

## Be Prepared for Emergencies and Disasters

**Making sure the County is ready to handle natural and man-made emergencies falls on the shoulders of the Office of Emergency Services (OES).**

It's nearly impossible to predict when the next disaster will hit Sacramento County, but OES staff know it's important to be ready for what may come next whether it's floods, fire or an attack. That's why the County is encouraging people to learn how to protect themselves and their families from emergencies and disasters.

Starting a conversation today can help you and your family to take more action to prepare. By taking simple steps, you can build your preparedness at your own pace:

- » Set aside a time when everyone is calm and relaxed.
- » It may help to hold continuous discussions, so decisions aren't rushed, and people feel more comfortable talking about the topic.
- » Talk about steps you've taken to prepare and encourage others to ask questions about preparedness actions that might work for them.

You may not know when a disaster will happen, but you can begin to take easy but impactful steps now to keep your family safe.

The public can find more ways to protect themselves at [sacramentoready.org](https://sacramentoready.org). There you can learn the steps needed to prepare for an emergency or crisis.



Sacramento County residents are encouraged to sign up for Sacramento Alert at [sacramento-alert.org](https://sacramento-alert.org) to receive emergency alerts by email, phone or text. Residents will only receive alerts that are critical and time-sensitive, including: flooding, levee failures, severe weather, disaster events, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods in specific geographic locations.

The flooding that struck the county in 2017 and 2023 disrupted lives and caused destruction totaling tens of millions of dollars. Planning ahead now means being ready when disaster strikes in the future.

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# A Fairer Approach to Child Support in Sac County

**In child support cases, fairness and participation matter. Yet across California and the nation, nearly half of all child support orders are determined without both parents present.**

These “default judgments” often result in child support amounts being set without crucial context—like a parent’s ability to pay—leading to payment delinquencies and financial stress for families.

**Sacramento County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS)** is doing things differently. DCSS has made a powerful commitment to procedural justice—ensuring parents are treated with fairness, transparency and respect throughout the child support process.

Historically, about 50% of child support orders in Sacramento County were made by default – on par with the national average. Today, that number is closer to 25%, thanks to major reforms driven by DCSS.

“Parents deserve a chance to be heard,” said DCSS Director, Dalen Fredrickson. “We’ve worked hard to remove barriers that prevent parents from participating in the process.”

## Key Innovations Making a Difference

DCSS has taken several concrete steps to help parents actively engage with the system:

- » **Dedicated Locate Team:** A specialized team now work to find and contact parents early in the process—not just to deliver legal paperwork, but to begin a conversation.
- » **Early Outreach & Communication:** Staff explain the child support process up front,



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offer guidance on how to respond to the summons, and answer questions about legal rights and responsibilities.

- » **“By Appointment” Legal Starts:** Instead of starting the legal process “by surprise,” parents are invited to begin by appointment, when possible, with information and support.
- » **Experienced Child Support Officers:** In most cases, department Child Support Officers—not outside process servers—deliver the legal documents. These staff are trained to answer questions, conduct on-the-spot genetic testing when

needed, and help parents avoid court by working toward agreements.

- » **Modernized Guidelines:** Recent updates to the state’s child support guidelines and upcoming changes to the family code allow courts to better consider a parent’s actual earning capacity, making support orders more realistic and sustainable.

## Results That Support Families

Thanks to these efforts, more parents are participating—and more children are benefiting. Sacramento County now sends over **\$10 million each month** to local families to help cover essential living expenses. When parents are engaged, support orders are more accurate, and collections improve.

Derek Smart and Siu Narruhn, both field Child Support Officers, meet with parents daily throughout Sacramento County to assist them with the complex child support process.

“The impact I have on customers in the field versus those on the phone is more personal,” said Mr. Smart. “Being in person allows the customer to see my passion to help and relate to them in their own setting, which puts them at ease.”

Ms. Narruhn shared a similar experience. “The impact on our customers in the field has improved since transitioning from Process Servers to field Child Support Officers. We now provide the option for fathers to get genetic testing on the spot. Many fathers I have tested feel relieved knowing they have a voice in their case and are thankful to get answers.”

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## A Community United Against Fentanyl

**“You never think this will happen to you. You never think this will be your kid. You know that you’re holding up a picture. That’s all you got, your pictures and your memories. You don’t have them physically here no more and that’s the worst pain ever.”**

With those words, Stephanie Boatright, who lost her son Izaya to fentanyl, opened the 2025 Fentanyl Awareness and Action Summit. Her voice was one of many: from parents, professionals, youth and community leaders, who reminded the audience that fentanyl doesn’t discriminate. The stories were raw and painful, but they carried a shared purpose: saving lives.

More than 400 people gathered for the annual Summit, hosted by **Sacramento County Department of Health Services** with partners including the Sacramento County Opioid Coalition, Sierra Sacramento Valley Medical Society, Safer Sacramento, Sac Metro Fire and the U.S. Attorney’s Office. The theme *“Coming Together, Embracing Solutions, Strengthening our Response”* was echoed in hopeful news: fentanyl-related deaths in Sacramento County have declined by 32 percent in the past year.

But the work is far from over. The Summit made it clear that the next steps are about education, prevention and action.

Here’s what every Sacramento County resident should know:

- » **Help is available.** If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use, visit Sacramento County Behavioral Health Services for support and resources.
- » **Be cautious.** Fentanyl is present in counterfeit pills and other street drugs. Never take pills that aren’t prescribed directly to you.



- » **Carry Narcan.** This life-saving medication can reverse an overdose. It’s available through Safer Sacramento and the Sacramento County Opioid Coalition.
- » **Get involved.** Join the Coalition at [sacopioidcoalition.org](https://sacopioidcoalition.org), participate in outreach events, or share your story with the Department of Health Services.
- » **Stay informed.** Learn more at [SaferSacramento.com](https://SaferSacramento.com) and read the *Ripple Effect* blog.

The Summit was a reminder that the fentanyl crisis is not abstract, it’s personal. Families like Stephanie’s carry the weight of loss, but their courage in speaking out lights the path forward. By learning, acting and standing together, Sacramento County is showing that real change is possible and lives can be saved.



### WE’RE HIRING!

As the region’s third largest employer, Sacramento County has more than 13,000 employees working across 40 departments in fields such as technology, health care, finance, waste management, social services, law enforcement, parks and voter registration. If you’re looking for a career with purpose, visit [www.saccountyjobs.net](https://www.saccountyjobs.net) to view a list of all the positions currently accepting applications and subscribe to emails to be alerted when a specific job is available.

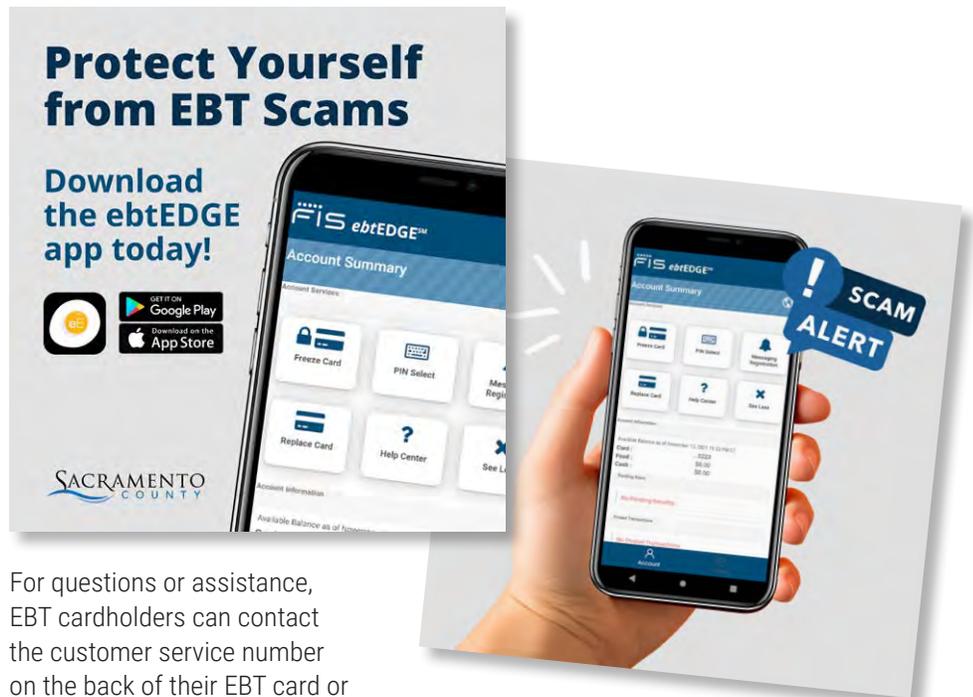
## County Warns EBT Cardholders of Fake Mobile App

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has alerted counties to a fake mobile application that is targeting EBT cardholders.

The app, called “Ebt edge – food stamps” and currently listed in the Apple iOS App Store, mimics the official FIS ebtEDGE Mobile App but is not legitimate.

The fraudulent app attempts to charge users a \$4.99 weekly fee or \$60 for lifetime access. California EBT cardholders should know that the state will never charge fees to access or manage their benefits.

Cardholders are strongly advised to download and use only the official, state-supported FIS ebtEDGE app to protect their benefits and personal information. The app can be downloaded at [www.fisglobal.com/ebtedgemobile](http://www.fisglobal.com/ebtedgemobile).



For questions or assistance, EBT cardholders can contact the customer service number on the back of their EBT card or visit [www.ebt.ca.gov](http://www.ebt.ca.gov).

## A Fairer Approach to Child Support in Sac County, *Continued*

### Need Help With Child Support?

Whether you're starting a new child support case, need to modify an existing order, or are having trouble with collections, DCSS is here to help, and almost all services are free.

DCSS has tools to help and real people who care! Their field-based Child Support Officers not only guide clients through the process, but they also work to find solutions.

### Connect With Us

If you or someone you know could benefit from child support services, visit [childsupport.sacounty.gov](http://childsupport.sacounty.gov) or call (866) 901-3212 to get started. We're here to support families—and build a stronger, more just future for every child.