



## Village Santa Cruz County Membership

Village Santa Cruz County is a non-profit network of members creating an intentional community to support each other as we navigate the changes, challenges, and joys of aging. The Village is unique in offering a neighborhood and relationship-based support system for older adults.

**What do we offer?** Our Village provides educational, social, and volunteer support and opportunities. Within the Village, there are area sub-groups, **Community Circles**, where members join together to build trusting relationships and to find help and friendship within their neighborhoods. Our board, made up of members from the different Circles, meets monthly, representing all members into our planning process.

- Social activities **with intention**. Through weekly social activities within our Community Circles, our county-wide Interest Groups or during whole-Village educational or social events, we build trusting relationships that we can call on for support through our transitions of aging: help to get us through a rough period or an occasional need.
- A path to growing your support network within the area that you live.
- Small group information exchange. We informally ask each other for information on where to go and what to do, as questions arise in our daily situations.
- Education: a monthly newsletter, a weekly eblast, and presentations in many areas, such as health, finance, facing emergencies, environment, staying safe, cooking for fun, solo aging, etc.

**Why a Dues Structure? (the question most often asked)?** Studies of the village model suggest that for sustainability, member dues should finance at least 75% of costs. Funding for senior services is limited and prone to fluctuations. Having self-generated funding means that members can count on long-term stability.

**What are dues used for?** \*social and educational events \*ongoing communication with our members \*software platform for website & back office operations \*staffing \*fiscal sponsorship \*maintaining an office and \*general overhead costs of running an organization day to day. Below is a breakdown of some expenses:

Staffing: currently we have a .25FTE Administrative Staff. We can keep our staffing low because of all the volunteer tasks that our members (and sometimes non-members) pick up. Our Volunteer Manager (a founding member) oversees the organization operations. Our staff person is a back-up source of knowledge for all aspects of the Village operations.

Fiscal Sponsorship: The Volunteer Center (VC) is our fiscal sponsor, giving us our non-profit status under their 501(c)(3). VC manages our finances, provides insurance, human resources for staffing, office space, and collaboration with their Seniors Programs. We pay 14% of our income for the fiscal sponsorship, which is normal practice. In addition, we pay our share of the cost of the office space: i.e. an office computer, IT support, janitorial services, office supplies, etc.

Connecting with other Villages: Village Santa Cruz County maintains annual dues-paying members to Village Movement California, and Village to Village National Network.

## What are the dues?

- **Basic membership: \$25/mo.;** paid monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually. Sliding Scale for those unable to afford Basic membership fees. See below for more information on our sliding scale. Household membership: cost of one membership (either full or associate) plus \$10/mo./each additional member.
- **Household membership: \$10/each extra member,** added to the Basic membership.
- **'Check-it-out' 3-month membership:** \$40 one-time payment for a 3-month membership, allows new members to find out if our organization is a good fit for them.
- **Sliding Scale Membership** for those unable to afford the Basic membership.

General guidelines to help you determine where you fall on the sliding scale: Please be mindful that membership fees are the Village's main source of funding for running programs, staffing, maintaining an office space, and general overhead.

If you select a price at the lowest end of the scale when you can realistically afford a higher amount, you may be limiting access to others. Choosing mindfully also respects the work of our staff, whose hours are directly linked to the Village income.

We recognize that extra expenses may come up in a particular time period. If, in any individual month(s) you encounter added expenses that make paying the amount you committed to pay a hardship, you can switch to sliding scale during this period.

\$25/month reflects the true cost of running the Village. It is the cost that the Village would charge all members in the absence of a sliding scale. If you have access to financial security, own property or have personal savings, you wouldn't traditionally qualify for sliding scale. If you can pay for "wants" and spend little time worried about securing necessities in your life, this price is for you.

\$10 - \$20/month If you are struggling to conquer debt or build savings but have access to a steady income and are not spending most of your time thinking about meeting basic needs such as food, shelter, medical care, etc., you probably belong here.

\$5 - \$9/ month If you struggle to maintain access to needs such as health care, housing, and food, you probably belong here.

Typically, with sliding scale there are a limited number of slots offered at the middle and lower end of the scale. Village Santa Cruz County will try to accommodate all sliding scale membership requests, always with an eye on long term sustainability of the Village. Our members highly value both their continuing membership and connections through the Village, as well as welcoming new members to join us!

We want all of our members to enjoy the  
comprehensive engagement, variety, and fun that being a member of  
Village Santa Cruz County offers to you!

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