



# AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

778 W. State St., El Centro, CA 92243  
800.510.2020 | 442.265.7030 | www.aaa24.org

## Meeting Minutes: Thursday, September 18, 2025

**Proceedings:** The Imperial County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Advisory Council met for a regular meeting on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at the Imperial County Workforce Development Board – Conference Room, Located at 2799 S. Fourth Street, El Centro, CA 92243.

### Voting Attendees:

Cynthia Alba  
AJ Gaddis  
Patricia Burnworth  
Sylvia Chavez  
Manuel Sanchez  
Ember Haller  
Daniel Romero  
Anna M. Garcia  
Benjamin Horton  
Javier Moreno  
Lucy M. Hendry  
Ana Rodriguez  
Ismael Lopez  
Mary Walla

### Representing Sector:

District 1  
District 3  
District 5  
League of Cities  
Senior Advocate  
Senior Advocate  
Senior Legislature  
Senior Organization  
HICAP  
Law Enforcement  
At-Large  
At-Large  
Alternate At-Large  
Alternate At-Large

### Non-Voting Attendees/Providers:

Sarah M. Enz ICAAA Director  
Monica Veliz ICAAA Manager  
Karla Flores ICAAA LTC Ombudsman Coordinator  
Ana Corona V. ICAAA LTC Ombudsman Staff  
Sofia Vasquez ICAAA Community Service Worker  
Andrew Briseno County of Imperial, County Counsel  
Jorge Torres County of Imperial Public Health, Health Promotion Manager  
Polo Salazar Catholic Charities, Program Manager, Senior Nutrition  
Michelle Romo Catholic Charities, Program Manager, Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Programs  
  
Victoria Ramirez Elder Law & Advocacy/HICAP, Program Assistant  
Alan Azevedo-McCaffrey Elder Law & Advocacy, Attorney  
Daniel Flores Access to Independence, Program Manager  
Lupita Guitron Access to Independence, Information & Assistance Coordinator

### Absent:

Cheryl V. Walker District 2  
John Hernandez District 4  
Supervisor John Hawk County of Imperial  
Paul R. Monarrez Disabled Interests  
Patricia Thompson Service Provider  
Helen Lopez Senior Legislature  
Supervisor Peggy Price Alternate At-Large



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Agenda Item / Action Taken:

**I. FLAG SALUTE, ROLL CALL (MEMBERS), AND INTRODUCTIONS (GUESTS):**

Chair AJ Gaddis called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. Ember Haller led the flag salute and roll call was completed. Guests introduced themselves.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Moreno/Chavez (M/S/C) to approve the minutes of July 17, 2025, Advisory Council meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chair Gaddis opened the floor for comments. Monica Veliz, AAA Manager, invited the Advisory Council and public present to join the Area Agency on Aging Team for the upcoming Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's taking place on October 17, 2025, at the DayOut Center in El Centro. Ms. Veliz will send out additional information on the event.

This concluded with the Public Comments.

**IV. PRESENTATION:**

**a) Imperial County Public Health Department – Cool Centers & Extreme Heat Community Response Plan – Jorge Torres, MBA, Health Promotion Manager**

Jorge Torres provided the history and overview of the County of Imperial Extreme Heat Community Response Plan. He discussed how the plan was created, who was asked to the table to participate, and the plans to continue to improve the plan to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our community. Mr. Torres shared the sites currently serving as cool centers and hydration areas. This summer there were 17 total centers, and water was acquired to be provided at these sites. The group responsible for the plan starts meeting in February and will meet again at the end of September to discuss any potential findings and possible solutions. Mr. Torres stated that the next steps is adding additional cooling centers for the next summer and enhance data sharing to get a better picture of who is using these sites and services. Mr. Torres then took questions from members including possible suggestions for new additions. This concluded the presentation.

**V. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEM(S):**

**a) Chair to appoint following Advisory Council Members to a Committee: Anna M. Garcia & Mary Walla.**

Chair Gaddis appointed Anna M. Garcia to the Social & Health Committee and the Transportation Committee.

Chair Gaddis then appointed Mary Walla to the Social & Health Committee and the Transportation Committee.

This concluded this discussion and no further

**b) Imperial County Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) update provided by Daniel Flores, Program Manager, Imperial Valley, Access to Independence of San Diego, Inc.**

Daniel Flores introduced himself and introduced Lupita Guitron, the new Information & Assistance Coordinator that will now be housed in his office. Mr. Flores invited Advisory Council to several upcoming events planned by Access to Independence. The next event is the Service Dog Awareness Resource Fair that is taking place on Tuesday, September



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30, 2025, at the El Centro Public Library from 10 am to 1 pm. He also discussed several other programs that Access to Independence is pursuing to help seniors stay hydrated and cool during the summer months.

### VI. AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Sarah Enz provided a brief Director's Report. She invited the Advisory Council to attend the next interment ceremony taking place in November 2025. Additional information will be sent out. This concluded the Director's Report.

### VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**Executive Committee:** Chair AJ Gaddis reported that the committee has been meeting regularly to look at potential agenda items, attendance rosters, and social media. This concluded her report.

**Legislative Committee:** Helen Lopez provided a written report. Daniel Romero briefly provided an update on the upcoming legislative activities that Ms. Lopez and he will be participating in to move the California Senior Legislature (CSL) proposals forward. In October, they will be prioritizing the proposed bills and meeting with legislators to take on some of the proposed bills. This concluded his report.

**Nutrition Committee:** Patricia Burnworth reported that a new schedule was approved in the last committee meeting for the new Fiscal Year 2025-2026. The committee was looking forward to visiting all the sites again. The Chair asked Polo Salazar if he had any additional updates to share. Mr. Salazar informed the members that the Heber Congregate Site, which closed briefly during the summer, will resume operation on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. This concluded the report.

**Transportation Committee:** AJ Gaddis reported that a meeting would be scheduled soon. Sarah M. Enz provided an update on IVT Ride Now. This service, which operates within each major city, and which used to be offered exclusively to seniors aged 55 or more, is now available to the public through an application where riders can book on-demand rides. No impact is expected to the seniors who use this service regularly or who use it to travel to the congregate sites, as they will continue to be the priority for the drivers. This concluded the report.

**Social & Health Committee:** Manuel Sanchez reported that he will reach out to staff to coordinate a meeting in October for this committee. He stated he would like to invite Sarah Enz, AAA Director, to provide a presentation on the Dementia Issues. This concluded his report.

### VIII. INFORMATION:

Chair Gaddis reminded members to review informational items provided.

### IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Chair Gaddis opened the floor for member requests. Chair Gaddis stated that she would like for the November meeting to be an end of year celebration, and for meals to be provided for the members so that everyone can experience the food provided at our congregate sites.



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Staff advised Ms. Gaddis that this will be discussed with the provider and will confirm in the next meeting.

### **X. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MEMBERS:**

Chair Gaddis opened the floor for announcements.

Karla Flores informed the members that she is currently updating the website and invited them to visit the site at [www.aaa24.org](http://www.aaa24.org).

No additional announcements were received.

### **XI. ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Gaddis adjourned the Advisory Council meeting at 10:24 a.m.

Sarah M. Enz  
AAA Director

Monica Veliz  
Recording Clerk