The recommendation has already been implemented

Summary regarding explanation: The report that the Grand Jury is referencing is not a county report. This report is generated annually by the External Quality Review Organization (EQRO), who is contracted with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), to review counties on an annual basis for quality. Our next External Quality Review is scheduled for August 24, 2023 and Amador County Behavioral Health will provide this feedback to the reviewers.

R5: The Grand Jury recommends Mental Health staff target specific groups of beneficiaries for improved 7-day and 30-day post-hospitalization follow-up to determine whether this improves patient well-being and decreases rate of readmission to psychiatric facilities. The most recent data shows that the Amador County 7-day follow-up rate is 49.09% and the 30-day follow-up rate is 67.27%. It should be noted that the follow-up rates were better in the prior year with 7-day at 66% and 30-day at 76%

Response: The recommendation has already been implemented

Summary regarding implementation action: Amador County Behavioral Health has been tracking and continues to track post hospitalization follow up within 7 and 30 days. One of the functions of the mobile support team is to follow up with all beneficiaries that are seen in the Emergency Department for a behavioral health crisis by our crisis team. The goal is to follow up same day or next day. The mobile support team also follows up with beneficiaries when they are released from an inpatient hospital stay. The goal is also same day or next day upon release. Unfortunately, there may be gaps in time for follow up due to the facilities not informing Amador County Behavioral Health when the beneficiary has been released. In an effort to ensure timely follow up, the mobile support team begins attempting phone follow up with a beneficiary after the third day from when they were placed, in case the facility did not inform the department of their release. Amador County Behavioral Health has also implemented a Peer Meet Up Group that all beneficiaries who have been seen in the Emergency Department or released from an inpatient facility are invited to attend to provide additional peer supportive services to assist in reducing hospitalization and re-hospitalization. This Peer Support Group was part of a Performance Improvement Project (PIP) that is reviewed by the External Quality Review Organization (EQRO).

AMADOR COUNTY JAIL

Findings

F1: The County mission statement and goals are not listed on the County website or advertised around Amador County. In fact, the “About” tab on the County website is completely blank (See Appendix C). Surrounding counties have their mission, vision, and values listed on their websites (See Appendix B).

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F2: The Jail has a maximum capacity of 76 inmates; at the time of our visit there were 93 inmates.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding, although that information is maintained by the Sheriff, not the Board of Supervisors

F3: The Jail has 23 correctional officer positions, but only 14 were filled at the time of our visit, leaving nine vacancies.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F4: When the Jail was built in 1984, it had a 20-year lifespan before reaching the maximum capacity of 76 inmates.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F5: In 2002, the Jail population exceeded the 76 inmate capacity, and the average daily population has exceeded this capacity for the 20 years since then.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F6: In 2007, three years after it was estimated the Jail would need more cells, AB 900 was introduced. This was Amador County’s first attempt to secure funding for an expansion project.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F7: Due to CEQA lawsuits, there was an eight-year delay of the expansion project from SB 863. The County has since saved the funds necessary to make up the \$7-8 million dollar difference in funding that resulted from the delays.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding, although it should also be pointed out that the County had adequate funding to proceed with construction and operation in 2016, had the project not been delayed needlessly by CEQA challenges and a subsequent failure to approve the project documents in a timely fashion by the numerous State agencies.

F8: The Grand Jury has been making suggestions to expand the Jail for over 20 years. In recent years, the Grand Jury recommended the County consider planning for a new Jail facility when the expansion meets capacity. These recommendations were met with discouraging responses about the future from the Sheriff's Office, with its focus being on the current expansion.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F9: The Jail has already had days when capacity exceeded 116 (which is the capacity with the expansion) even with some inmates released early, while others who committed low-level crimes were not booked at all.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F10: After the current Jail expansion plan from SB 863, there will be no more room for future expansion on this location.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F11: Staff refused to say anything bad about their jobs, even when prompted. We observed during the tour that staff seem to like their jobs but are approaching burn out due to understaffing and expanded job duties such as janitorial tasks. It was noted in several prior Grand Jury reports that staff had a morale boost during the time of the AB 900 talk and the SB 863 expansion. However, as time passed with no expansion construction, staff vacancies have increased.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F12: The roof is over 20 years old and in need of replacement. There is a plan to get the roof fixed before the expansion project begins.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

F13: The staff have been very knowledgeable and accommodating during the tour and with all of our follow-up questions.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Recommendations

R1: Complete the roof replacement as soon as possible.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

R2: Get the expansion project out to bid and in construction as soon as the State finishes processing the expansion approval.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented.

R3: “Outstanding people have one thing in common: An absolute sense of mission” (Zig Ziglar). Create and make the County aware of goals for the future of the County. Update the County website with the mission statement and goals. Use these goals to guide plans for the future.

Response: The recommendation will be implemented.

R4: Implement a funding replacement plan for future projects in the County. When the Jail expansion is complete, a Nexus study should be done to determine when the next expansion/upgrade will be needed. Start securing funding by searching for grants and investments, as well as setting aside savings for future expansion projects.

Response: The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted. The County currently has a Capital Facilities Fee (CFF) in place to address future needs such as this, and a nexus study is kept current with the needs of the County. It should be noted that not all of the cities have adopted this fee, so the collections are incomplete. The County does not have the authority to assess this fee within the cities without concurrence from those cities.

R5: “Employees are a company’s greatest asset – they’re your competitive advantage. You want to attract and retain the best; provide them with encouragement, stimulus, and make them feel that they are an integral part of the company’s mission” (Anne M. Mulcahy). The salary of the Jail staff should be reviewed with a goal to regain the “competitive advantage” with neighboring counties. However, if this is not currently feasible, the County should focus on making staff “feel that they are an integral part” of the County. It was reported multiple times that the staff had a higher morale when there was a discussion of a new facility being built. Living in a rural community, citizens compromise the pay of a big city for the caring and compassion they are provided. Jail staff members should feel like there is a future in staying in the County even if there is not a financial incentive.

Response: The recommendation has been implemented. The Board of Supervisors has negotiated raises with the Sheriff's Office Association, which includes all Correctional Officers. Beginning in 2022, all staff in SOA will receive 20% increases over the next four years. The Board sincerely appreciates the work that these men and women do in serving the residents of Amador County and understands the essential role they play in the operations of our county.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Brown
Chairman, Amador County Board of Supervisors

Cc: Chuck Iley, County Administrative Officer
Greg Gillott, County Counsel
File

Amador County Suicide Prevention & Awareness An Overview

Introduction:

Suicide in Amador County has been a challenge for the past decade, if not longer. Rural communities have higher rates of suicide and Amador is no exception. Lack of resources, education, community engagement, transportation, poverty, stigma and opportunities for isolation create risk factors that contribute to suicidal ideation and death.

Efforts to educate the public and address suicide in Amador County have been ongoing since 2014 when the Amador County Public Health Department did an analysis of Suicide and Overdoes Deaths in Amador County, covering the period of 2011-2013. During this time period, 27 suicide deaths occurred in Amador County.

Between 2016 and 2021, Amador County has experienced 73 people die by suicide. Here are the breakdowns by year:

Year	# of Suicide Deaths
2016	10
2017	9
2018	14
2019	13
2020	12
2021	15

Currently, out of 58 counties, Amador County ranks second for highest for suicide deaths during 2019-2021. The California Suicide Rate is 10.7 while Amador's is 36.2, nearly three times higher than the state. The California Suicide Rate is based off 10 deaths per 100,000 people. Since Amador County's population is smaller, this impacts the rate. However, for a county with approximately 35,000 people (excluding MCSP), this is a very significant number of suicide deaths.

Currently, out of 58 counties, Amador County ranks first for highest rate of self-harm Emergency Department (ED) visits during 2019-2021. The California Self-Harm Rate is 82.7 and Amador County's is 265.7. Similar to the suicide rate, the self-harm rate is based off the number of self-harm ED visits per 100,000 people. Amador County's rate is nearly three times that of the state. However, since Amador's population is smaller, this also impacts that rate, even though it is still high for such a small population.

Local Efforts in Suicide Prevention:

As stated above, Amador County has had a significantly high suicide rate (per capita) for several years. Efforts to engage the community around suicide prevention efforts were unsuccessful until 2018 when Capital Public Radio decided to do a story on rural suicide, with a specific focus on Amador County. Until this time, many community members had no idea that Amador was ranked with the third highest (at the time – the rate has increased since) suicide rate in the state and that many factors contribute to this.

In September 2018, Capital Public Radio released their series, Rural Suicide: One California County's Fight To Save Lives, using their radio platform, a dedicated webpage on their website and locally on Amador's radio station, KVGK. At the end of the series, Capital Public Radio held a community gathering to discuss the data, risk factors and create a conversation around suicide and suicide prevention which thus started a momentum at the local level. The main takeaway from the evening was that it was determined that suicide would never be addressed by one agency, organization or individual – it takes an entire community.

Amador SPEAKS: After Capital Public Radio's story aired, followed by the community-wide event, Amador SPEAKS (Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Knowledge Support) formed. This became and still is Amador County's suicide prevention coalition. The coalition started meeting in October 2018 and has met monthly ever since. The group has a core membership of community organizations, agencies and community members that understand this is a community effort and all take part to address suicide prevention, awareness and education.

Currently, Amador SPEAKS is working to update its Strategic Plan which should be finalized in August. Included in the update will be measurable outcomes and goals to increase community awareness around suicide while engaging community members in these efforts through outreach, events and trainings/education.

Initiatives under Amador SPEAKS include:

1) Training:

- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR): Suicide gatekeeper training has been very successful and 572 Amador County residents have been trained since 7/1/2018.
- Prior to COVID-19, safeTALK was provided to schools, the local wellness center and the community.
- El Rotafolio is a specific training provided in Spanish and targeted to the Hispanic and Latino population. This has been provided by ACBH local Promotores de Salud. QPR in Spanish has also been provided as well.
- Living Works START is another gatekeeper training that is provided online and very useful and interactive.
- Other trainings as-needed are offered during regular Amador SPEAKS meetings.

2) Data:

Amador SPEAKS has developed a data subcommittee that looks at local death data in comparison by years, age, gender and then compares to state and other small county data. This has helped with identifying where outreach efforts need to be targeted and to assist with unmet needs. For example, our data was showing us that people who were experiencing chronic pain were dying by suicide at a higher rate—so a volunteer started a chronic pain group at the wellness center.

Anthem Blue Cross, Managed Medi-Cal Plan has been a critical partner in accessing and presenting local data around suicide. In addition to Anthem, the local Coroner's office has been instrumental in providing localized data, in real-time.

- 3) Partnership with California Department of Public Health (CDPH) – Office of Suicide Prevention (OSP):** CDPH offers training and technical assistance to 13 California counties that have higher suicide and self-harm rates than the general population and participate in the CA Violent Death

Reporting System (CalVDRS): Amador, Butte, Humboldt, Kern, Lake, Lassen, Placer, Sacramento, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, and Tehama.

CDPH OSP provides Amador County with annual data tables, technical assistance to address county needs and has provide small gun safes to distribute for free for the past two years. For September 2023, CDPH OSP has committed to providing 75 guns safes so that Amador SPEAKS can partner with local law enforcement to advertise the availability of the gun safes and how it reduces access to lethal means, as well as provide a Lethal Means Safety training.

- 4) **Postvention:** Amador SPEAKS identified that there was no grief support specific to suicide loss in Amador County. Two coalition members started a Friends for Survival group that met monthly. Although the group is no longer meeting, Friends for Survival is still a very active partner and will be presenting at an upcoming Amador SPEAKS meeting in the fall.

Amador SPEAKS has also engaged with Amador County Sheriff's Office and the Amador County Chaplains in discussions around developing a Loss Team. A Loss Team provides support to families and loved ones after a suicide death. Amador SPEAKS is currently receiving technical assistance to start the process of creating a local Loss Team here in Amador County.

- 5) **Community Engagement Strategies:** One of the core components of Amador SPEAKS is community engagement. The purpose of community engagement is to educate the coalition members about community resources and supports that can benefit suicide prevention efforts, but also to allow the community to learn about the coalition and its efforts. It is a bi-directional approach that has worked well. Since January 2022, Amador SPEAKS has invited guest speakers to attend the monthly coalition meetings which include, Amador County Sheriff Redman, the Amador County Chaplains, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Hospice of Amador and Calaveras Counties, and the 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Future presenters include Friends for Survival and trainings from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the VA.

In addition to engagements during the monthly meetings, Amador SPEAKS advertises its monthly meetings in the Amador Ledger Dispatch (both online and paper) and a coalition member has access to a radio spot on KVCB which is utilized every few months to keep suicide prevention efforts as an ongoing conversation within the community.

6) **Events:**

- **Heart of Hope:** Heart of Hope originated as a collaboration between the Amador Arts Council (AmadorArts) and ACBH, in order to bring awareness around mental illness and suicide prevention during Suicide Prevention Awareness Week in September 2019. The Heart of Hope is an art exhibit that highlights the hope, perseverance and awareness of mental health and suicide prevention. The impact the exhibit had on those who viewed it increased awareness of community members and facilitated meaningful discussion around the effects of suicide throughout Amador County. Heart of Hope is now an annual event, held every September.
- **Suicide Prevention & Awareness Month:** September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness month and every year, Amador SPEAKS organizes the campaign to increase awareness and education around suicide and suicide prevention efforts. In 2022, the group presented to the Amador County Board of Supervisors for the first time and the

group has decided to do the same in 2023. Amador SPEAKS is receiving technical assistance to create the slide decks and streamline other marketing materials in order to provide effective messaging with action steps so all can do their part in suicide prevention.

- **Future Ideas:** A goal for the next year is to host a community event in the Spring to bring awareness to suicide prevention efforts throughout the county. Brainstorming is currently underway and potential ideas include 'Hike for Hope' or some sort of walk/run activity, along with resources and activities for all.

Funding Considerations for Suicide Prevention Efforts:

Amador County Behavioral Health (ACBH) is the primary funding source for suicide prevention efforts in Amador County. ACBH provides staffing and an outreach budget in the amount of \$20,000 per fiscal year to fund activities under Amador SPEAKS and act as a coordinator for the coalition itself. In addition to the staffing and outreach budget, ACBH also provides the funding for the QPR training, utilizing Ken Baldwin and Nexus Youth & Family Services as well as other suicide prevention training offered through the community.

Resources:

<https://www.capradio.org/news/project/2018/rural-suicide-one-california-countys-fight-to-save-lives/>

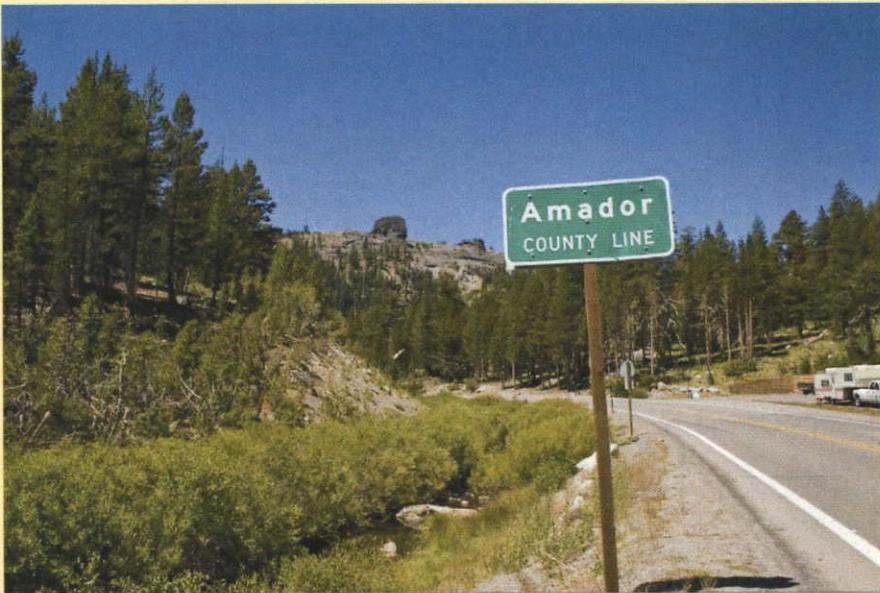
<https://amador.networkofcare.org/mh/content.aspx?id=19231>

[https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/Office-of-Suicide-Prevention-\(OSP\).aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/Office-of-Suicide-Prevention-(OSP).aspx)

[BOS Final Amador County AU FY22/23 Prt. 1](#)

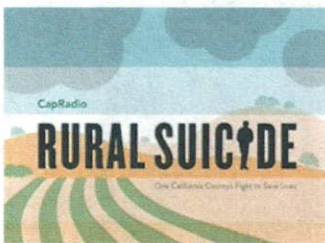
[BOS Final Amador County AU FY22/23 Prt. 2](#)

[BOS Final Amador County AU FY22/23 Prt. 3](#)



Amador County Suicide Prevention & Awareness

September 2022



Rural Suicide: One California County's Fight To Save Lives

A rural pocket of Northern California is seeing some of the highest rates of suicide in the state. We're exploring the mental health crisis in Amador County, and what's being done to solve it.

<https://www.caprдио.org/news/project/2018/rural-suicide-one-california-countys-fight-to-save-lives/>

PODCAST EPISODES



The 'S' Word: How Suicide Is Devastating Amador County And Rural Communities
Monday, September 10, 2018

Amador has the third-highest suicide rate of any county in California — about three times the state average and the top 20 counties on the list are some of the most remote and least populous places in the state.



Dying To Get Out: Stigma, 'Copycat Effect' Drive Youth Suicide In Rural Amador County
Tuesday, September 11, 2018

Many young people say they don't have a healthy way to express feelings of being trapped and misunderstood. And teens who live in remote places are more likely to seek a fatal escape.



Chronic Loneliness Is A Major Cause Of Suicide For Seniors, Especially in Rural California
Wednesday, September 12, 2018

It's a health issue that presents a threat of early death equal to obesity. One-third of all people who took their lives in Amador County between 2010 and 2017 were over age 60.



How Suicide Trainings, Community Connections Could Patch Holes In Amador's Mental Health Safety Net
Thursday, September 13, 2018

Amador County residents and social service providers say there's a serious lack of services and awareness around mental illness in the community. They're planning to use a special cache of leftover state funding to solve the problem.

Energy, Resolve After CapRadio's Gathering On Rural Suicide

Monday, September 24, 2018 | Sacramento, CA



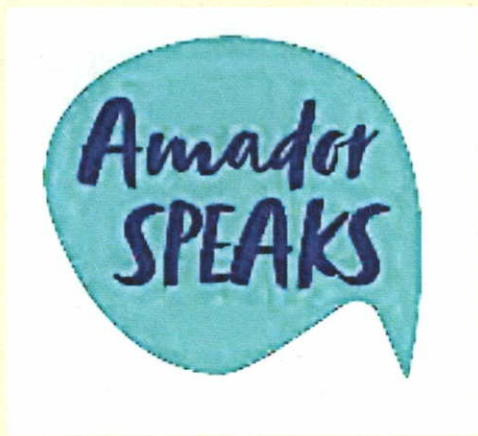
Nearly 100 people convened in Jackson at an event organized by CapRadio and Amador County Behavioral Health following reporter Sammy Caiola's six-month investigation into the topic of rural suicide.

Veressa S. Nelson / Capital Public Radio

The whole community needs to
be part of the solution!

Amador SPEAKS

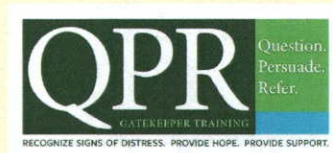
(Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Knowledge Support)



- County's first suicide prevention coalition
- Formed in October 2018 and meets monthly
- Core membership of people that understand this is a community effort

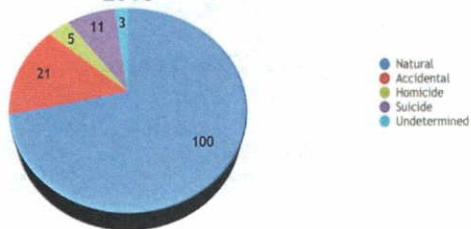
Accomplishments: Training

- safeTALK
- LivingWorks START
- El Rotafolio
- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR)
 - 521 individuals trained (since July 1, 2018)
 - Offered virtually and in-person
 - October 5, 2022 - IN-PERSON





Coroner Statistics for
2018



Accomplishments: Data

- Data subcommittee reviews local death data and compares it to state and other small county data.
- The data review helps identify unmet needs and where outreach efforts need to be targeted, for example:
 - People who were experiencing chronic pain were dying by suicide at a higher rate—so a volunteer started a chronic pain group at Sierra Wind.

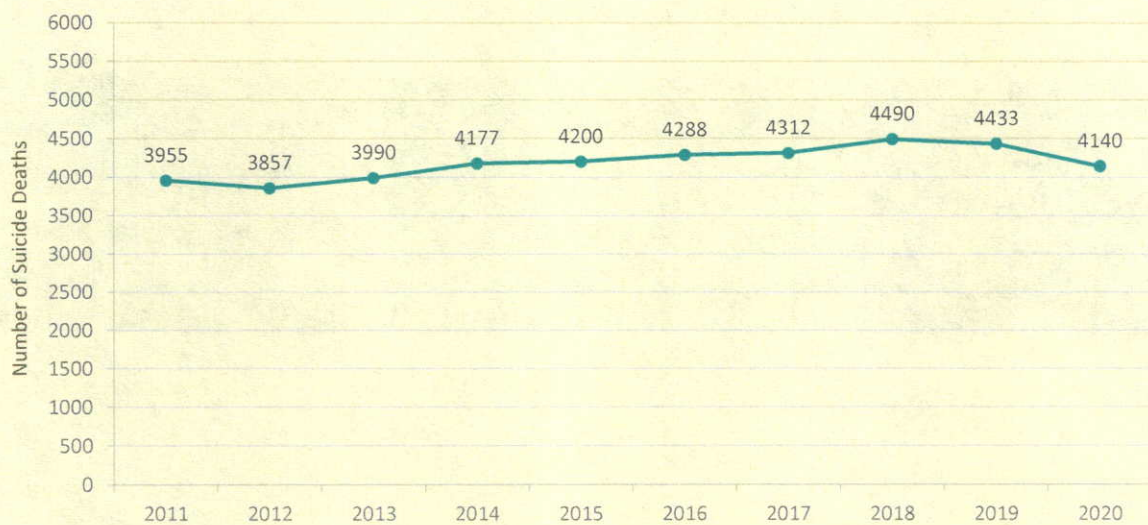
CDPH Suicide Prevention Programs

Office of Suicide
Prevention (OSP)

Comprehensive
Suicide Prevention
(CSP) Program

California Violent
Death Reporting
System (CalVDRS)

Number of Suicide Deaths in California, 2011-2020



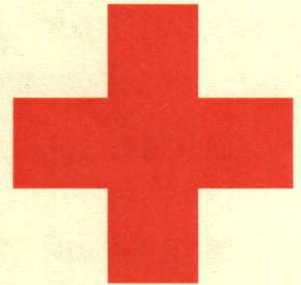
Source: 2011-2013 deaths: CDPH, Death Statistical Master File (DSMF); 2014-2020 deaths: CDPH, CA Comprehensive Master Death File (CCMDF)

Recent Suicide Trends in CA

- Number of suicides overall in California decreased in 2020
- Suicide rates of certain subgroups increased in 2020:
 - 10-18 year olds
- Suicide rates among certain subgroups of youth (ages 10-24) increased in 2020:
 - Youth who are Black
 - Youth who are Hispanic
 - Female youth
- The use of firearms as a mechanism for suicide has increased in 2020

Recent Self-Harm Emergency Department (ED) Visit Trends in CA

- California ED visits declined in March and April 2020 then returned to 2019 levels by July 2020
- From July 2020 to June 2021, California ED visits remained roughly at 2019 levels
- In the first half of 2021, ED visits were greater than 2019 levels among:
 - Females
 - Youth aged 10 - 18 years
 - Californians who are Hispanic, Asian/PI, or multiracial



Amador County Suicide Rates

- Amador County ranks **2nd highest** in the state (out of 58 counties) for suicides during 2018-2020
 - 2018-2020 Amador County Suicide Rate: 35.5 (per 100,000 residents)
 - 2018-2020 CA Statewide Suicide Rate: 10.9 (per 100,000 residents)
- Suicide rates in Amador County are highest among:
 - **People who are white (35.7)**, followed by people who are Hispanic (18.9), Asian/Pacific Islander (18.2), American Indian (16.0), and Black (10.4)
 - **Older adults age 85+ (61.3)**, followed by individuals aged 45-64 (41.5), 25-44 (40.7), 65-84 (33.1), 19-24 (11.1), and youth aged 18 and under (4.4)
 - **Males (53.4)**, followed by females (6.4)
- In 2019, firearms were used in 62% of suicides in Amador County

Amador County Self-Harm Emergency Department (ED) Visit Rates

- Amador County ranks **1st in the state** for self-harm related ED visits in 2018-2020
 - 2018-2020 Amador County Self-Harm ED Visit Rate: 282.1 (per 100,000 residents)
 - 2018-2020 CA Statewide Self-Harm ED Visit Rate: 80.1 (per 100,000 residents)
- Self-harm ED visit rates in Amador County are highest among:
 - **People who are black (1783.9)**, followed by people who are Hispanic (386.0), Asian/Pacific Islander (313.9), and white (202.7)
 - **People aged 25-44 (697.1)**, although rates for people aged 19-24 (403.4) and youth aged 18 and under (279.2) were also high
 - **Males (373.1)**, followed by females (173.0)

CDPH Suicide Reports

- CDPH's publicly available suicide and self-harm data reports and suicide prevention resources can be found on CDPH's [Suicide Prevention Program web page](#).
- Listed below are titles and links to recently published reports.
 - [Suicide Trends in 2020 Data Brief](#)
 - [PowerPoint doc with updated data for Suicide Trends in 2020](#)
 - [Veteran Suicide in 2019 Data Brief](#)
 - [Older Adult Suicide in 2018 Fact Sheet](#)
 - [California Violent Death Reporting System \(CalVDRS\) Fact Sheet: Suicide in California, 2019](#)
 - [California Violent Death Reporting System \(CalVDRS\) Infographic: Suicide in California, 2019](#)

Accomplishments: Postvention

- Discussion and review of previous postvention efforts highlighted that there was no grief support specific to suicide loss in our county.
- As a result, two members started a Friends for Survival group that meets monthly.

Friends
FOR SURVIVAL

CAL VOICES
ADVOCACY • RECOVERY • PEER SUPPORT

Amador County / Jackson, CA - 1st Tuesdays @ 3:30pm - 4:30pm

- Dates: September 6, October 4, November 1, December 6
- Call our office 916-392-0664 for meeting address.

Community Engagement Strategies

- Guest speakers at Amador SPEAKS meetings
 - January meeting: Amador County Sheriff
 - August meeting: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
 - These presentations increase community interest and attendance and open the door for deeper partnerships
- Ongoing radio spot at the local radio station that includes a monthly broadcast highlighting Amador SPEAKS and suicide prevention/awareness
- Advertisement of monthly meetings in Amador Ledger Dispatch

Suicide Prevention Coalition Meeting

January 20, 2022 @ 3:00 pm via Zoom

VIRTUAL MEETING with guest speaker Sheriff Redman presenting on Law Enforcement's Role in Suicide and Suicide Prevention in Amador County.

GOT HOPE? JOIN AMADOR SPEAKS TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN SHARE THAT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

**SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION
AWARENESS KNOWLEDGE SUPPORT**

**Amador
SPEAKS**

**JOIN US THE 3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH @ 3:30
JUNE 16TH, JULY 21ST, AUGUST 18TH, 2022
MEETINGS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM/CALL IN**

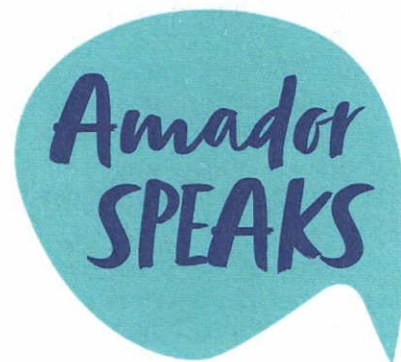
Join Zoom Meeting <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/98140936071?pwd=ZH-VYV0FiV2xVcXNUeU1nRjNGSlQxUT09>
Meeting ID: 981 4093 6071 • Passcode: 831756 • Phone: (669) 900-6833

**WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS IN AMADOR COUNTY?
CONTACT STEPHANIE HESS 209 223-6308**

If you or someone you know is at risk of suicide, please contact the
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255

CONNECT - REACH OUT - INSPIRE HOPE - OFFER HELP

Accomplishments: Amador Arts Partnership



Small But Mighty!

- Strategic Plan and Learning Collaboratives
- Community efforts
- Cross-pollination
- Our goal is simple: to prevent suicide and increase awareness around suicide and we work together to help achieve it.

