



**COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE**  
105 E. Anapamu St., Fourth Floor, Santa Barbara CA 93101  
(805) 568-3400 FAX (805) 568-3414

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**July 3, 2023**

**News Media Contact:**

Kelsey Gerckens Buttitta  
Communications Manager/Public Information Officer  
Cell: (805) 319-9155  
Email: [Kbuttitta@countyofsb.org](mailto:Kbuttitta@countyofsb.org)

### **Information Technology Becomes Standalone County Department** *County's first new department in over a decade will focus on improving services delivered to County residents*

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** – On July 1, 2023, the County of Santa Barbara launched a new standalone department, Information Technology Department (ITD). Previously, Information & Communications Technology was a division of the General Services Department. The transition to its own department will allow ITD to better deliver quality technology solutions that enable our communities to thrive and will improve productivity, cybersecurity, continuity and, efficiency throughout the County.

Chris Chirgwin, the County's Chief Information Officer (CIO) is the new department head. Chirgwin came to the County in September 2022 to lead and oversee the vision, strategy, launch, and operations of ITD.

"The Information Technology Department is committed to driving innovative and strategic solutions that will enable our entire community to thrive. We are looking at how county residents receive services and how departments operate, in order to better serve all constituents," said County CIO Chris Chirgwin. "When the right technologies are used in a strategic and coordinated way, everyone benefits."

"County leadership, including the Board of Supervisors, have recognized the critical role that Information Technology plays across all departments and in nearly every service we provide. As part of the County's Renew Initiative to transform our organization, we needed to elevate IT by having a Chief Information Officer to provide strategic IT leadership and to leverage IT more effectively across the entire county," said County Executive Officer Mona Miyasato.

ITD will be continuing efforts toward modernizing technology and driving efficiencies through a multi-departmental approach to data sharing, application integration, and mobile-friendly solutions. ITD is making it easier to access all of the services the County offers by focusing on digitizing processes. This includes making services completely available online, a recent example of this is the new online permitting system through Accela for planning and building permits.

The County has recently invested in a new, cloud-based, enterprise management system that will be supported by ITD. The new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system is replacing over 60 legacy applications and modernizes how the County manages finances, human resources, payroll, etc.

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