



Calendar Year 2025

AB 2561 Vacancy Report

SEIU Local 620

May 5, 2026 · Santa Barbara County

The Workers of SEIU Local 620

SEIU Local 620 represents the workers who keep this county running, the people behind every public service residents rely on.



SOCIAL SERVICES

Case aides & support staff connecting vulnerable families with critical safety-net programs



ROAD MAINTENANCE & PUBLIC WORKS

Crews maintaining roads, infrastructure & public facilities communities depend on daily



PUBLIC HEALTH

Protecting community health through disease prevention, environmental inspections & health education



SHERIFF'S DEPT (NON-SWORN)

Sheriff Service Technicians, Records staff & civilian support essential to public safety operations



MENTAL HEALTH & BEHAVIORAL WELLNESS

Clinicians, therapists & support staff providing life-saving mental health and substance abuse services



ELECTIONS

Workers safeguarding democracy by administering fair and accessible elections for every resident



ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The backbone of county operations — clerks, analysts & technicians keeping every department running



AND MANY MORE

Animal services, parks, agriculture & other departments serving the public every day

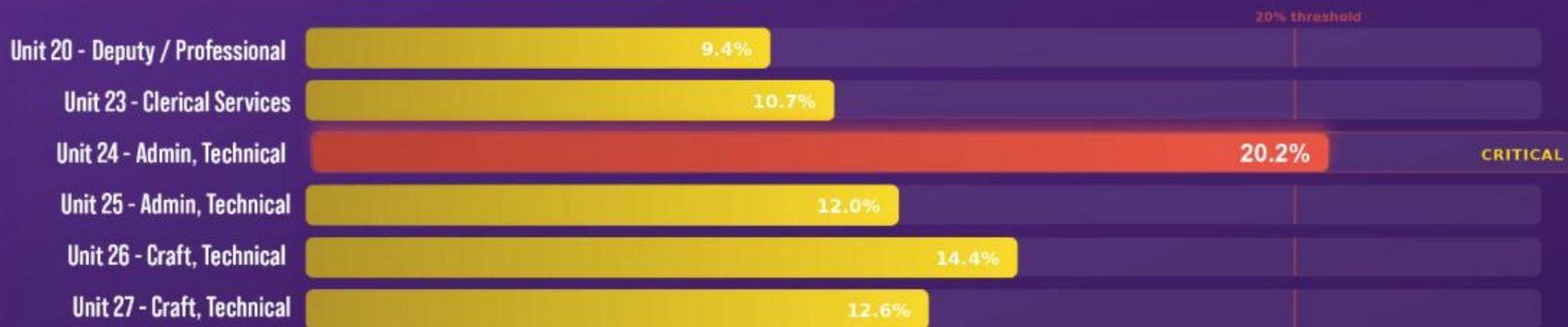


Every department. Every role. One united voice.

Thousands of dedicated public servants across Santa Barbara County and beyond

2025 Vacancy Rates by Bargaining Unit

Yearly Average Vacancy Rate — SEIU Local 620 Represented Units



IMPORTANT: These averages include data from periods AFTER positions were eliminated at the end of 2025. The elimination of these positions at year-end artificially lowered the final vacancy counts — making the yearly average appear better than the reality employees experienced for most of the year.

Next year's vacancy data will be further skewed — not because staffing improved, but because the positions themselves no longer exist to be counted as vacant.

⚠️ Eliminated & Proposed Eliminated Positions

↓ Recently Eliminated Positions

Positions already cut from the budget reduce the workforce without reducing the workload.



⚠️ Currently Proposed Eliminations

Additional positions are now proposed for elimination, further shrinking the workforce.



💡 When positions are eliminated, the work doesn't disappear — it gets redistributed to the remaining employees.

♥️ Each eliminated position represents a real person, a real family, and a real impact on public services.

🔍 The Hidden Truth: Artificially Low Vacancy Rates

Eliminating vacant positions does **NOT** solve the staffing crisis — it hides it.

- ✗ When a vacant position is eliminated from the budget, it **disappears from vacancy reports entirely**.
- 📉 Next year's vacancy data will appear **artificially low** — not because positions were filled, but because they were **erased**.
- ⚠️ The workload remains. The staffing shortage remains. **Only the data changes**.
- 💡 **AB 2561** was designed to shine a light on vacancies — eliminating positions **turns off that light**.



⚠️ **Fewer positions on paper ≠ Fewer responsibilities in practice**

Erased
From Budget

≠

Problem
Solved

DATA MANIPULATION ≠ REAL SOLUTIONS

**Eliminating permanent positions is not a fiscal necessity,
it's a choice that harms services and destabilizes the workforce.**

The County Is Already Saving Money

- Increased reliance on extra help already reduces labor costs
- Ongoing work is being filled with cheaper, temporary labor, not permanent staff
- Vacancy savings + Extra-Help usage = built-in budget relief the County is already using

Vacancies Are Being Used to Justify Outsourcing

- Long-term vacancies create the “staffing crisis” used to justify contracting out
- Work still exists — it’s just shifted to non-represented labor
- High vacancy rates are not a hiring problem; they’re a staffing choice

Impact on Services

- Extra-Help workers lack stability and institutional knowledge
- Public services suffer when the County relies on a revolving temporary workforce

Impact on Current Employees

When positions are eliminated, the consequences ripple through the entire workforce



01

HEAVIER WORKLOADS

Remaining employees absorb the duties of eliminated positions, stretching capacity to the breaking point.



02

DECLINING MORALE

Workers watch colleagues lose their jobs and wonder if they're next — creating anxiety and disengagement.



03

BURNOUT & TURNOVER

Overworked employees burn out faster, creating more vacancies — a vicious cycle that compounds the damage.



04

SERVICE DELIVERY SUFFERS

Fewer workers means longer wait times, reduced quality, and dangerous gaps in public service coverage.



The Legislature recognized this exact problem when it passed AB 2561.

Doing More With Less Is Not Sustainable

Our members are dedicated public servants. They deserve to be supported — not stretched to the breaking point.

1

FUND POSITIONS, DON'T ELIMINATE THEM

Invest in recruitment and retention to maintain essential public services. Cutting positions shifts the burden onto remaining staff.

2

TRANSPARENT REPORTING

Vacancy data should reflect actual staffing needs — not obscure the gaps that workers experience every day.

3

PRIORITIZE EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Address morale, workload, and retention before more positions are lost. Healthy workers deliver better outcomes.

We urge the Board to consider the **true cost** of these eliminations — not just the budget savings, but the **human cost**.

“When public institutions
are weakened,
inequality widens.”



SEIU LOCAL 620 | PRESENTED TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Thank You

