



NOTICE/AGENDA

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL 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 at www.scdd.ca.gov

MEETING DETAILS:

TELECONFERENCE LOCATION:

SCDD LA REGIONAL OFFICE
411 N. Central Avenue, Suite 620
Glendale, CA 91203

JOIN BY TELECONFERENCE:

CALL IN NUMBER: (888)-475-4499 or
(877) 853-5257
MEETING ID: 883 5327 2420

JOIN BY ZOOM:

<https://bit.ly/SCDDCouncilMar2026>

MEETING ID: 883 5327 2420

PASSCODE: 082389

DATE: March 24, 2026



MEETING TIME: 10:30 AM – 3:00 PM

COUNCIL CHAIR:

Julie Gaona

Item 1. CALL TO ORDER

Item 2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

Item 3. SWEARING IN NEW COUNCILMEMBER	Page 4
Item 4. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	
Item 5. PUBLIC COMMENTS	Page 5
<i>This item is for members of the public to provide comments and/or present information to this body on matters not listed on the agenda. There will be up to 20 minutes allocated to hear from the public with each person allotted up to 3 minutes to comment.</i>	
<i>Additionally, there will be up to 10 minutes allocated to hear from the public on each Council agenda item, with each person allotted up to 1 minute to comment.</i>	
Item 6. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2026 MINUTES 	Page 6
<i>All</i>	
Item 7. CHAIR REPORT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS	Page 13
<i>Julie Gaona, Council Chair</i>	
A. Statewide Self-Determination Committee (SSDAC)	
B. Administrative Committee	
C. Executive Committee	
D. Legislative and Public Policy Committee (LPPC)	
E. Self-Advocates Advisory Committee (SAAC)	
Item 8. STATEWIDE SELF-ADVOCACY NETWORK REPORT	Page 18
<i>SCDD SSAN Representative Eric Aguilar</i>	
Item 9. SCDD 2026-27 DRAFT BUDGET	Page 21
<i>Aaron Carruthers, Executive Director</i>	
Item 10. SCDD SPONSORED LEGISLATION	Page 53
<i>Chris Arroyo, Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs</i>	
Item 11. SCDD POLICY POPCORN	Page 54
<i>Aaron Carruthers, Executive Director</i>	
Item 12. 2026 BILLS TO CONSIDER 	Page 55
<i>Harold Fujita, LPPC Chair and Chris Arroyo, Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs</i>	

Item 13. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT & STAFF REPORTS

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Aaron Carruthers, Executive Director

- A. Chief Deputy Director Report
- B. Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Report
- C. Deputy Director of Regional Office Operations Report
- D. RA Project Report
- E. QA Project Report

Item 14. NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

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The next Council meeting will be in person on May 19, 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 Yaritza Sanchez at (916)-207-2856 or yaritza.sanchez@scdd.ca.gov. Please provide at least 3 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.

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 3.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Swearing in New Councilmember

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers will swear in new Councilmember Sherry Johnson Alvarez.

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 5.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Public Comments

This item is for members of the public to provide comments and/or present information to this body on matters not listed on the agenda. There will be up to 20 minutes allocated to hear from the public with each person allotted up to 3 minutes to comment.

Separately, there will be up to 10 minutes allocated to hear from the public on each Council agenda item, with each person allotted up to 1 minute to comment.

MARCH 24, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 6.

ACTION ITEM

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Approval of January 2026 Minutes

The draft minutes from the January 27, 2026 Council meeting have been included in the packet for review. Councilmembers will vote on whether to approve the minutes.

Attachment

January Council Meeting Minutes

Action Recommended

Approve the January Council meeting minutes.



DRAFT
Council Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2026

Members Attending

Ana Acton (CDA)
Andy Imparato (DRC)
Azucena Garcia-Ferro (S.A.)
Bob Twomey (F.A.)
Cathay Liu (F.A.)
Eric Aguilar (S.A.)
Harold Ashe (F.A.)
Harold Fujita (F.A.)
Irene Valdez (F.A.)
Jessica Brown (F.A.)
Joseph Billingsley (DHCS)
Julie Gaona (S.A.)
Kara Ponton (S.A.)
Kim Rothschild (F.A.)
Kris Wallman (UCEDD)
Larry Yin (UCEDD)
Liz Laugeson (UCEDD)
Maria Aliferis-Gjerde (DOR)
Melissa Fitch (F.A.)
Michelle Padilla (S.A.)
Michi Gates (DDS)
Nestor Nieves (S.A.)
Noelia Hernandez (CDE)
Rosanna Ryan (S.A.)
Sascha Bittner (S.A.)
Sonia Jones (S.A.)

Members Absent

Debra Cooper (CHHS)
Nicole Adler (S.A.)

Others Attending

Aaron Carruthers
Austin Murphy
Beth Hurn
Charles Nguyen
Chris Arroyo
David Delgado
Debra Ponton
DeLois McGriff
Hailey Halvorson
Jonathan Hill
Kevin Rowell
Michael Santiago
Michelle Cave
Riana Hardin
Rihana Ahmad
Robin Maitino-Erben
Rondale Holloway
Sam Wijesiriwardane
Sheraden Nicholau
Tamera Cannon
Yaritza Sanchez

Others Attending (cont.)

N/A

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Julie Gaona called the meeting to order at 10:31 A.M.

Legend:

SA = Self-Advocate
FA = Family Advocate

N/A = not available
DNP = Did Not Participate

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2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

A quorum was established.

3. SWEARING IN NEW COUNCILMEMBER

Executive Director Carruthers swore in new Councilmember Azucena Garcia-Ferro.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2025 MINUTES

Action 1

It was moved/seconded (Bittner [S.A]/ Fitch [F.A.]) and carried to approve the November 2025 meeting minutes by unanimous acclamation. (See last page for a voting record of members present)

6. CHAIR REPORT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Gaona shared several observances recognized in January and February. She noted that January included World Braille Day, Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day, World Leprosy Day, and Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy Awareness Day. She also highlighted several February observances, including National Cancer Prevention Month, Black History Month, International Friendship Month, and Valentine’s Day. Chair Gaona encouraged Councilmembers to check in on friends and family during Valentine’s Day, since the holiday can also bring feelings of loneliness or isolation. She also encouraged Councilmembers to review the committee reports and staff summaries included in the meeting packet.

Chair Gaona then invited State Plan Committee Chair Jessica Brown to provide an update on the 45-day public comment period for the Council’s 2027–2031 State Plan. Councilmember Brown explained that the State Plan Committee met on January 15 to review and analyze the public comments received during the comment period, which ran from November 24 through January. After reviewing the comments and analysis, the committee determined that there were no substantive comments requiring changes to the language of the State Plan. Therefore, the Council could proceed with the proposed plan for the upcoming five-year cycle.

7. STATEWIDE SELF-ADVOCACY NETWORK (SSAN) REPORT

SCDD SSAN representative Eric Aguilar provided Councilmembers with an update from SSAN’s virtual meetings on December 10th and 11th, 2025.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT & STAFF REPORTS

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers provided updates on legislative activities, recent advocacy efforts, and SCDD announcements. He shared that Senator Lena Gonzalez agreed to author legislation sponsored by the Council that would clarify SCDD’s authority to appoint an Authorized Representative to support individuals served by Regional Centers when families are suddenly separated.

He then provided an update on the January 22 Little Hoover Commission hearing on the developmental disability services system. He explained that SCDD submitted written testimony noting that while many of the Commission’s recommendations were beginning to take shape, most individuals served and their families have not yet experienced those improvements in their daily lives. Additionally, he noted ongoing concerns such as provider availability, navigating Regional Center systems, delays in implementing approved services, and the need for more centralized and portable information.

Next, Mr. Carruthers reviewed highlights from SCDD’s 2025 Program Performance Report submitted to the federal Administration on Community Living. He reported that SCDD staff directly reached 137,355 people in 2025 through advocacy, training, and technical assistance. He also highlighted that SCDD hosted a briefing for legislative staff featuring findings from the Council’s statewide State Plan survey. The briefing was attended by staff from 35 offices and highlighted the challenges community members reported experiencing within California’s service systems, including barriers related to housing, health, safety, and employment. The survey gathered feedback from more than 4,000 community members.

The Executive Director reported that the Council’s budget remained stable and that the federal government proposed level funding for developmental disability councils nationwide. Lastly, he announced that SCDD will hold an all-staff in-person training in February.

9. 2026 GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers announced an update to the agenda, noting that the order of items 9 and 10 would be swapped.

Director of the Department of Developmental Services Pete Cervinka presented an overview of the Governor's proposed 2026-27 state budget and key proposals affecting developmental disability services. He explained that the Governor's proposed state budget totaled approximately \$343.6 billion and included a projected \$2.9 billion shortfall. He noted that the administration was focused on protecting the social safety net under federal threat, including proposed reductions to programs such as Medi-Cal and CalFresh. Mr. Cervinka explained that proposed federal changes to CalFresh could reduce benefits and impose work requirements as a condition of continued eligibility for some recipients. He also noted that proposed changes to Medi-Cal could affect eligibility and access to services for certain populations, including individuals with specific immigration statuses.

Mr. Cervinka then reviewed the proposed Department of Developmental Services budget, which would increase to \$21.1 billion, reflecting a \$2.4 billion increase from the previous year. He explained that the increase was largely due to continued caseload growth, with the department projecting approximately 37,600 additional individuals to be served next year. Furthermore, he discussed several DDS initiatives and proposals, including continued development of the Life Outcomes Improvement System, a new grievance process required under the federal access rule, continued growth in the Self-Determination Program, expansion of employment supports, additional autism-focused capacity, implementation of a standardized vendorization process, and piloting of a respite assessment tool. Mr. Cervinka noted the closure of Fairview Developmental Center as a milestone in California history.

During public comment, Councilmember Nestor Nieves read a written comment submitted by Rick Wood, Co-Chair of the Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee. The comment expressed support for continuing funding for Self-Determination Program local advisory committees and emphasized the importance of implementation funding for outreach, training, and increasing participation in the program. Councilmember Nieves also shared brief remarks supporting the importance of these funds for training and community education.

Legend:

SA = Self-Advocate
FA = Family Advocate

N/A = not available
DNP = Did Not Participate

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10. SELF-DETERMINATION PROGRAM WAIVER RENEWAL

Jonathan Hill with the Department of Developmental Services presented an overview of Medicaid and the upcoming renewal of the Self-Determination Program waiver. He explained that Medicaid waivers allow states to provide home and community-based services to individuals who would otherwise require an institutional level of care. Mr. Hill shared that the Self-Determination Program waiver allows California to receive federal funding for services provided through the Self-Determination Program and is required to be periodically renewed with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. He explained that the Self-Determination waiver was initially approved for three years and later renewed for five years, and that the department was preparing to submit the next renewal for another five-year approval period.

Mr. Hill reported that approximately 8,000 individuals were participating in the Self-Determination Program, with about 5,000 enrolled in the waiver. Participants must meet Lanterman Act eligibility requirements, live in a community setting, meet an institutional level of care requirement, and be eligible for Medi-Cal. He also reviewed the timeline for the upcoming waiver renewal, explaining that the document would be released for public comment for a minimum of 30 days before being submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for federal review. He noted that the renewal included updates to Financial Management Service provider requirements, Individual Program Plan and budget development processes, and quality performance measures specific to the Self-Determination Program waiver.

The full presentation can be accessed at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next Council meeting will be held on Zoom on March 24, 2026. Chair Gaona adjourned the meeting at 3:30 P.M.

Name	Vote 1
Acton, Ana	Aye
Aguilar, Eric	Aye
Aliferis-Gjerde, Maria	Aye
Ashe, Harold	Aye
Billingsley, Joseph	NP
Bittner, Sascha	Aye
Brown, Jessica	Aye
Fitch, Melissa	Aye
Fujita, Harold	Aye
Gaona, Julie	Aye
Garcia-Ferro, Azucena	Aye
Gates, Michi	NP
Hernandez, Noelia	Aye
Imparato, Andy	Aye
Jones, Sonia	Aye
Laugeson, Liz	Aye
Liu, Cathay	Aye
Nieves, Nestor	Aye
Padilla, Michelle	Aye
Ponton, Kara	Aye
Rodriguez, Lupe	Aye
Rothschild, Kim	Aye
Ryan, Rosie	Aye
Stahmer, Aubyn	Aye
Twomey, Bob	Aye
Valdez, Irene	Aye
Yin, Larry	Aye

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 7.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Chair Report and Committee Reports

Council Chair Julie Gaona will provide Councilmembers with an oral report about her recent activities and current priorities for the Council.

SCDD committee summaries have been provided for informational purposes.

Attachments

Statewide Self-Determination Committee (SSDAC) Summary 2/17/26

Administrative Committee Summary 2/23/26

Executive Committee Summary 2/24/26

Legislative and Public Policy (LPPC) Summary 3/19/26

Handouts

Self-Advocates Advisory Committee (SAAC) Summary 3/23/26

AGENDA ITEM 7A.

STATEWIDE SELF-DETERMINATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SSDAC) SUMMARY

Date of Meeting

February 17, 2026

Meeting's Focus

The Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC) met on February 17th to discuss newly released Self-Determination Program (SDP) trailer bill language, and to hold a Town Hall to receive public comments on the renewal of the SDP waiver and the importance of continued federal funding for the program.

Co-Chairs Rick Wood and Nestor Nieves explained that proposed changes to SDP legislation (WIC 4685.8) strikes through the language that allows regional centers' access to implementation funds used for local education, outreach, resources, and events supporting SDP implementation. Co-Chairs Wood and Nieves recommended that LVACs consider advocating for the continuation of these funds by writing letters to the legislature. Members then discussed how the SSDAC should respond, given its role as an advisory Committee. Following discussion, it was moved to grant the SSDAC Workgroup the authority to craft a recommendation letter to DDS with the following recommendations, incorporating the member feedback that was gathered during the discussion:

1. Advise DDS to continue funding as it has in the past (providing a report that demonstrates how funds have been used to increase enrollment/make the program more effective).
2. Provide an alternative approach that allows for continued local funding. This approach would be for DDS to establish a statewide grant opportunity for local projects that support implementation of the program.

Later that morning the Committee reconvened to hold a Town Hall event focused on gathering public input for the Medicaid Waiver Renewal. The event was well attended, and members of the public shared important stories that highlighted how SDP has transformed their/their family member or client's lives.

Item's Acted Upon

- Approval of the December 2025 meeting minutes.
- Grant the Workgroup authority to craft a recommendation letter to DDS incorporating proposed recommendations and Committee feedback

Future Meeting Dates: May 5, 2026.

AGENDA ITEM 7B.**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

Date of Meeting

February 23, 2026

Meeting's Focus

The Administrative Committee met on February 23, 2026, to receive an update on current year (FY 2025-26) budget expenditures, review the draft FY 2026-27 SCDD Budget proposal, consider a one-time increase in sponsorship funding, and to receive an informational update on the Councilmember Administrative Policy on Travel Planning and Reimbursements.

Chief Deputy Director Rihana Ahmad presented a mid-year spending update showing all programs remain within budget. Following the update, the committee acted to recommend approval for the use of \$25,000 from the External Contracts budget to increase the current year's sponsorship allocation from \$25,000 to \$50,000. Executive Director Aaron Carruthers then presented the proposed FY 2026-27 budget, which the committee recommended be forwarded to the Executive Committee for review.

The meeting concluded with an informational update on changes to the travel reimbursement policy to align with current federal guidelines and updated Southwest Airlines fare options, including adjustments to per diem and mileage reimbursement rates effective January 1, 2026.

Items Acted Upon

- Approval of the August 2024 and February 2025 meeting minutes.
- The Administrative Committee recommended that the Executive Committee approve a one-time increase to Sponsorship funding from \$25,000 to \$50,000, using \$25,000 from the External Contracts budget.
- The Administrative Committee recommended that the Executive Committee review and consider the proposed FY 2026-27 SCDD Budget as drafted.

Future Meeting Dates

To be announced.

AGENDA ITEM 7C.**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

Date of Meeting

February 24, 2026

Meeting's Focus

The Executive Committee met on February 24, 2026, and included a 2026 kick-off, SCDD budget update, nine sponsorship requests, ten conflict resolution plans, a travel update, and a report from the Executive Director.

Executive Director Carruthers presented an update on recent Council activities and priorities. His report included an overview of the Governor's budget proposal, which includes \$730,000 in administrative support for SCDD, as well as recent policy successes related to Council-sponsored legislation AB 2360 (Arambula) on plain language and SB 1052 (Gonzalez) on authorized representatives. He also shared updates regarding the February all-staff meeting and the 50th anniversary of IDEA. Lastly, he welcomed Greg Gonzalez as the new Bay Area Regional Office Manager and Nick Lutton as the Fresno Regional Office Manager.

Items Acted Upon

- Approved the October 2025 meeting minutes.
- Approved the Administrative Committee's recommendation for a one-time increase of \$25,000 to fund sponsorships.
- Recommend that the Council approve the draft proposal of the FY 2026-27 SCDD budget.
- Approved sponsorship requests from the ARC of Ventura County, the Autism Society of Los Angeles, Beacon AAC, Choices Institute, Family Resource Network, Special Care Services, the Special Needs Resource Foundation of San Diego, the Orange County Department of Education, and We Rock The Spectrum – Clovis.
- Approved conflict resolution plans for Regional Center Board Members David Glasser, Nilo Choudhry, Terry Magady, Tina Daley, Mike Sawyer, Joseph Cullis, Jacqueline Dubois, Patricia McCarthy, Cali McKinzie, and William Moore.

Future Meeting Date: April 14, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 7D.**LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

Date of Meeting

March 12, 2026

Meeting's Focus

The Legislative and Public Policy Committee will meet on March 19th. The meeting's main focus will be reviewing and considering action on the 2026 legislative bill package. Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Chris Arroyo will ask members to consider action on up to 17 bills.

Prior to taking positions on the bill package, members will learn how SCDD connects policy and advocacy with communications and will receive an overview of the legislative process.

Other topics on the agenda include receiving a summary of the Governor's Proposed 2026-2027 State Budget.

Before adjourning, members will also receive relevant federal updates.

Proposed Items to be Acted Upon

- Approve October 2025 Meeting Minutes.
- Adopt the Committee's Recommended Bill Positions

Future Meeting Dates

June 23, 2026

August 25, 2026

October 13, 2026

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 8.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) Report

The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) is a project of the Council. Members will hear updates from SCDD SSAN Representative Eric Aguilar on recent activities.

Attachment

March 2026 SSAN Update Report

March 6, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8.

INFORMATION ITEM

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



Summary of March 2026 Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) Meeting

SSAN Meeting Date and Location: The Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) held virtual meetings on March 4 & 5, 2026, over Zoom.

Summary of Meeting:

Day one members provided updates on local self-advocacy efforts and their favorite hot or cold beverage.

Aaron Carruthers, SCDD Executive Director, provided members with an update on SCDD activities since the December meeting. This update included an overview of the Governor's proposed budget, which includes more funding for the developmental disabilities system due to an expected increase in regional center clients next year. SCDD has recently announced that the agency is sponsoring two pieces of legislation this year: AB 2360 (Arambula), which would require state departments to use plain language in communications, and SB 1052 (L. Gonzalez), which would allow SCDD to appoint authorized representatives for regional center clients in emergency situations. Members expressed concern about cuts to social programs across California's 58 counties, access to CalFresh (food stamps), and unknown changes to IHSS.

Chris Arroyo, SCDD Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs, provided members with more details about the two pieces of legislation that SCDD is sponsoring. He showed members how to submit letters through the Senate/Assembly committee websites and explained how bills with more letters of support are more likely to pass. Members were encouraged to spread the word to other self-advocate groups, workplaces, and personal networks about how to submit position letters. SCDD plans to host trainings on the legislative process in the coming weeks.

Gabe Taylor, Senior Advocate with the Disability Rights California (DRC) Voting Rights Practice Group, provided members with a presentation on voting rights. In California, people with disabilities have the right to vote unless a court has taken that right away as a part of a conservatorship. Additional rights covered included: the right to physically access your polling place, the right to have someone help you read your ballot, and the right to select your own choices. For more information, contact Gabe Taylor at Gaberiel.Taylor@disabilityrights.org. You can also contact the Disability Rights California Voter Hotline for help at 888-569-7955.

March 6, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8.

INFORMATION ITEM



STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Summary of March 2026 Statewide Self-Advocacy Network (SSAN) Meeting

The second day began with members sharing advocates that they admire. Following introductions, Scott Barron, Peer Advocate for the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) at Disability Rights California, and Bebo Saab, Supervising Attorney for Outreach at OCRA, led the group in a breathing exercise and talked about strategies for feeling calm and relaxed. Members shared things that add to their stress, including work, medical appointments, the news, financial worries, and other pressures. Strategies shared for managing stress included, watching TV, listening to music, and walking. Members expressed an interest in future agenda items on mindfulness and stress management.

SSAN Vice-Chair and SCDD SSAN Representative Eric Aguilar provided training on how people with disabilities can prepare for floods. Key points included knowing your flood zones, signing up for accessible alerts, building emergency plans with support networks, and preparing multi-day kits with medications, backup devices, and sensory or service animal supplies. He stressed evacuating early and staying safe from water hazards afterward.

SSAN Secretary and North Bay Regional Representative Ellen Sweigert provided members with a presentation on how one-page descriptions can be used to introduce yourself to others. Members noted that one-page descriptions could be used in IPP meetings, doctor's appointments, and to introduce yourself to new people.

Alexa Whitfield-Moore, Resources for Independence, Central Valley CalAIM Independent Living Coordinator, provided members with a presentation on California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), an initiative that aims to transform Medi-Cal into a whole-person care framework. For more information, email awhitfield-moore@ricv.org.

Visit the [SSAN Page](#) on the SCDD website for updates on meeting dates and group activities.

Actions Taken

- Approved December 2025 Meeting Minutes

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 9.
INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

SCDD 2026-27 Draft Budget

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers will present the proposed SCDD FY 2026-2027 draft budget.

Attachments

Budget Narrative

Budget PPT

FY 2026-27 SCDD Draft Budget Proposal

Handouts

May be additional handout(s) on the day of the meeting.



Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 BSG Budget and Description of Line-item Changes

Staff are presenting a State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026-27 BSG budget of \$8,167,000. The budget reflects a slight decrease in budget from 2025-26 due to a projected decrease in operational spending.

The budget assumes a Basic State Grant award amount consistent with the previous FFY 2025 award of \$8,032,000. Given higher personnel and operational costs, staff have prepared a proposed balanced budget supported by the anticipated BSG award amount and a transfer of Estimated Unexpended Funds (\$135,000).

Personal Services (Salaries and Wages, and Benefits)

This spending category is proposed to decrease from \$6,672,000 to \$6,381,000. This \$291,000 decrease represents a 4% decrease to the category. The change reflects staff allocation changes more towards contracted program work. The proposed budget also presumes an 8% percent vacancy rate based on position vacancy trends (\$535,000).

Temporary Help/Honorarium

This line-item is budgeted at \$148,000, anticipating that there will be limited expenditures in Temporary Help for 2026-27. This is a \$118,000 increase from previously budgeted \$30,000. The increase is to account for a blanket position that may become permanent in the future.

The Council member honorarium portion of this line-item is unchanged from 2025-26.

Operating Expenses and Equipment

Staff propose to realign line-items to better reflect recent spending trends. As a result, most line-items will show modest increases from the SFY 2025-26 budget. The proposed changes increase the OE&E budget from \$1,719,000 (SFY 2025-26) to \$1,786,000 (SFY 2026-27). This \$67,000 increase represents a 4% increase.

General Expense

This category includes expenses such as office supplies, non-IT equipment purchases, and conference facilities. The budget proposes to increase this line-item from \$38,000 for SFY 2025-26 to \$125,000 for SFY 2026-27. This is an \$87,000 increase.

Printing

This line-item covers the production of printed material such as Council and committee packets, pamphlets and brochures, reports, business cards, and copy paper. The budget proposes to increase this budget from \$20,000 to \$34,000. This is a \$14,000 increase.

Communications

This category funds telecommunications and related expenses such telephones. Spending patterns support increasing this budget from \$45,000 to \$76,000 for SFY 2026-27. This is a \$31,000 increase.

Postage

The budget proposes to slightly increase this line-item by \$3,000, from \$7,000 to \$10,000. Expenses under this category include postage meter rental and repair, supplies, and FedEx delivery services.

Travel In-State

This line-item is budgeted at \$175,000, an increase of \$25,000 from SFY 2025-26 budget of \$150,000. Regular use of remote meetings will continue in SFY 2026-27.

Travel includes:

- Commercial airfare
- Train fare
- Overnight lodging
- Meals
- Private car mileage and rental car charges
- Public transit, Lyft, shuttles, etc.

Travel Out-of-State

This line-item is consistent with the SFY 2025-26 budget: \$7,000. The category includes approved out-of-state trips for required meetings with the Administration on Community Living, NACDD and other DD Act partners as required as part of our Basic Support Grant.

Training

Expenses under this item include:

- Tuition and registration for all required and job-related skills development and leadership development training to rank and file and managerial staff
- Contract with CalHR and external trainers for staff training and development

The budget decreases this item from \$29,000 to \$25,000 and is consistent with spending in recent years to support required and staff development-related training. This is a \$4,000 decrease.

Facilities Operations

This line-item is increased from \$585,000 to \$633,000 to reflect current year spending, minor cost increases for leased space, and a new lease for the North State Regional Office. This is a \$48,000 increase. This includes:

- Rents/leases for SCDD offices
- DGS planning and lease management services
- Janitorial services
- Security/alarm services

Utilities

This line-item budget of \$8,000 remains unchanged for SFY 2026-27. It funds electricity, gas, water, and waste management services for SCDD offices where utilities are not included in the site's rent or lease.

Interdepartmental Services

This line-item decreased from \$250,000 to \$100,000 due to recent spending trends. This is a \$150,000 decrease. It supports various interagency agreements with state partners for support and technical services:

- \$50,000 allocated for annual the contract with the Department of Social Services for administrative support services
- Contracts with other state agencies for their services (State Treasurer, State Controller, Attorney General, CalHR, etc.)
- Audit charges for SCDD audits by control agencies (State Auditor, State Personnel Board, Department of General Services, Department of Finance, etc.)

External Contract Services

This line-item, unchanged from SFY 2025-26, is budgeted at \$360,000 and supports interpreting, translation, and captioning services.

Information Technology

The budget proposes a modest increase from \$190,000 to \$203,000 for SFY 2026-27. This is a \$13,000 increase. This funding pays for:

- CDT website hosting and data line charges for all SCDD offices
- Software purchases and licenses
- IT hardware such as PCs and accessories such as monitors and docking stations.

We are purchasing several new laptops for department staff in the current year as part of our IT refresh schedule, and we anticipate purchasing additional devices in SFY 2026-27.

SWCAP

This line-item represents SCDD's share of state administrative overhead and is statutorily capped at \$25,000.

Other Items of Expense

This line-item is projected to remain unchanged from the previous year and represents expenses that do not fall under any of the above categories: \$5,000.

Community Program Development Grants

As previously approved by the Council, this item remains budgeted at \$0 for SFY 2026-27. The historical amount of \$260,000 was reallocated within External Contract Services to support increasing need and cost for interpretation services and other State Plan contracting needs.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities

Draft Budget

July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027



Key Takeaways

- The SFY 2026-27 budget assumes the same Basic State Grant award amount from last year: \$8,032,000. This amount may change.
- The largest budget items are salaries and rent.
- The proposed budget includes decreased personnel costs by 4% and increased operating expenses by 4%.
- Most operational budget lines have been adjusted to reflect recent spending trends.
- Staff recommends transferring estimated unexpended funds to ensure a balanced budget.



Explanation of Calendars

- Calendar Year – January 1 through December 31
- State Fiscal Year (SFY) – July 1 through June 30
 - This is the timeframe we use for the proposed budget
- Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) – October 1 through September 30



What is a budget?

- It is a spending plan with an itemized summary of likely income and expenses for a given period.
- SCDD funding includes several sources:
 - Basic State Grant (Federal Funds)
 - The Council has review and approval authority
 - Quality Assessment (State Contract)
 - Rights and Advocacy Program (State Contract)
 - Self-Determination Program Orientation and Self-Determination Advisory Committee (State Contracts)
 - Supported Decision-making Technical Assistance (State Contract) (proposed)



PERSONAL SERVICES

“The *people* part of the budget”

The Personal Services category contains a single line item that includes the salaries, wages, and benefits for department staff.

It also includes the Honoraria payments to Council members.



Personal Services (BSG)

\$6,381,000

❖ Decreased by \$291,000 (4%) from SFY 2025-26.

More staff are working on state contracts, so less is charged to the Basic State Grant (federal funds).

This category includes:

- Staff Salaries
- Health, Dental and Vision Insurance contributions
- PERS Retirement contributions
- State Disability Insurance tax
- Unemployment insurance tax
- Temporary Help (e.g., Retired Annuitants)
- Council Member Honorarium

OPERATING EXPENSES AND EQUIPMENT

“The *things* part of the budget”

The Operating Expense and Equipment (OE&E) category consists of several line items that cover our statewide operational costs of doing business.



Operating Expenses & Equipment (BSG) \$1,786,000

❖ Increased by \$67,000 (4%) from SFY 2025-26.

The Operating Expense and Equipment (OE&E) category consists of several line items that cover our statewide operational costs of doing business.

The following slides explain these items and their proposed budget levels. In budget-speak, they're called "line items"

Most line items have been adjusted to reflect recent spending trends. Some went up because things cost more, some went down because we are spending less on it.

General Expense (BSG) \$125,000

❖ Increased by \$87,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes a variety of expenses that may not fall under specific line items.

- Office supplies and non-IT equipment.
- Service contracts.
- Association dues, membership fees and subscriptions to publications.
- Meeting rooms, conference facilities and fees.

Printing (BSG)

\$34,000

❖ Increased by \$14,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes the production of all printed materials such as:

- Copier maintenance in all offices.
- Council and committee agenda packets.
- Pamphlets, leaflets, brochures, etc.

Communications (BSG)

\$76,000

❖ Increased by \$31,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes all telecommunication and communications related expenses such as:

- Telephones and mobile devices (iPhones and iPads).
- Zoom licenses.
- Constant Contact

Postage (BSG)

\$10,000

❖ Increased by \$3,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes postage related expenses such as:

- Postage meter rental, repairs, postage refills and stamps.
- Mailing services such as FedEx and UPS.

In-State Travel (BSG)

\$175,000

❖ Increased by \$25,000 from SFY 2025-26.

The draft budget for travel is based on spending and patterns in the current year and associated cost increases resulting from lodging reimbursement rate increases. This line item includes all staff and member travel expenses within California such as:

- Airfare, train fare.
- Personal car mileage and parking expenses.
- Hotel rooms.
- Meal allowances and incidentals.

Out - of - State Travel (BSG) \$7,000

❖ Unchanged from SFY 2025-26.

Same as in-state travel but for travel outside California and approved by the Governor's Office.

Training (BSG)

\$25,000

❖ Decreased by \$4,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes required and desired trainings for staff and members, and the costs of staff providing SCDD-related training in the community. Examples include:

- Ethics, Sexual Harassment Prevention, Basic Supervision, Leadership and other required trainings.
- Tuition and training fees.
- Training materials such as books and supplies.

Facilities Ops. (BSG)

\$633,000

❖ Increased by \$48,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes the monthly lease or rental costs for SCDD Headquarters and SCDD's Regional Offices.

Facilities operations costs are projected to increase by approximately 8%.

Increase includes an office for North State Region, which has been operating remotely.

Utilities (BSG)

\$8,000

❖ This item is unchanged from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes the monthly water, electricity, gas, and trash expenses in offices where they are not included in a lease or rent agreement.

Interdepartmental Svcs. (BSG)

\$100,000

❖ Decreased by \$150,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes the cost of contracts with other state agencies for required services such as:

- Department of Social Services (accounting and IT support).
- Department of Human Resources (HR advice and consultation).
- Department of Justice (legal advice and litigation support).
- Department of General Services (facilities support, purchase order, and contract review).
- State Controller's Office (expedited processing of payments)

External Contract Srvcs. (BSG)

\$360,000

❖ This item is unchanged from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes the costs of contracts with non-governmental entities and local vendors for required services such as:

- Janitorial services for field offices where it is not included in the lease/rent agreement.
- Worksite/ergonomic evaluations.
- Captioning, interpreting and translation services.
- Consultants, presenters.

Information Technology (BSG) \$203,000

❖ Increased by \$13,000 from SFY 2025-26.

This line item includes costs related to information technology such as:

- Department of Technology data lines for Internet access in Headquarters and Regional Offices.
- Department of Technology (website maintenance and support).
- Computer hardware peripherals and accessories (computer parts and monitors).
- Software licenses (Windows operating system, Microsoft Office 365, Adobe Professional, and Qualtrics).

SWCAP (BSG)

\$25,000

❖ This item is unchanged from SFY 2025-26.

The Statewide Cost Allocation Plan (SWCAP) represents the SCDD's share of support for statewide general administrative costs (i.e., indirect costs incurred by central service agencies) from federal funding sources. By statute, SCDD's share is fixed at \$25,000. This charge applies only to the federal Basic Support Grant as the CRA/VAS and QA programs are funded by the Department of Developmental Services, which is a non-federal funding source.

Other Items of Expenses (BSG)

\$5,000

❖ This item is unchanged from SFY 2025-26.

This line item captures miscellaneous charges that don't fall under the other line items.

Community Program Development Grants \$0

The Council previously voted to not run a grant program in 2026-27.

The historical amount \$260,000 was reallocated to External Contracts.

Prudent Reserve and Estimated Unexpended Funds

Prudent Reserve: \$1,750,000

The prudent reserve identifies funding that would be available should the federal government shutdown or if Congress reduces state council budgets. We would be able to maintain stable funding for a few months, providing time to plan and make necessary operational decisions.

Estimated Unexpended Funds: \$169,000

Given BSG award amount assumptions, and the budget needs identified in this presentation, staff recommend using these funds (\$135,000) to fully support the Council budget.

Summary of Operating Expenses Changes

General Expense	↑ \$87,000
Printing	↑ \$14,000
Communications	↑ \$31,000
Postage	↑ \$ 3,000
Travel (In State)	↑ \$25,000
Travel (Out of State)	no change
Training	↓ \$ 4,000
Rent	↑ \$48,000
Utilities	no change
Interdepartmental Contracts	↓ \$150,000
External Contracts	no change
Information Technology	↑ \$13,000
SWCAP	no change
Other Items of Expense	no change
Total Operating Expenses Changes	↑ \$67,000

TOTAL PRELIMINARY 26-27 COUNCIL BUDGET ALL PROGRAMS

Council Budget

Basic State Grant (BSG) Award	\$8,032,000
Estimated Unexpended Funds	<u>\$135,000</u>
Total Federal Funds	\$8,167,000

Other Programs

Quality Assessment (QA) State Contract	\$4,513,000
Rights Advocacy Program	\$1,660,000
Self-Determination Projects (2)	\$ 693,000
Supported Decision-Making TAP	\$ unknown

Total Council Budget **\$15,033,000**

Questions?





State Council on Developmental Disabilities

Fiscal Year 2026-27 Proposed Budget
February 2026

Categories	Council Budget		Department Budget - Other Programs			TOTAL
	*Basic State Grant	Quality Assessment	Rights and Advocacy Program	Self-Determination Orientation	Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee	
	Federal Grant	State Contract	State Contract	State Contract	State Contract	
1. Personal Services:						
Net Salaries & Wages	\$ 4,340,533	\$ 1,674,000	\$ 833,000	\$ 203,000	\$ 104,000	\$ 7,154,533
Temporary Help / Honorarium	\$ 148,064	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 148,064
Staff Benefits	\$ 2,427,127	\$ 904,000	\$ 417,000	\$ 105,000	\$ 54,000	\$ 3,907,127
Less 8% Salary Savings from Vacancies	\$ (534,754)					\$ (534,754)
Total Personal Services	\$ 6,381,000	\$ 2,578,000	\$ 1,250,000	\$ 308,000	\$ 158,000	\$ 10,675,000
2. Operating Expense and Equipment:						
General Expense	\$ 125,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000	\$ -	\$ 161,000
Printing	\$ 34,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 70,000
Communications	\$ 76,000	\$ 73,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 161,000
Postage	\$ 10,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 48,000
Travel-in-State :	\$ 175,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 293,000
Out-of-State Travel	\$ 7,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000
Training	\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000
Facilities Operations (Rent)	\$ 633,000	\$ 266,000	\$ 24,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 923,000
Utilities	\$ 8,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,000
Interdepartmental Services	\$ 100,000	\$ 140,000	\$ 134,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 374,000
External Contract Services	\$ 360,000	\$ 175,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 126,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 681,000
Information Technology	\$ 203,000	\$ 166,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 14,000	\$ -	\$ 428,000
Statewide Cost Allocation Plan (SWCAP)	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000
Other Items of Expense	\$ 5,000	\$ 980,000	\$ 132,000	\$ 12,000	\$ -	\$ 1,129,000
Total Operating Expense and Equipment	\$ 1,786,000	\$ 1,935,000	\$ 410,000	\$ 170,000	\$ 57,000	\$ 4,358,000
3. Community Grants / Other Projects	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
4. Total SCDD Budget by Source	\$ 8,167,000	\$ 4,513,000	\$ 1,660,000	\$ 478,000	\$ 215,000	\$ 15,033,000
5. Total Basic State Grant Award	\$ 8,032,000					
6. Difference between Total Council Budget and Basic State Grant Award	\$ (135,000)					
*Footnotes						
3 Month Reserve	\$ 1,750,000					
Estimated Unexpended Funds Available	\$ 169,000					

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 10.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

SCDD Sponsored Legislation

Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Chris Arroyo will present SCDD's sponsored bills for the current legislative session.

Handout(s)

May be additional handouts on the day of the meeting

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 11.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

SCDD Policy Popcorn

Executive Director Aaron Carruthers will ask Councilmembers to identify community groups or organizations the Council should consider reaching out to regarding SCDD-sponsored legislation.

MARCH 24, 2026

AGENDA ITEM 12.

VOTE ITEM

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

2026 Bills to Consider

The Legislative and Public Policy Committee (LPPC) met on March 19th to review and make recommendations on legislative bills. Committee members used the 2022-2026 State Plan and Council-approved Policy Priorities to guide the discussion and subsequent recommendations.

The Council will review bills to consider based on the LPPC's recommendation.

Attachments

SCDD Policy Priorities
2022-2026 State Plan

Handout(s)

2026 Bill Position Chart
May be additional handouts on the day of the meeting

Action Recommended

Approve the recommended positions on legislation.

Policy Priorities 2025-26

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have a right to exert control and choice over their own lives, play decision making roles in policies and programs, and be fully integrated into the economic, political, social, cultural and educational mainstream of California.¹ To advance these rights, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities declares these policy priorities.

PROTECTING AND ENHANCING CIVIL RIGHTS

Every person with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) has the right to self-determination, equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency no matter their disability.

The Council will work to ensure civil rights, are protected, and enhanced, including identification and reduction of racial and ethnic inequalities and disparities, advocating for transparency in processes, and supporting persons with IDD and their families to participate in policy/systems change.

ENSURING FEDERAL POLICIES AND LAWS ADVANCE INCLUSION AND SELF-DETERMINATION

Federal law recognizes that individuals with developmental disabilities have the right to make informed choices and decisions about their own lives, live independently, and participate fully in their communities. Further, these values call for providing persons with IDD and their families with the information, skills, opportunities, and supports needed to pursue meaningful and productive lives; contribute to their families, communities, and the nation; and achieve full inclusion in society consistent with their unique strengths and abilities. Federal policies play a crucial role in ensuring robust, community-based systems of services and supports that promote self-determination, independence, productivity, and inclusion.

The Council will work to ensure that information about federal policies and laws that have an impact on persons with IDD and their families is shared in plain language. The Council will also work to ensure that these federal efforts uphold the values of informed choice, independence, and full community participation for all persons with IDD and their families.

GUARANTEEING ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Every student with IDD has the right to a quality inclusive education with their peers that prepares them for post-secondary education and/or competitive integrated employment (CIE). Students with disabilities must be provided the same opportunities for learning, in the classroom and online, as students without disabilities.

Every person with IDD should have the opportunity to be employed in CIE. Individuals must have access to information, benefits counseling, transition planning, job training, career exploration and information and support for inclusive post-secondary education. New or expanded pathways to CIE must be developed and supported, including apprenticeships and internships.

The Council will work to ensure the full and robust implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, California's Employment First Law, and the California Employment First Office. The Council will ensure that policies and practices improve opportunities for and incentivize CIE, encourage supports for employers, and make the state a model employer.

IDENTIFYING & PRIORITIZING EMERGING ISSUES IN THE I/DD COMMUNITY

Every person with a developmental disability should not have to deal with problems that arise due to the emergence of inequality issues in the community. Events in our everyday lives, both due to policy changes and unforeseen events, can cause unintended consequences for the IDD community. These issues must be identified and acted upon swiftly to ensure as little harm as possible is inflicted.

The Council will work to ensure emerging issues including, but not limited to, dealing with disparities across all IDD issues, barriers to participating in a community setting, and roadblocks to access for people with IDD are dealt with through policy changes and by keeping the administration and lawmakers informed about issues.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO QUALITY SUPPORTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Every person with IDD should have the ability to fully participate in their communities. Receiving quality, individualized services is the cornerstone for people with IDD to be safe, healthy and to promote self-determination, interdependence, and inclusion.

Community-based services/supports require adequate wages for providers; therefore, the state must restore rates. Disparities in access, outcomes, and quality of services and supports must be addressed. Complexities in the service delivery systems must be reduced.

The Council will make meaningful improvements to the service delivery system to reduce disparities, increase transparency and accountability and increase quality outcomes by making recommendations to the Master Plan on Developmental Services, and by ensuring successful implementation of the Self-Determination Program and Achieving Better Life Experience Act.

ENSURING SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

Every person with I/DD has a right to be safe and must be provided with emergency preparedness training and training in personal safety. Law enforcement personnel, first responders, emergency medical professionals and the judicial system must be trained in how to work with people with IDD (including those who are suspects, victims or witnesses of crimes)

The Council will work to ensure people with I/DD are safe, free from abuse and neglect and have access to services and supports in their communities during all types of disasters or emergencies and an adequate safety net for people in crisis and access to adequate crisis intervention services. The Council will work to improve outcomes of law enforcement interactions with people with IDD.

IMPROVING HOUSING AND COMMUNITY LIVING

Every person with IDD should have the opportunity to live in the community. Permanent, affordable, accessible, safe and sustained housing options must be continually developed. Statewide inclusive living options for individuals with IDD must be increased and enhanced through access to housing and subsidies that are paired in a timely manner with needed services and supports.

The Council will work to identify housing resources for persons with IDD and their families to prevent homelessness and advocate for availability of accessible and affordable housing.

For more information, contact: scdd@scdd.ca.gov | 916-263-7919

2022-26 State Plan

Goal 1: Self-Advocacy

By 2026, the Council will maintain and/or increase the number of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities to become strong self-advocates, peer trainers and community leaders.

Objectives

1.1

The Council will provide information and resources through 300 regional/statewide self-advocacy chats, 40 regional/statewide projects/events and 200 trainings to strengthen 15,000 self-advocates in:

- 1) Achieving self-governance with supports, as requested;
- 2) Identifying and asking for the supports and services that they need;
- 3) Becoming and serving as peer trainers;
- 4) Developing skills and opportunities to engage as strong activists for issues that are important to them and their families; and,
- 5) Participating in culturally diverse, cross-disability coalitions.

1.2

The Council will collaborate with and/or support self-advocates in peer networks, including culturally diverse, cross-disability coalitions, by providing facilitation, tangible supports and peer advocacy/leadership opportunities through at least 1 statewide and 12 regional self-advocacy entities, reaching 6,000 self-advocates.

1.3

In the event of unforeseen project opportunities, emerging needs, and/or community, cross-regional or statewide requests, the Council may engage in additional activities with and/or on behalf of self-advocates and those who support and serve them.

Goal 2: Systems Change/Advocacy

By 2026, the Council will lead in partnership with family/self-advocates and others to protect and enhance civil rights to improve community-based systems and be more fully inclusive and supportive of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families.

Objectives

2.1

The Council will monitor and collaborate with local, regional and/or statewide entities to develop, improve and/or change 85 practices, 70 policies, and 20 regulations (or guidance), statutes and/or laws in the systems of regional centers, community-based services, and governmental entities. This work will include the areas of employment, education, housing, health/safety and/or emerging issues in ways that will benefit people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and protect their civil rights, promote full inclusion, and/or provide additional supports and services, improving their lives in tangible ways.

2.2

The Council will engage in 40 regional and 5 statewide innovative/special projects and/or events in the areas of employment, education, housing, health/safety and/or self-determination to:

- 1)** Support 45,000 people (family/self-advocates and others) in systems change efforts and give them information, skills and/or supports to increase their abilities to become effective advocates;
- 2)** Engage in professional training and/or other efforts to implement systems, demonstrate or support systems change; and/or,
- 3)** Increase services and/or improve supports for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families.

2.3

The Council, in collaboration with California's four (4) partners (one Protection and Advocacy agency and three University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities), will seek to improve the generic service system that impacts people with intellectual/developmental disabilities by choosing one or more areas of emphasis in the State Plan, such as education, employment, housing, and/or health/safety, and report on how that system is serving people with I/DD, gaps in that service delivery system, recommendations on how to improve the systems to meet the goals of the DD Act, and/or pursue policy and practice changes in those areas. The collaboration will result in the review or development of 2 reports, 6 recommendations for policy or practice changes, and 2 Legislative or Administrative changes to policy or practice.

Goal 3: Capacity-Building/Advocacy

By 2026, the Council will increase partnerships with and support of more people with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families, so they know their rights and can advocate for and receive supports and services.

Objectives

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 3.1 | <p>The Council will increase the capacity of 60,000 people with assistance and resources to identify and obtain the supports and services to help people with intellectual/developmental disabilities live a safer and healthier life, by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Establishing and/or collaborating with and supporting 10 family-advocate groups/networks,2. Providing (staff-led, peer-led and/or collaborative) training to 35,000 people (family/self-advocates/others) throughout the state – virtually, online and/or in person, and3. Providing technical assistance (TA)/advocacy clinics and/or resources, reaching 25,000 people. |
| 3.2 | <p>The Council will engage in 150 projects and events in the areas of employment, education, housing, health/safety, and/or emerging issues, reaching 45,000 people (family/self-advocates/others) with information and resources to enhance their knowledge and increase their capacity to obtain supports and services that are important to them.</p> |
| 3.3 | <p>In order to reduce the disparities in obtaining a free, appropriate public education, the Council will work with 5,000 Spanish-speaking family/self-advocates throughout the state to advocate for and increase the number and type/quality of special education services they receive through their own local education agencies.</p> |

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 13.
INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Executive Director Report and Staff Reports

SCDD Executive Director Aaron Carruthers will provide Councilmembers with an oral report regarding recent Council activities. Additionally, SCDD Staff reports have been included in the packet for informational purposes.

Attachments

Chief Deputy Director Report
Deputy Director of Regional Office Operations Report
RAP Report
QA Project Report

Handouts

Executive Director Report
Deputy Director of Policy and Public Affairs Report



Deputy Director Report

March 2026

Rihana Ahmad

Overview:

The Chief Deputy Director (CDD) continues to oversee operational functions in collaboration with staff, while identifying tools and strategies to strengthen organizational effectiveness. Recent efforts have focused on engaging with staff, leadership, and external partners to support program development, policy implementation, and operational alignment.

Key initiatives include implementation and oversight of the Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP), along with collaborative discussions with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) on the Quality Assurance (QA) program, Self-Determination Program (SDP) Orientations and Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC) projects.

Core administrative responsibilities are being prioritized, including executive oversight of the agency's budget development and monitoring processes, contract and procurement oversight, personnel management, interagency coordination, and day-to-day operational support across the organization.

The following sections highlight recent activities and accomplishments from some of the operational and program support units under the Chief Deputy Director's oversight.

Personnel:

- ✓ Conducted 19 recruitments in FY 2026 (July 1, 2025 – present), with 5 active recruitments currently ongoing.
- ✓ Hired 10 staff members in FY 2026, with 2 new hires since February
 - Bay Area Regional Office, Manager I – Gregory Gonzalez (February 9)
 - Central Coast Regional Office, Analyst II – Josphe Macias (March 2)

Budget:

- ✓ Submitted SCIF estimates for 2026-27 coverage period
- ✓ Completed 3-year Operating Expenditure and Equipment (OE&E) analysis and payroll projection for 2026-27
- ✓ Drafted and submitted 2026-27 proposed Council Budget
- ✓ Completed February Exec Council Budget Report
- ✓ Provided operational support for Chief Deputy Director

IT:

- ✓ SCDD IT Staff continued to partner with internal SCDD staff as well as external agencies to advance key projects including:
 - Developing Service Code Descriptions webpages to enhance accessibility and clarity of Regional Center service information
 - Meeting with CDSS Telecommunications in preparation for Microsoft Teams Calling Project Rollout (Estimated July 2026 Completion)
- ✓ SCDD's IT staff continued to provide the agency with support and access to up to date technology by:
 - Overseeing the ongoing IT Refresh Cycle, including upgrades to laptops, copiers, and software licenses
 - Providing ongoing technical support to staff to resolve IT issues and maintain smooth operations

Business Operations and Committee Supports:

- ✓ Staff continued to advance key operational and administrative efforts to strengthen organizational effectiveness and ensure compliance including
 - Finalizing and deploying an updated SCDD Contract Manual
 - Completing Committee & Council Membership intranet resources and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for internal staff.
- ✓ Staff completed required records management and compliance reporting and reviewed and approved contracts and invoices to support uninterrupted operations.
 - Small Business and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) compliance continues to be a focus and Staff have begun development of a DVBE first procurement policy to ensure strengthened compliance for the remainder of the fiscal year.

State Plan:

- ✓ State Plan Team (SPT) staff have reviewed 436 Regional Staff Activity Reports from the first two quarters of the new Federal Fiscal year and have begun identifying key projects to highlight for this year's Program Performance Report (PPR).

- ✓ At the request of the Administration on Community Living ACL, the SPT have also been collecting and writing impact stories which are being used to showcase the work and impact of The Council to federal lawmakers and other decision-making authorities.
- ✓ After January's adoption of the 2027-2031 State Plan, the SPT have begun preparing the workplan and logic model which will be submitted to ACL alongside the State plan and will outline how the Council will achieve its new objectives across the next 5-year cycle.

Self-Advocacy:

- ✓ The Self Advocacy Committee (SAAC) met on January 20th to discuss issues impacting Californians with IDD, align on 2026 Self-Advocacy goals, and provide feedback to DDS representatives on their experiences with receiving in-person versus virtual services.
- ✓ SSAN held a 2-day meeting over Zoom on March 4th and 5th where members were informed about legislative bills affecting people with I/DD, tips for voting, Cal Aim, and how to stay prepared in the event of a flood.
- ✓ SCDD staff hosted 1 Statewide Self-Advocacy Chat in February and Staff met with SA leaders to continue planning SA outreach activities.

Statewide Self Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC):

- ✓ The SSDAC met on February 17th for a Townhall and to review proposed Trailer Bill Language that would remove the section of law allowing Self-Determination Program implementation funds to be allocated to regional centers for local projects.
 - Members discussed the potential impact of losing these funds and considered recommendations to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS).
 - Members expressed support for a statewide grant program and voted to authorize the SSDAC Workgroup to draft a recommendation letter to DDS incorporating member feedback.

Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program (SDM-TAP):

- ✓ Grant projects under the Supported Decision-Making Technical Assistance Program have been completed.
 - SDM-TAP staff continue to collaborate with UC Davis and data collection efforts will continue through April 2026.
 - UC Davis has drafted an outline of their evaluation report of the program and are preparing recommendations on future priorities and initiatives to promote SDM in California.

- ✓ SDM-TAP staff are reviewing SDM-TAP grantee developed resources and identifying those which will be translated and beginning the process of uploading all remaining materials to the online SDM-TAP resource Library.

Self-Determination Program Orientation Project

The SCDD Statewide Self-Determination Program (SDP) Orientation Project is a long-term Interagency Agreement with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to conduct the required first step of the Self-Determination Program: the SDP Orientation. Since July 2022, SCDD has offered these sessions statewide in multiple languages. The project is carried out by SCDD staff working alongside co-trainers who are family members of participants and SDP participants themselves, bringing lived experience to the training.

Participants who attend the full session and provide the required information receive an orientation certificate that is honored by all 21 regional centers. This certificate allows eligible individuals to enroll in the Self-Determination Program, if desired.

- ✓ Between January and February 2026, the SDP Orientation Project delivered 17 sessions in English, Spanish, Armenian, and Farsi, reaching 922 participants. Cumulatively, the project has served 13,716 participants statewide.
- ✓ Recent feedback about the SDP team, co-trainers, and content delivery includes:
 - "Thank you so much. Looking forward to learning more as I move forward. Thank you again for your presentation. Both were really great. 😊"
 - "BRAVA!! Amazing orientation!! Thank you!!"
 - "Thank you for your professional and clear presentation. I appreciate you!"
- ✓ For January and February 2026, in addition to providing dedicated interpreters for Armenian and Farsi sessions, and Spanish sessions led by Spanish-speaking SCDD trainers, we continue to offer an AI translation tool during English-language sessions. During this two-month period, participants used the tool in Arabic, Azerbaijani, Armenian, Chinese, Hebrew, Korean, Nepali, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish, helping extend access to more of California's diverse language communities.
- ✓ Finally, SCDD continues to work closely with DDS on curriculum updates to align the orientation with recent statutory changes and improve clarity around roles, responsibilities, and program processes. In January 2026, DDS conducted community engagement to gather feedback on the proposed updates. The revised curriculum is currently pending final approval, with plans to launch the updated materials in the coming months.



Deputy Director, Regional Office Operations (DDR00)

Report, March 2026

Sheraden Nicholau

Overview:

The Deputy Director of Regional Office Operations is the lead position fulfilling the department's federal and state mission for systems change and capacity building. This position leads the 12 regional teams to carry out the work of the State Plan, including systemic identification and removal of barriers that keep people with IDD from living integrated lives in the community.

Additionally, this position:

- Represents SCDD externally to build partnerships and advance the work of the SCDD.
- Leverages change management to maximize SCDD's impact.
- Provides leadership and oversight of the programmatic, administrative, and strategic work of the SCDD regional teams.
- Supervises SCDD Regional Managers.
-

Recent Regional Office Highlights:

- ✓ SCDD Regional Offices have kicked off this year's SCDD themed-month content, to include panels featuring experts with lived-experience, webinars, and resources statewide. Recent rollouts include trainings and panels for Developmental Disability Awareness month in March and building content for Mental Health Awareness month in May.
- ✓ Regional Offices are mid-contract for the 2026 Community Care Licensing (CCL) contract, featuring statewide training of hundreds of California licensing analysts and facilitating panels featuring experts with



lived-experience. SCDD is funded for this work, through a contract with U.C. Davis.

- ✓ SCDD’s new Regional Manager for the Sequoia Regional Office and new Regional Manager for the Bay Area Regional Office have recently completed their first 30-days. Additionally, a new Office Technician has joined the North Valley Hills Regional Office, and a new Analyst II has joined the Central Coast Regional Office. SCDD’s Sacramento Regional Office and the Los Angeles Regional Office have open positions and are in the recruitment process to bring on new team members.

Recent External Partnership Highlights:

- ✓ SCDD DDROO was a keynote speaker or session presenter at recent conferences, trainings, and events:
 - Cal-TASH’s Annual Conference, *Building Bridges: Breaking Barriers*, a presentation on Medicaid law updates and impacts with Councilmember Bittner
 - Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) sessions for law enforcement, fire department, EMT, and crisis street teams across counties
 - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) related updates, community member rights, and safety planning, for Deaf and Deaf + community members
- ✓ SCDD DDROO received the 2026 Diane J. Lipton Memorial Award, presented by the Cal-TASH Board of Directors, in honor of “*significant systems-level advocacy efforts towards inclusive schools and communities for all Californian’s youth and adults with and without Disabilities*”



Recent Administrative Highlights:

- ✓ SCDD team members convened in Sacramento for an in-person All-Staff conference, in February 2026. This conference featured two days of training, team building, and workgroup planning, supported by National Leadership Consortium.
- ✓ SCDD regional teams, in collaboration with fellow SCDD HQ teams, continue to make progress on updated in-house procedures and best-practices, for effective and efficient regional office operations. Recent examples include a translation audit process, regional manager onboarding checklist, and progress on a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) support toolkit.
- ✓ Seven SCDD teams are in process of renewing their regional office lease or evaluating new lease options.

State Plan Activities Year-to-Date from the Regional Offices & HQ Team Members:

SCDD team members continue to lead and contribute to a variety of statewide and regional activities in this fifth and final year of the current State Plan.

Activities conducted and reported on, so far, this fiscal year include:

- ✓ 51 self-advocacy activities (Goal 1), impacting 567 individuals
- ✓ 292 systems change activities (Goal 2), impacting 7,066 individuals
- ✓ 194 capacity-building activities (Goal 3), impacting 9,810 individuals
- ✓ Delivering a total of 121 trainings, and 416 meetings, chats, and clinics
- ✓ Preparing 93 self-advocates and 8 family advocates to be trainers, facilitators, and presenters across 83 prep sessions
- ✓ Developing 15 curricula, 20 resources, updating 14 curricula and resources, and translating one resource

✓ Reaching 6,976 new individuals with SCDD’s work

A Few Recent State Plan Activities Highlights:



Advocates and State Council staff providing public testimony at Cupertino City Council Mtg



An award of appreciation from the Far Northern Regional Center to SCDD for dedication to long-term support services. A photo from the Irvine Residents with Disabilities Advisory Committee.

Goal 1: Self-Advocacy

✓ The SCDD North Bay Regional Office worked with fellow SCDD regional offices to



recruit eleven panelists with lived-experience from across the state. These panelists with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) are serving as expert panelists in the 2026 statewide Community Care Licensing (CCL) trainings. They've received training and support from the North Bay Regional Office team, preparing to present to hundreds of analysts this year across nine training days. As a result, these expert panelists have statewide training opportunities, and California's CCL Analysts have the training to better serve Californians with IDD in licensed homes and day program settings. Additionally, this work offers a stipend for expert panelists. North Bay Regional Office staff serve as a liaison between the expert panelists and U.C. Davis, so that panelists can complete the paperwork required, and receive a pay stipend for their valuable work.

- ✓ The SCDD Sequoia Regional Office partnered with self-advocates to provide training around healthy relationships, consent, boundaries, public v. private communication, and other related topics. The aim of these trainings and technical assistance is to prevent abuse, uphold individual rights, foster open communication, and to normalize sexuality as a natural part of human development. A total of 98 self-advocates participated, recently. As a result, participants have a better understanding of boundaries and other components of health relationships. Additionally, participants have the knowledge and safe space to advocate for themselves and practice healthy boundary setting in relationships.
- ✓ The SCDD North Valley Hills Regional Office supported the Self Advocacy Council 6 (SAC6) Area Meeting of Self Advocates Annual Meeting. This annual meeting is run by and for self-advocates; SCDD is an invited partner for this work. Over 250 self-advocates attended the annual meeting, from five counties in the region. A SAC6 member and SCDD North Valley Hills Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Member provided training on the new Individual Program Plan (IPP) process and gathered feedback in collaboration with Valley Mountain Regional Center's Director of Consumer Services. CHOICES members announced the winners of their T-shirt and video contests for the 2026 conference. The North Valley Hills Regional Office



provided an update on the latest quality assessment cycle for the state, provided a resource table, and technical support for the event. SAC6 hired The Advocates and PCS DJs for the event. Participants enjoyed a delicious free lunch and left the event with a CHOICES Conference registration form, a Dept. of Developmental Services IPP survey link, and flyers for upcoming events across the region. It was a successful day for SAC6 to show their leadership in the community, with support from the SCDD North Valley Hills Regional Office.

Goal 2: Systems Change

- ✓ The SCDD Central Coast Regional Office collaborated with partner agencies and advocates to provide a strong wave of testimony and support for an affordable, inclusive housing development in Cupertino. This project is planned to provide 40 affordable homes, 19 of those for individuals with IDD. Over 60 members of the IDD community attended the City Council meeting. Approximately 30 self-advocates and family advocates provided public comment. The Central Coast Regional Office provided written and in-person comments to the City Council, to counter ‘Not in My Backyard’ (NIMBY) opposition to the development. The City Council ultimately approved the Mary Avenue Villas project.
 - Community members with disabilities expressed appreciation, with one writing to SCDD, *“thank you for inviting me and helping me”*.
 - An inclusive housing community partner shared, *“Thank you for your support letter for Mary Ave Villas and continued support through the various phases of this advocacy effort. As you know, after a very close vote, Mary Avenue passed last night. City Council approved the project design and environmental clearance, where 19 units set aside for those with IDD, required the housing to stay affordable for 99 years... your support, along with that of other advocates, played an important role in getting us here.”*
- ✓ The SCDD San Bernardino Regional Office established an initiative with California



State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB), called the Leadership for Inclusive Futures in Teaching (LIFT). This initiative aims to develop mentorship opportunities for newly credentialed neurodivergent teachers starting their careers. The SCDD San Bernardino Regional Office helped connect CSUSB and local Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPAs), as a part of developing this mentorship structure. The goal is for neurodivergent credentialed teachers to receive mentorship and support as they enter the workforce, while strengthening partnerships among higher education, community advocates, and local education systems. The Leadership for Inclusive Futures in Teaching (LIFT) initiative has the potential to increase the number and retention of neurodivergent teachers serving and thriving in local school systems. By promoting disability-affirming mentorship and advocacy, the initiative contributes to building a more inclusive and representative education workforce, with potential for expansion across California.

- ✓ The SCDD North State Regional Office serves as a partner in the Long-Term Support Services Committee, comprised of community advocates, Far Northern Regional Center, service providers, Alice Carroll Foundation, and New Beginnings Housing Foundation. This committee develops Long-Term Support Services in the region, and assists individuals served in building personal support networks while supporting Long-Term Planning for families. Recent work included the development of a Long-Term Support Services resource webpage, updating the Life Care Tool for the region in English and Spanish, and Peace of Mind seminars (for individuals served and families to build their community and receive valuable resources to navigate long-term planning). Far Northern Regional Center presented an award of appreciation to SCDD's North State Regional Office for SCDD's dedication to long-term support services.
- ✓ The SCDD North Coast Regional Office, in partnership with Redwood Region RISE, out of the CA Jobs First Initiative, has advocated throughout the process for full access, equity, and disability inclusion. Recognizing ongoing gaps in this work, the North Coast Regional Office, RISE, and other disability advocates have begun working with West Business Development Center to develop training and support for the



organizations with funded projects, as well as for organizations that were not awarded funding. This training and support will include curricula and technical assistance for employers, for job seekers with disabilities, and for small business owners with disabilities. As a part of this work, SCDD's North Coast Regional Office and collaborators are assisting West Business Development Center in updating their materials to ensure materials are accessible and relevant for employers, job seekers, and small business owners with disabilities. As one of numerous Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) in the state, success with this initiative could be shared statewide through the SBDC network.

- ✓ The SCDD Orange County Regional Office, at the request of the UCLA PEERS® Clinic at UCLA Tarjan Center, provided training titled Demystifying Disability Benefits: Practical Knowledge for College Professionals Supporting Students with Disabilities. This training was provided virtually to 336 attendees. The objectives included: 1. increase understanding of the disability benefits evaluation and calculation process; 2. understand factors that impact disability benefits and programs that allow students to work more and save more, and; 3. identify resources and referrals to help students navigate the disability benefits system.
 - Dr. Moody shared the following information following the training: *"It was so well prepared, and I am so impressed by your ability to make such complex information easy to follow. You also have a very calming presence while speaking which helps when talking about these topics since they can be stressful!! I'm not sure if you saw, but you got kudos and thanks from multiple people in Q&A as well."*
 - Another parent advocate shared *"Your talk made my day and may impact much more! The scenarios and examples were awesome and so appreciated along with how clearly you connected the technical mechanics to the main message. Your talk was positive energy and certainly a spark for me! I'm grateful. It has been a very long time since the content I am working around gives me energy. A very long time."*



- ✓ The SCDD Bay Area Regional Office and the SCDD Sacramento Regional Office are working with the California Office of State Publishing (OSP) to develop accessible templates for State of California department business cards. There had not been business card templates available to state departments with accessible larger fonts, in Sans-serif. This presents challenges for community members and partners in reading and making use of these State of California business cards. The SCDD Bay Area Regional Office developed the initial template and shared with OSP, providing consultation. The SCDD Sacramento Regional Office is now currently working with OSP to create additional State of California business card design templates. The goal is for all state departments across the state to have options in selecting accessible business cards.

Goal 3: Capacity-Building

- ✓ The SCDD San Diego Imperial Regional Office provided a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) presentation for Spanish-speaking families. Twenty-five parents of children with autism participated. This training sought to reduce language barriers for families and to improve families' understanding of SSI eligibility and application processes. This live presentation included resource sharing, and a question-and-answer session. Parents reported increased understanding of the SSI eligibility and application process. Families expressed appreciation for receiving culturally and linguistically appropriate information. As a result, this activity strengthened outreach to underserved families in the region, and improved access to vital benefits information.
- ✓ The SCDD Los Angeles Regional Office led Public Testimony training, in collaboration with parent support groups lead by SCDD's academy (ALAS) graduates, Together for Inclusion, Tichenor Clinic for Children, Unidad y Fuerza, and Broad Spectrum Broader Minds. The SCDD Los Angeles Regional Office provided the training, in Spanish, on how to provide



effective public testimony in board, council, and/or committee meetings. Forty-five self-advocates and family-advocates learned how to structure clear and effective public comment. Participants reported that, after receiving the training, they have increased their confidence in speaking in front of decision makers. As a result, individuals with IDD and their families have increased representation and greater influence in public decision-making processes through meaningful participation in public comment.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities

Rights and Advocacy Program (RAP)

SCDD Serving Individuals Residing and Transitioning from DDS State Operated Facilities

March 2026

Prepared by: Holly Bins, Rights and Advocacy Program Manager

During January–February 2026, the Rights and Advocacy Program (RAP) continued to support individuals residing at Canyon Springs Community Facility and Porterville Developmental Center through direct advocacy, rights protection, and transition planning to community settings.

Advocates participated in over **200** interdisciplinary and advocacy meetings, supported community placements, and addressed systemic barriers affecting individuals transitioning from institutional settings to community homes.

Advocacy efforts during this reporting period helped individuals:

- Successfully transition to community homes
- Maintain relationships with family members
- Secure identification and access to benefits
- Exercise rights regarding medical decisions
- Access employment opportunities and community activities

Despite these successes, systemic barriers continue to delay transitions and services, including licensing delays, identification documentation issues, communication gaps among providers and regional centers, and delays in access to Social Security benefits.

Population

Facility	Census
Canyon Springs Community Facility	39
Porterville Developmental Center	164
Total Individuals Served	203

Community Transition Activity

During this reporting period:

Activity	Number
Community placements	2
Transfers from PDC to Canyon Springs	1
Placement from Canyon Springs to Porterville	1
Return from county jail to community	1

Several individuals are currently in active transition planning, including individuals moving into community placements and individuals preparing for employment opportunities.

Program Impact Highlights

Supporting Health and Personal Goals

Advocates supported an individual who successfully quit smoking after participating in non-smoking meetings at Canyon Springs, demonstrating positive health outcomes linked to program engagement.

Securing Community Placements During Medical Crisis

Advocacy staff helped coordinate placement for an individual discharged from hospitalization who was not thriving in a skilled nursing facility. Through advocacy and coordination with the regional center, the individual was successfully relocated to a more appropriate community home.

Protecting Medical Decision Rights

Advocates supported an individual who chose to refuse treatment by ensuring the individual understood their medical options and that the care plan respected the person's informed decision.

Access to Identification and Benefits

Advocates assisted individuals in obtaining California Real IDs, an important step for accessing employment, benefits, and community services.

Strengthening Family Connections

Advocates supported individuals who had limited phone contact with family by helping them write letters and send drawings, maintaining emotional connection and support.

Financial Advocacy

Advocacy staff intervened when a delayed payment to a community provider had not been processed for six months, ensuring funds were reissued so the individual could access clothing and activities.

Advocacy Activity Summary

Meeting Participation

Meeting Type	Total
IPP / Special Meetings	67
Transition Planning Meetings	57
Incident Action Team Meetings	17
Human Rights / Behavior Committees	18
Regional Project Meetings	33
Escort Review Committees	10
Court Hearings	4

Advocates also participated in numerous placement planning discussions, provider meetings, and interdisciplinary care coordination sessions.

Rights Protection Activities

Advocates actively supported individuals through:

- Rights education and training for staff and students
- Participation in Denial of Rights review processes
- Legal advocacy and coordination with public defenders
- Support for individuals navigating medical decision-making
- Monitoring of behavior intervention plans and medication reviews

Notably, no Denial of Rights cases were reported at Porterville Developmental Center during this reporting period.

Self-Advocacy and Community Participation

Advocates supported individuals' engagement in:

- People First/self-advocacy meetings
- Individual council meetings within facilities
- Community outings
- Employment assessments and job placement opportunities

One Canyon Springs resident completed a five-day employment assessment and was accepted for a work placement beginning March 2026.

Systemic Issues Identified

Advocates across facilities identified several ongoing systemic barriers affecting individuals transitioning to community living.

1. Identification Documentation

Some individuals leaving Porterville Developmental Center are placed in community homes without valid California identification cards or original birth certificates, delaying access to SSI benefits and other services.

2. Delays in Social Security Benefits

Individuals transitioning to community homes sometimes wait months to receive Social Security funds, due to administrative processes between Social Security and regional centers.

3. Licensing and Placement Delays

Placement delays continue due to:

- Staffing shortages in community homes
- Licensing delays for Enhanced Behavioral Support Homes
- Limited employment and aging-related services in the community

4. Communication Challenges

Advocates report frequent communication barriers with providers and regional centers, including:

- Meeting notifications not being sent to advocates
- Delays in placement planning updates
- Difficulty contacting individuals in supported living due to phone access issues.

5. Discharge Coordination Issues

Hospitals and psychiatric facilities occasionally discharge individuals without notifying advocacy staff, which can create safety concerns and disrupt service coordination.

Staff Training and Professional Development

Advocacy staff completed numerous professional development trainings including:

- Security awareness and cybersecurity training
- Abuse prevention and professional boundaries training
- Emergency preparedness and active shooter response
- Trauma-informed care
- Health and safety training

Advocates also provided rights education to DDS facility staff and healthcare students.

Key Takeaways for the SCDD Council

- RAP Advocacy staff remain deeply engaged in protecting individual rights and supporting successful community placements.
- Advocacy involvement continues to produce measurable outcomes in health, access to services, and community integration.
- Systemic issues related to documentation, benefit access, and provider communication continue to create barriers for individuals transitioning to community living.
- Continued coordination among facilities, regional centers, and community providers is essential to improving transition timelines and service access.



Quality Assessment Project (QAP) Report

March 2026

Upcoming Cycle: Family Surveys

DDS will continue to stratify data collection with a focus on obtaining a targeted sample of 400 surveys from each RC that has proportionate representation from five ethn racial groups (i.e., African American/Black, Asian, Hispanic, White, and Other). The tables in the following pages are from the UC Davis Population Plan identifying the target sample for each ethn racial group. See Table 1 for AFS, Table 2 for CFS, and Table 3 for FGS.

For this FY 2025-26 cycle, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has elected to sample all eligible families per regional center, per family survey as opposed to a sampling of eligible families for the CFS and AFS. Challenges with collecting updated contact information for family members in previous cycles resulted in extremely low response rates for the FGS for certain regional centers, so this survey has a statewide goal this cycle.

DDS has also elected to examine responses for family members of clients who entered the Self Determination Program (SDP) based on the following criteria: 1) For clients who exited as of 5/7/25: client was enrolled in SDP for at least 6 months or more and 2) For current clients as of 5/7/25: client entered SDP at least six months before the FY25-26 survey cycle launch.

Surveys are offered in a total of 19 languages: Arabic, Armenian (Eastern), Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), English, Farsi, Hindi, Hmong, Japanese, Khmer, Lao, Mien, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. **Surveys are currently being mailed to all eligible individuals/families. It is anticipated that mailing will be completed by mid-March.**

Eligibility for Family Surveys

Family Surveys collect demographic information on both the individual receiving services ('family member') as well as the person who fills out the survey (the 'respondent') and information on services and supports received.

Child Family Survey (CFS): Mailed to families who have a child family member (ages 17 and under) who lives with the respondent and receives at least one regional center funded service in addition to case management.

Adult Family Surveys (AFS): Mailed to families who have an adult family member (ages

18+) who lives with the respondent and receives at least one regional center funded service in addition to case management.

Family Guardian Survey (FGS): Mailed to families who have an adult family member (ages 18+) who lives in the community (outside the family home) and receives at least one regional center funded service in addition to case management.

Table 1: AFS Target Number of Surveys Returned for Each Regional Center by Ethno-racial Category and Overall

Regional Center	Asian Sample	Black Sample	Hispanic Sample	White Sample	Other Sample	Total RC Sample
ACRC	46	46	83	187	38	400
CVRC	31	20	250	84	15	400
ELARC	56	4	299	31	10	400
FDLRC	57	27	201	108	7	400
FNRC	14	10	67	290	19	400
GGRC	147	26	107	94	26	400
HRC	60	40	186	76	38	400
IRC	20	47	219	89	25	400
KRC	13	31	231	106	19	400
NBRC	35	44	118	161	42	400
NLACRC	30	42	201	116	11	400
RCEB	94	73	103	104	26	400
RCOC	81	9	147	118	45	400
RCRC	10	12	76	274	28	400
SARC	109	9	165	89	28	400
SCLARC	4	81	302	5	8	400
SDRC	38	25	189	116	32	400
SGPRC	63	18	249	50	20	400
TCRC	20	7	187	167	19	400
VMRC	42	33	174	124	27	400
WRC	20	105	156	82	37	400
Total Statewide Sample	990	709	3710	2471	520	8,400

Table 2: CFS Target Number of Surveys Returned for Each Regional Center by Ethno-racial Category and Overall

Regional Center	Asian Sample	Black Sample	Hispanic Sample	White Sample	Other Sample	Total RC Sample
ACRC	57	45	89	128	81	400
CVRC	24	15	264	54	43	400
ELARC	54	5	287	24	30	400
FDLRC	48	30	207	105	10	400
FNRC	11	8	81	255	45	400
GGRC	118	21	144	72	45	400
HRC	49	40	198	42	71	400
IRC	19	28	173	53	127	400
KRC	15	28	265	66	26	400
NBRC	30	29	159	100	82	400
NLACRC	28	39	226	91	16	400
RCEB	98	50	135	62	55	400
RCOC	91	9	142	75	83	400
RCRC	6	10	109	219	56	400
SARC	104	5	192	49	50	400
SCLARC	2	55	323	3	17	400
SDRC	36	16	185	75	88	400
SGPRC	71	14	273	26	16	400
TCRC	10	3	224	127	36	400
VMRC	46	31	199	70	54	400
WRC	19	96	172	70	43	400
Total Statewide Sample	936	577	4047	1766	1074	8,400

Table 3: FGS Target Number of Surveys Returned for Each Regional Center by Ethno-racial Category and Overall

Race/Ethnicity	Sample Target
Asian	93
Black	103
Hispanic	223
White	747
Other	58
Total Statewide Sample	1224

About National Core Indicators

National Core Indicators {NCI} strives to provide states with valid and reliable tools to help improve system performance and better serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Through a contract with Department of Developmental Services {DDS}, State Council on Developmental Disabilities {SCDD}, using the NCI Survey tools, collects quantitative data on consumer satisfaction, provision of services, and personal outcomes. Data collection is completed through face-to-face interviews with consumers as well as mail-in surveys from families.

This data collection effort will enable DDS to evaluate the quality and performance of California's developmental disability service delivery system and among all 21 regional centers over time.

For RC results of past surveys go to:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/nci/reports/>

For more information about the NCI go to:

<https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/>

Scan QR code below to go to QA Project Webpage

scdd.ca.gov/qap



QAC Regional Center Assignments

QAC: Sarah Wirrig
Support Staff: Jennifer Rosenfeld

**Far Northern
Redwood Coast
North Bay**

QAC: Ron Usac
Support Staff: Valerie Buell

**East Bay
Golden Gate**

QAC: George Lewis Support
Staff: Valerie Telles

**Alta California
Central Valley
Valley Mountain**

QACs: Lia Cervantes-Lerma ■ Vacant ■
Jenny Villanueva

Support Staff: Vacant and
Marina Bchtikian

**East Los Angeles Frank D. Lanterman
Harbor
North Los Angeles
San Gabriel Pomona
South Central Los Angeles
Westside**

QAC: Nancy Carlson-Zapata
Priscilla Huang, AGPA
Support Staff: Vacant

**Golden Gate
Orange County
San Diego**

QAC: Esteban Ortiz
Support Staff: Jose Valle

**Inland
Kern
San Diego**

MARCH 24, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM 14.
INFORMATION ITEM**

STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

The Council's next meeting will be in person in Sacramento on May 19, 2026.