



NOTICE/AGENDA

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

This meeting is being held via teleconference within the meaning of Government Code section 11123.2. Members may be physically present at one or more teleconference locations. There may be members of the public body who are participating in today's meeting that were granted a reasonable accommodation per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accessible formats of all agenda and materials can be found online www.scdd.ca.gov.

Physical Location

SCDD North Bay Regional Office
236 Georgia Street, Suite 201
Vallejo, CA 94590

Join by Zoom:

<https://bit.ly/SCDD2026SAAC>

TELECONFERENCE: (669) 900-9128

MEETING ID: 889 3643 6383

MEETING PASSWORD: 948611

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

POSTED AT: www.scdd.ca.gov

DATE: September 21, 2026

TIME: 1:30 P.M. to 4:30 P.M.

COMMITTEE CHAIR:

Sascha Bittner

Item 1. CALL TO ORDER/ ESTABLISH QUORUM

Item 2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Item 3. REVIEW OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

Page 5

Presented by: Aaron Carruthers, SCDD Executive Director

- A. SCDD agency updates
- B. Statewide updates
- C. National updates

Item 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Page 7

This item is for members of the public to provide comments and/or present information to the Committee on matters not on the agenda. Each person will be given up to three (3) minutes to speak.

Additionally, up to five (5) minutes will be set aside to give members of the public the opportunity to comment on each agenda item, with each person being allowed up to one (1) minute to speak.

Item 5. APPROVAL OF JULY 20, 2026, MINUTES

Page 9



Item 6. SAAC FEEDBACK ON THE NEW DDS GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Page 15

Presented by: Katie Hornberger, DDS Deputy Director,
Community Assistance and Regulations
Division

Item 7. NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH PRESENTATION AND TIPS **Page 17**

Presented by: Councilmember Eric Aguilar

Item 8. ADJOURNMENT **Page 19**

Next Meeting Scheduled: Monday, November 9, 2026

Accessibility

Pursuant to Government Code Sections 11123.1 and 11125(f), individuals with disabilities who require accessible alternative formats of the agenda and related meeting materials and/or auxiliary aids/services to participate in this meeting should contact Riana Hardin at (916) 263-8196 or Riana.Hardin@scdd.ca.gov. Please provide at least 5 business days prior to the meeting to allow adequate time to respond to all requests.

All times indicated and the order of business are approximate and subject to change.

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 3.

INFORMATION ITEM

SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Review of Council Business

SCDD Executive Director, Aaron Carruthers will review Council business with the Committee. This item may include:

- A. SCDD agency updates
- B. Statewide updates
- C. National updates

Materials related to this agenda item can be found in the Council packet.

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 4.

INFORMATION ITEM

SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Public Comment

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 5.

ACTION ITEM

**SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC)
STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Approval of July 20, 2026 Minutes

The draft minutes from the July 20, 2026, SAAC meeting are included in the September meeting packet for your review. Committee members will have the chance to vote to approve the minutes and suggest changes.

Action Recommended

Approve the minutes from the July 20, 2026, SAAC meeting

Attachment

- July 20, 2026, SAAC Minutes

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**SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC) MEETING
MINUTES
July 20, 2026**

Members Present

Eric Aguilar (SA)
Sascha Bittner (SA)
Azucena Garcia-Ferro (SA)
Sonia Jones (SA)
Michelle Padilla (SA)
Kara Ponton (SA)
Nestor Nieves (SA)

Members Absent

Julie Gaona (SA)

Others Attending

Chris Arroyo
Aaron Carruthers
David Delgado
Riana Hardin
Dena Hernandez
Brian Hoang
Patricia Jackson
Austin Murphy
Robin Maitino-Erben
Charles Nguyen
Sam Wijesiriwardane

1. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Sascha Bittner called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members introduced themselves and those around them and shared what disability pride means to them. Their comments included: owning their disability and choosing to make things better for others with disabilities; acknowledging and celebrating others; helping raise awareness of disability as a part of the human experience; being proud of our accomplishments and having the right to be included in our

Legend:

SA = Self-Advocate FA = Family Advocate

Page 1

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communities; and sharing what we know with others. During welcome and introductions, a quorum was established for the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

4. APPROVAL OF MAY 18, 2026, MINUTES

Members reviewed the May 18, 2026, meeting minutes. The minutes can be found on page 7 of the July 2026 SAAC meeting packet.

ACTION 1

Padilla (SA) moved to approve the May 18, 2026, minutes as presented, and Aguilar (SA) seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

5. SCDD POLICY PLATFORM

SCDD Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Chris Arroyo provided the committee with an overview of recent updates to the SCDD Policy Platform recommended by the Legislative Public Policy Committee (LPPC). Members asked clarifying questions about the process for making changes to the platform based on emerging issues and how councilmembers are informed about updates. Topics brought up by committee members during the discussion on this agenda item included: access to healthcare; especially in rural settings; transportation; the return to office mandate for state workers; and early screening for cerebral palsy (CP) and other intellectual and developmental disabilities. This agenda item also included a brief state budget update.

Legend:

SA = Self-Advocate FA = Family Advocate

Page 2

6. REVIEW OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers provided committee members with an overview of Council Business. During this agenda item, Deputy Director Arroyo provided members with an overview of a proposed position approved by the Legislative and Public Policy Committee (LPPC) that the Council support access to individualized communication systems and supports. Members of the committee talked about how access to communication methods is a human right and should not be limited in any situation.

7. DISABILITY RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN CALIFORNIA: THEN AND NOW

Committee Chair and Councilmember Sascha Bittner gave a presentation on the history of the self-advocacy movement in California. The presentation covered the history of institutionalization, language, and efforts by family members, professionals, and self-advocates to push for community living using different advocacy tactics. Members shared their own reflections on their involvement in the independent living movement and how far we have come and how far we still need to go, sharing that we need to work together to make things better for people with disabilities.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:06 P.M. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 28, 2026.

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 6.

DISCUSSION ITEM

SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

SAAC Feedback on the New DDS Grievance Process

The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) would like members of the Self-Advocates Advisory Committee (SAAC) to review and provide feedback on the department's new grievance process which is replacing the current 4731 Complaint Process. The new process is set to take effect in February 2027. DDS Deputy Director, Community Assistance and Regulations Division, Katie Hornberger will facilitate this agenda item.

Ahead of the meeting, members are encouraged to review the following materials:

- [Grievance Process Proposal Presentation](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Recording](#)
- [Grievance Process FAQ's](#) | [Spanish](#)

If you have any input or questions on the updated grievance process, you may contact us at grievance.process.input@dds.ca.gov.

If you have any questions regarding the current complaint processes, you may contact us at appeals@dds.ca.gov.

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 7.

INFORMATION ITEM

SELF-ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

National Preparedness Month Presentation and Tips

Councilmember Eric Aguilar will provide the committee with a presentation on tips and best practices for preparing in case of an emergency.

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SEPTEMBER 21, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8.

INFORMATION ITEM

SELF ADVOCATES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAAC)

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Adjournment

The next committee meeting is currently scheduled for Monday, November 9, 2026.

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