



2025-2026 Grand Jury COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Hall of Justice
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655
(650) 261-5066; Fax (650) 261-5147
grandjury@sanmateocourt.org

For Information Contact:

Michael Kovalich, Foreperson
Liz Figueroa, Foreperson Pro Tem
grandjury@sanmateocourt.org

PRESS ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury Issues Report “MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT: County Sustainability Department Is Not Enforcing SB1383 Edible Food Recovery Regulations”

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. August 3, 2026 — San Mateo County is the third wealthiest county in the country. Surprisingly, more than 53,000 residents are experiencing food insecurity, and the problem is getting worse. By 2024, the County experienced one of the greatest increases in food insecurity in the state for adults at the federal poverty level compared to 2019..

The 2025-26 San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury investigated compliance with Senate Bill 1383 (“The Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Act of 2016”). We **focused on key provisions of the Act that directly impact edible food recovery**. In particular, we identified:

- 1) a statewide goal to achieve a 20% recovery rate for edible food destined for disposal by 2025
- 2) a requirement to begin enforcing compliance beginning January 1, 2024
- 3) a requirement to implement an anonymous complaint process to report violators

The Civil Grand Jury found that despite **inspection reports showing a noncompliance rate of 60% for the largest edible food generators, the San Mateo County Sustainability Department has undertaken no enforcement actions to date, beyond a handful of re-inspections.**

Although the inspection **reports themselves are public domain, they are not easily accessible or understood.** It would be difficult for a resident to determine if their supermarket had been inspected and whether or not it passed.

We also found that a **number of the 24 jurisdictions (cities and special districts) in the County subject to SB 1383 have not implemented the anonymous complaint process** required by law.

Last, the Grand Jury found that progress towards the statewide 20% goal cannot be measured as no baseline data from 2016 exists. We can report that approximately **3,000 tons of edible food was recovered and distributed in the County in 2024.**

The Grand Jury **recommends** that the San Mateo County Sustainability Department should:

- adopt and implement written SB 1383 edible food recovery enforcement procedures, including criteria for inspections, re-inspections, notice of violations, penalty orders, and enforcement actions.
- develop and implement a standardized inspection form and publicly accessible database of inspection reports.
- develop an anonymous complaint process that can be adopted by the jurisdictions.

The full report is available on the San Mateo County Superior Court/Grand Jury website at <https://sanmateo.courts.ca.gov/divisions/civil-grand-jury>.

About the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury

The San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury is an independent investigative body created by the California State Constitution. Composed of nineteen citizens, the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury serves as a "watchdog for citizens of the county." The jury may receive and investigate complaints by individuals regarding the actions or performances of county or public officials. Empowered by the state judicial system, the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury submits meaningful solutions to a wide range of problems. More information about the Civil Grand Jury can be found at <https://sanmateo.courts.ca.gov/divisions/civil-grand-jury>.