



**JIM DESMOND**  
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**AGENDA ITEM**

**DATE:** March 25, 2026

**09**

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT**

**TAKING ACTION TO EXPAND ACCESS TO AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (AEDs) FOR PRIVATE SPORTS FACILITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

**OVERVIEW**

Effective January 1, 2028, Assembly Bill 310 (AB 310) will require youth sports organizations throughout the State to provide access to Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) during practices and matches, as well as ensure AED staff training, emergency response plans, and communication procedures. AB 310 underscores the critical importance of AED availability in preventing sudden cardiac arrest, which remains a leading cause of death among youth athletes, including those with undiagnosed heart conditions.

On May 6, 2025, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff (staff) to explore opportunities to expand AED access for youth sports organizations and facilities across the San Diego region. This direction aimed to support these organizations in getting a leg up on AB 310 compliance while enhancing public safety more broadly. In response, staff conducted extensive stakeholder outreach, including surveys and interviews with youth sports organizations and municipal parks departments, to identify barriers and potential solutions. Results of these efforts are included in staff's memo, titled: "*Report Back on Expanding Access to Automated External Defibrillators for Private Sports Facilities and Organizations*," (memo) dated September 3, 2025.

Outreach efforts revealed that only 23% of surveyed organizations consistently have access to an AED during organized sports activities, leaving the majority of youth athletes in the County vulnerable during practices and games. The top needs expressed by survey respondents were funding for AED purchases (34%), training and certification (28%), and maintenance support (15%). These gaps highlight the urgent need for a comprehensive approach that addresses both access to equipment and education/training.

The memo identified several options the County could implement to bridge these critical gaps in AED access. The first category of options - Option 1 – identifies strategies for establishing an AED subsidy program to get AEDs in the hands of youth sports organizations. Three sub options are presented (1A, 1B and 1C) providing specific implementation mechanisms, as follows:

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- Option 1A: rebate program
  - Organizations purchase their own AED upfront and submit documentation later for reimbursement
  - Program specifics:
    - Provides a total of 300 AEDs
    - Allows one AED per organization
    - Rebate limit of \$1,100 per unit
  - Total one-time cost: \$412,589
    - AEDs: \$330,000 (300 units)
    - Program administration: \$82,589 (i.e., application and eligibility development, communication with applicants, processing of rebates, etc.)
  
- Option 1B: voucher program
  - Organizations provided with a voucher, redeemable through the County’s Amazon Business Account
  - Program specifics:
    - Provides a total of 300 AEDs
    - Allows one AED per organization
    - Voucher limit of \$1,100 per unit
  - Total one-time cost: \$412,589
    - AEDs: \$330,000 (300 units)
    - Program administration: \$82,589 (i.e., application and eligibility development, communication with applicants, processing of vouchers, etc.)
  
- Option 1C: vendor program
  - County negotiates pricing with one or more vendors; organizations purchase directly using vendor contacts and rates
  - Program specifics:
    - Provides a total of 300 AEDs
    - Allows one AED per organization
    - Leverages County’s purchasing power to lower costs for units
    - Limit of \$1,100 per unit
  - Total one-time cost: \$412,589
    - AEDs: \$330,000 (300 units)
    - Program administration: \$82,589 (i.e., application and eligibility development, communication with applicants, processing of discounts, etc.)

Of the three sub options presented, Option 1B provides a straightforward, practical solution by reducing upfront costs for organizations (as opposed to a rebate program). Through a voucher program, eligible organizations would receive a voucher from the County for up to \$1,100 per unit, redeemable through the County’s Amazon Business Account for pre-approved AEDs. This approach centralizes costs and inventory control, provides a simple and easy-to-understand procurement process, and accomplishes the goal of helping youth sports organizations get ahead

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of compliance with AB 310 while accelerating the deployment of lifesaving equipment to greater reaches of San Diego County.

The second category of options – Option 2 – would expand access to AEDs at designated County sports facilities, with three sub options presented (2A, 2B and 2C), again, providing specific implementation mechanisms, as follows:

- Option 2A: County sports facilities only + cellular service
  - Add one outdoor AED to Department of Park and Recreation (DPR) sport facilities that currently have none (8 sites)
  - Program specifics:
    - Includes weatherproof, ventilated, heated storage (SaveStation Tower)
    - With cellular service and monitoring subscription
    - Accessible by park users after hours
  - Total one-time cost: \$234,500
    - AEDs: \$18,500
    - SaveStations: \$45,000
    - Installation: \$171,000
  - Total ongoing cost: \$32,000
    - 4-year cellular monitoring plan per SaveStation (8 total) (*begins after the fourth year of installation*)
- Option 2B: County sports facilities, including leased sites + cellular service
  - Add one outdoor AED to each DPR sport facility, including leased sites (19 total)
  - Program specifics:
    - Includes weatherproof, ventilated, heated storage (SaveStation Tower)
    - With cellular service and monitoring subscription
    - Accessible by park users after hours
  - Total one-time cost: \$632,000
    - AEDs: \$44,000
    - SaveStations: \$107,000
    - Installation: \$405,000
  - Total ongoing cost: \$76,000
    - 4-year cellular monitoring plan per SaveStation (19 total) (*begins after the fourth year of installation*)
- Option 2C: County sports facilities, including leased sites (no cellular service)
  - Add one outdoor AED to each DPR sport facility, including leased sites (19 total)
  - Program specifics:
    - Includes weatherproof, ventilated, heated storage (SaveStation Tower)
    - Without cellular service / monitoring subscription
    - Accessible by park users after hours
  - Total one-time cost: \$511,937
    - AEDs: \$43,472

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- SaveStations: \$63,465
- Installation: \$405,000
- Total ongoing cost: N/A
  - Minimal cost for maintenance anticipated

Of the three sub options presented, Option 2A would best complement a County voucher program (Option 1B) while remaining sensitive to overall program costs. Installing outdoor AEDs at eight DPR-designated sports sites that currently have none ensures area residents, park users and athletes have increased access to lifesaving equipment. Option 2A closes critical gaps in emergency readiness at high-use public spaces and demonstrates the County's commitment to safety.

The third category of options – Option 3 – proposes a two-year Public Awareness Campaign designed to increase knowledge, visibility and compliance with AB 310.

- Option 3: Public Awareness Campaign
  - Develop and administer a two-year AED Awareness Outreach Program to increase public knowledge, visibility, accessibility and compliance with AB310
  - Program Specifics:
    - Creates awareness of AEDs and available resources
    - Provides free resources to organizations in forms of training and education seminars
    - Services and supplies include online platforms, marketing campaigns, flyers, posters, and other outreach materials
  - Total one-time cost: \$232,589
    - Services and supplies: \$150,000
    - Program administration: \$82,589 (One temporary part-time staff for marketing/outreach program management. Position would also assist with initial development of eligibility criteria for the voucher program in option 1B).
  - Total ongoing cost: N/A

This campaign will leverage partnerships with San Diego Project Heart Beat, the Health & Human Services Agency (HHS), County Fire, Emergency Medical Services, and DPR to deliver training resources, educational materials, and outreach initiatives to youth sports organizations affected by AB 310. This option would kick start the marketing/outreach campaign and development of eligibility criteria for option 1B. Together, implementing these three options (Option 1B, Option 2A, and Option 3) would form a holistic strategy to improve cardiac emergency preparedness for youth sports organizations and area residents across the region. That is exactly what today's item calls for.

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**RECOMMENDATION(S)  
SUPERVISOR JIM DESMOND**

1. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to establish a holistic approach for expanding access to Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) throughout the region, particularly for youth sports organizations subject to AB 310, that includes the following elements:
  - a. An AED voucher program for eligible youth sports organizations, consistent with Option 1B, as well as developing eligibility criteria as detailed in staff's memo titled: "*Report Back on Expanding Access to Automated External Defibrillators for Private Sports Facilities and Organizations,*" (memo) dated September 3, 2025.
  - b. Expanding AED access at the eight (8) identified Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)-designated sports facilities that currently have none, consistent with Option 2A as detailed in staff's memo.
  - c. A public outreach and awareness campaign through January 1, 2028, consistent with Option 3 as detailed in staff's memo.
2. Refer to the Fiscal Year 2026-27 CAO Recommended Operational Plan and/or Change Letter - as feasible - the establishment of one-time appropriations and revenue of up to \$880,000 in the Department of Parks and Recreation for expanding access to AEDs throughout the region beginning in Fiscal Year 2026-27, depending on the option(s) selected by the Board of Supervisors, and subject to available funding source(s), including the alternative funding sources as detailed on page 8 of 9 in staff's memo.

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Many youth sports organizations, especially those in low-income or rural areas, often lack the financial resources to acquire AEDs, leaving youth athletes in those communities with less protection during practices and games. By offering vouchers and placing AEDs at DPR sports facilities that currently have none, the County can help level the playing field and ensure lifesaving equipment is available when and where it's needed most. These steps make sure every young athlete has a fair chance at a safe playing environment, no matter where they live. This work supports the County's commitment to fairness and community well-being.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

Adding AEDs at County sports facilities strengthens our long-term emergency response system by making lifesaving equipment more available in communities that may need to wait longer for emergency response. SaveStation towers help AEDs last longer by protecting them from the weather, which also cuts down on equipment waste. By taking these actions, the County can support a stronger, more reliable public-safety system that serves residents well into the future. They also promote efficient use of County resources while improving community health and safety.

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**FISCAL IMPACT**

Funds for this request are not included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Operational Plan in the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Based on current estimates of projected operating results, and identified Fiscal Year 2026-27 needs, at this time there is no funding source available to support these recommendations.

Budget strategy for the coming Fiscal Year 2026-27 remains under development as the CAO Recommended Operational Plan is finalized for consideration by the Board of Supervisors (Board), including identifying any available fund balance that may be generated by current year operations, which will be known at fiscal year-end.

If approved by the Board, the selected option will result in one-time and ongoing maintenance costs for DPR beginning in Fiscal Year 2026-27, for which funding has not been identified. Accordingly, if approved, necessary appropriations and revenue for the selected option(s) will be referred for possible inclusion as feasible in the Fiscal Year 2026-27 CAO Recommended Operational Plan and/or Change Letter, totaling up to \$880,000 in the Department of Parks and Recreation, subject to available funding source(s). Costs for the options recommended include:

- Option 1B: The total one-time cost is \$412,589. This includes \$330,000 for 300 AED units and \$82,589 in staff time for one temporary part-time position to support program administration, including application and eligibility development, applicant communication, and voucher processing.
- Option 2A: The total one-time cost is \$234,500. This includes \$18,500 for eight AED units, \$45,000 for eight SaveStations, and \$171,000 for installation. This option also includes \$32,000 in ongoing costs for a four-year cellular monitoring plan for a total of eight SaveStations (\$4,000 per station), beginning after the fourth year of installation in Fiscal Year 2031-32 and would be included in future years Operational Plans.
- Option 3: The total one-time cost is \$232,589. This includes \$150,000 for services and supplies such as online platforms, marketing campaigns, flyers, posters, and outreach materials, and \$82,589 in staff time for one temporary part-time position to support program management.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

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Sudden cardiac arrest can happen without warning, even to healthy young athletes, and having an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) nearby can make the difference between life and death. Assembly Bill 310 (AB310) recognizes this and will require youth sports organizations throughout the state to have AEDs, a response plan, and trained staff beginning January 1, 2028. However, this mandate may financially burden many organizations in our region who don't have the budget for an AED. The steps presented in today's item are meant to make sure every organization, no matter its size or budget, are better prepared to comply with AB 310 and respond during an emergency.

On May 6, 2025, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff (staff) to explore opportunities to expand AED access for youth sports organizations and facilities across San Diego. In response to this direction, staff conducted extensive outreach, finding that most youth sports organizations don't have an AED available during practices or games, primarily due to cost, with smaller or volunteer-run leagues most likely to struggle to pay for equipment. This is particularly alarming for the rural unincorporated areas where emergency response times may be longer than those in an urban setting. These gaps create uneven levels of safety for young athletes across the region. By stepping in to help, the County can make sure organizations that need support the most are not left behind.

In addition to outreach efforts, staff also confirmed that the County currently tracks more than 5,700 AEDs registered across the region, but many public parks and sports sites don't have devices that can be accessed outdoors or after hours. While most government buildings have indoor AEDs, very few offer outdoor units or portable devices for sports use. This leaves critical gaps in the availability of AEDs, especially for high-use recreational areas. Adding outdoor AEDs at eight DPR sites currently without coverage, consistent with Option 2A, fills these important safety gaps and improves emergency readiness for athletes and other park users. Combining this effort (Option 2A) with a County voucher program (Option 1B) and a public awareness campaign (Option 3) will create a strong, practical plan to improve safety at both public and private sports facilities while helping youth sports organizations get a leg up on compliance with AB 310. By taking action consistent with the approach laid out in today's item, we will demonstrate our commitment to protecting youth athletes, particularly for smaller and volunteer-run organizations, and strengthening public safety overall.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's proposed actions support the *Equity: Health*; and *Community: Engagement, Safety, and Quality of Life* Strategic Initiatives in the County of San Diego's 2026-2031 Strategic Plan.

Respectfully submitted,



JIM DESMOND  
Supervisor, Fifth District

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**ATTACHMENT(S)**

N/A