

Legislative And Public Policy Committee

June 23, 2026



Agenda Item #6

Legislative Overview

What to Expect in the Coming Months

- By June, bills have moved out of their house of origin and are now in the opposite house and start the committee process again, holding hearings
 - July 2 is the last day for policy committees to meet and report on bills
- This is important because these hearings always give the public a chance to speak about why they like or dislike a bill

What to Expect (continued)

- Submitting written comments via online portal
- August 31 is the deadline to pass bills in each house
- September 30 is the deadline for the Governor's to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature

Agenda Item #7

State Legislative and Budget Updates

2025-2026 Policy Projects – Update

1. Authorized Representative: SB 1052 (Gonzalez)
 2. Plain Language: AB 2360 (Arambula)
 3. Chronic Absenteeism (Law Contest Winner)
 4. Special Education Work Opportunities (Law Contest Winner)
 5. Protective Paid Leave for Sibling Bonding (Law Contest Winner)
 6. SSI Marriage Penalty
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Chronic Absenteeism

Problem: families of students with disabilities report that attendance policies are sometimes used in ways that create new barriers rather than remove them. Parents describe being pressured to withdraw their children and instead homeschool them when disability-related absences occur. In these cases, attendance systems intended to support students can instead limit access to education. →

Chronic Absenteeism

- **Proposed Solution:** Make clear in law that efforts to improve school attendance should work together with special education supports for students with disabilities
- Status:
 - Working with the CA School Attendance Review Board
 - Evaluating legislative solutions for next legislative session

Special Education Work Opportunities

Problem:

Current background check requirements limit work-based learning opportunities for students with disabilities. Many employers cannot comply with the requirement that at least one employee who has direct contact with the student is fingerprinted, particularly large employers that cannot guarantee a background-checked employee will always be present. As a result, long-standing WorkAbility and other work experience placements have sharply declined, reducing equitable access to real-world skill development – for example, a reduction from roughly 750 sites to about 5 in one large local educational agency (LEA)



Special Education Work Opportunities

Proposed Solution:

Allow a parent, guardian, or student (if 18+) to sign a waiver acknowledging that the contractor's employee interacting with the student has not completed a criminal background check. This is presently permitted for students in independent study.

- Status:
 - Working with school staff
 - Evaluating legislative solutions for next legislative session

SSI Marriage Penalty

- Long term priority
- For SSI, individuals have a limit of \$2000 in assets. If two people are married, they have a limit of only \$3000.
- Investigated history (such as the last time these limits were updated) and current legislative opportunities
- At the present time, the Council is supporting the following six bills that address the marriage penalty one way or another

SSI Marriage Penalty

- [HR 1389](#), Marriage Equality for Disabled Adults
- [S 1234/HR 2540](#), SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act – increase asset and income limits with correction to marriage penalty, increase payments, end punitive reductions, and expand eligibility to people living in territories.
- [S 73/HR 1757](#) – Eliminating the Marriage Penalty in SSI Act (EMPSA)
- [HR 7828](#) – SSI Restoration Act of 2026

Paid, Protected Sibling Leave

- **Issue:** provide paid, protected leave for siblings when they become the primary caregiver for their sibling with a developmental disability
- Investigating feasibility, coalition opportunities, HR-related issues, and existing law

2026 Legislation Update



Authorized Representation – Sponsored Bill

Introduced by Senator Lena Gonzalez – [SB 1052](#)

- **What will this bill do?**
 - Creates contingent or backup appointments and defines them. Creates a one-year limit and explicitly allows annual reappointments
 - Explicitly permits SCDD to investigate when needed, with consent
 - **Status:** Died in Senate Appropriations

Plain Language – Sponsored Bill

Introduced by Assembly Member Arambula – [AB 2360](#)

- **What will this bill do?**

- Beginning January 1, 2027, state agencies would be required to write public documents in clear, easy-to-understand language using statewide plain language standards.
- Agencies would also have to designate a senior staff member to oversee implementation of these requirements.

- **Status:** Moving forward in the Senate!
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Civil Rights

- **Bill:** [SB 84 \(Niello\)](#) Disability access: construction-related accessibility claims: notice of violation and opportunity to correct. Two-year bill.
- **What will this bill do?** Would establish waiting periods and procedural barriers before a person with a disability who encounters an access barrier can enforce their civil rights in court or bring lawsuits.
- **Status:** Assembly Judiciary

Education #1

- **Bill:** [AB 1861 \(Lackey\)](#) Special education: complaint database
- **What will this bill do?** Requires the Department of Education, by January 2028, to create and maintain an online database of all state compliance complaints it receives beginning with an unspecified school year.
- **Status:** Died in Assembly Appropriations

Education #2

- **Bill:** [SB 244 \(Grayson\)](#) Public postsecondary education: disabled student services: assessments. Two-year bill.
- **What will this bill do?** Requires the Trustees of CA State University and requests the Regents of the University of CA to cover diagnostic assessment costs for students with disabilities who seek academic accommodations in colleges.
- **Status:** Assembly Appropriations

Education #3

- **Bill:** [SB 1222 \(Choi\)](#) Career Technical Education Technical Assistance and Equity Pilot Program Act
- **What will this bill do?** Creates a 3-year pilot program called the Career Technical Education (CTE) Technical Assistance and Equity Pilot Program, focused on fairness and inclusion. The CA Superintendent would choose a county office of education to run the program and pick 2 regions to get extra support.
- **Status:** Died in Senate Appropriations

Health #1

- **Bill:** [AB 350 \(Bonta\)](#) Health care coverage: fluoride treatments. Two-year bill.
- **What will this bill do?** The bill would require the State Department of Health Care Services to update Medi-Cal rules by July 1, 2027 so that coverage for people under age 21 follows federal standards and includes fluoride varnish treatment.
- **Status:** Senate Floor

Health #2

- **Bill:** [AB 1561 \(Krell\)](#) Medi-Cal: complex rehabilitation technology
- **What will this bill do?** It stops DHCS, who administers Medi-Cal, from requiring prior approval for repairing wheelchairs if the repair costs \$1,250 or less. Repairs or replacements wouldn't need a new doctor's prescription if the wheelchair was already approved, but the supplier must keep records of the repair work and reasons, which DHCS can check later.
- **Status:** Died in Assembly Health

Health #3

- **Bill:** [AB 1670 \(Arambula\)](#) Medi-Cal: excluded services
- **What will this bill do?** Would make Medi-Cal pay for support services – like behavior management or helping patients get comfortable with dental care – even if no dental procedure happens at that visit. These services would be covered when a patient requires extra time, attention, staff, or preparation to safely receive dental care (for example, someone with physical, developmental, or emotional needs).
- **Status:** Died in Assembly Appropriations

Health #4

- **Bill:** [AB 2081 \(Stefani\)](#) Medi-Cal: Home and Community-Based Alternatives (HCBA) Waiver
- **What will this bill do?** Would among other things, expand the number of those served by the Medi-Cal HCBA Waiver by removing the current limit on how many people can join the program (capped at 5,000 extra slots). It would require, beginning in 2027, to ensure that the HCBA Waiver provides for an annual increase of at least 10,000 waiver slots for each waiver year.
- **Status:** Senate Health

Health #5

- **Bill:** [AB 2096 \(Pacheco\)](#) Vocational nursing: respiratory care
- **What will this bill do?** Right now, the law lets a licensed vocational nurse (LVN), working under a school nurse, help students with special needs with certain basic breathing treatments. This bill would change that and remove the rule that only LVNs (under a school nurse) can do this. Instead, it would allow other trained and qualified people – not just LVNs – to provide a specific set of basic breathing services to students with special needs, as long as specific requirements are met.
- **Status:** Died in Assembly Business and Professions


Health #6

- **Bill:** [SB 363 \(Wiener\)](#) Health care coverage: independent medical review. Two-year bill.
- **What will this bill do?** Require health care service plans or health insurers to annually report their number of denials of treatment, and hold them liable with administrative fines if more than 50% of independent medical reviews are overturned or reversed
- **Status:** Assembly Appropriations


Health #7

- **Bill:** [SB 1226 \(Ochoa Bogh\)](#) Pupil health: individuals with exceptional needs: respiratory services
- **What will this bill do?** Current law lets a licensed vocational nurse (LVN), working under a school nurse, help students with special needs with certain basic breathing treatments. This bill would change that and remove the rule that only LVNs (under a school nurse) can do this. Instead, it would allow other trained and qualified people – not just LVNs – to provide a specific set of basic breathing services to students with special needs, as long as they meet certain requirements.
- **Status:** Died in S. Bus., Professions, and Economic Development

Informal and Formal Comm'y Supports #1

- **Bill:** [AB 1099 \(Bryan\)](#) Developmental services: initial intake: assessment. Two-year bill.
- **What will this bill do?** Would streamline and expedite the eligibility process for children in foster care and those involved in the juvenile justice system suspected of having I/DD, addressing disparities in accessing regional center services.
- **Status:** Senate Appropriations 

Informal and Formal Comm'y Supports #2

- **Bill:** [AB 1220 \(Arambula\)](#) Developmental services: denials of services and notices of actions. Two-year bill.
- **What will this bill do?** Would require a regional center to track disagreements and service denials in the individual program plan (IPP) and publicly post this data online.
- **Status:** Senate Appropriations 

Informal and Formal Comm'y Supports #3

- **Bill:** [AB 2209 \(Bains\)](#) Developmental services: caregiver succession
- **What will this bill do?** Requires a discussion at the IPP meeting regarding caregiver succession when the primary caregiver reaches 55 years of age, and at any time upon the request of the person served, primary caregiver, or authorized representative.
- **Status:** Died in Assembly Human Services



Informal and Formal Supports #4

- **Bill:** [SB 969 \(Reyes\)](#) Developmental services: remote services and supports
- **What will this bill do?** By July 2027, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) must identify services and supports eligible for remote delivery and develop the infrastructure to implement them, including posting guidance on its website. Regional centers would then be required to inform persons served and/or their families/representatives of the option to receive remote services if they wish.
- **Status:** Assembly Human Services

Safety #1

- **Bill:** [AB 308 \(Ramos\)](#) **Developmental services: safety training**
- **What will this bill do?** Orders DDS to do a statewide study of safety-training services (interactions with first responders, emergency preparedness, and more) for people with I/DD, requires a report with recommendations by 2028, and signals that lawmakers may later fund a statewide training program based on those recommendations.
- **Status:** Senate Human Services

Safety #2

- **Bill:** [SB 837 \(Reyes\)](#) Disaster and emergency preparedness
- **What will this bill do?** Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) programs presently must provide services to older adults and people with disabilities with technical assistance re: long term care services and supports (for example, waiver services, IHSS, and community-based adult services).
- This bill would require ADRC programs to offer emergency preparedness training specifically tailored for older adults and people with disabilities so they can prepare for disasters and stay safe before, during, and after emergencies.
- **Status:** Assembly Aging & Long-Term Care and A. Emergency Mgmt

2026 Budget Update

- Must have passed by June 15 – Passed
- Governor must sign by June 29

Agenda Item #8

2026-2031 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM UPDATES

Background and Purpose

- Historically, the Council has used several different documents to guide its legislative and public policy work. You may have heard terms such as *Policy Platform*, *Legislative Priorities*, or *Legislative Theme*. Each served a different purpose and provided guidance for Council action.
- As we begin implementing the new 2026–31 State Plan, these separate resources have been combined to make the Council’s policy framework easier to understand and use.

Background and Purpose (continued)

- The document before you today is a five-page resource that aligns the Council's legislative and public policy work with the goals and objectives of the State Plan.
- The following slides provide both a high-level overview of the changes and a detailed look at the new document.
- After reviewing the document, you will be asked to recommend that the Council adopt it.

Less is More – Combining Resources

By consolidating multiple documents into one resource, we have:

- Improved alignment between the State Plan and legislative activities.
- Clearly stated the Council's policy positions and guiding principles.
- Provided direction for staff to take action when issues align with the Council's adopted principles.
- Reduced duplication of information.
- Simplified and streamlined the resources used to guide policy work.



CA STATE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

WORKING TO MAKE CALIFORNIA THE BEST PLACE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

POLICY PLATFORM 2027-2031

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their families have a right to exert control and choice over their own lives, hold decision-making roles in policies and programs, and be fully integrated into the economic, political, social, cultural and educational mainstream of California.¹

Guided by our core values of self-determination, independence, productivity, integration, inclusion, advocacy, protection, and quality of life, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) removes barriers, strengthens systems, and expands opportunities so people with I/DD can live, work, and thrive in their communities. We work to make California the best place for people with I/DD and their families through advocacy, capacity-building, and systems change.

SCDD's State Plan provides a five-year roadmap, identifying the goals, objectives, and activities to advance meaningful change across California's systems of services and supports in partnership with people with I/DD and their families. This Policy Platform complements the State Plan by translating SCDD's values, priorities, and legal principles into a public policy framework that guides our advocacy, education, partnerships, and engagement with state and federal decision-makers:

PROTECT AND ENHANCE CIVIL RIGHTS

Federal and state laws, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, affirm that people with I/DD have the right to equality of opportunity, self-determination, full participation, independent living, and freedom from discrimination in all areas of life.

For people with I/DD, these civil rights ensure protection from discrimination and unequal treatment across all areas of life, including but not limited to education, employment, housing, health care, public services, and community life, and require that systems provide equal access, reasonable accommodation, and meaningful opportunities for participation and decision-making.

¹ Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, (Public Law 106-402; 42 U.S.C. Sec. 15001 et seq.) Section 101

SCDD will advance civil rights by promoting equity across systems, identifying and addressing disparities and discriminatory practices, and ensuring meaningful participation of people with I/DD and their families in policy development and systems change.

GUARANTEE ACCESS TO EDUCATION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide students with disabilities the right to a free appropriate public education, including access to inclusive educational opportunities, individualized supports, and full participation in school programs that promote independence, self-determination, and lifelong success.

For students with I/DD, this means receiving the supports needed to learn alongside typically developing peers, to access and benefit from their education, and to be prepared for further education, employment, and independent living.

SCDD will identify and address systemic barriers in educational systems to ensure students with I/DD have equal access to an appropriate, inclusive education.

REMOVE BARRIERS TO EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

Federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, affirm the right of people with I/DD to equal opportunity in employment, including access to competitive integrated employment, reasonable accommodations, and supports necessary to obtain and maintain meaningful work.

Employment provides opportunities for economic self-sufficiency, independence, community inclusion, and career growth. Access to competitive integrated employment enables individuals to earn fair wages, build meaningful relationships, contribute their talents, and pursue personal and professional goals.

SCDD will advance policies and systems-change efforts that expand access to competitive integrated employment, reduce barriers to workforce participation, and increase opportunities for people with I/DD to obtain and retain meaningful employment.

PROMOTE ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES AND SUPPORTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, and California's Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) framework, establish the right of people with I/DD to receive the services and supports necessary to live, learn, and work in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

Access to services and supports such as in-home assistance, personal care, transportation, assistive technology, and other community-based services is essential to living independently and participating fully in community life. These supports make it possible to exercise choice, maintain health and safety, and be included in the community. These supports reduce reliance on costly institutional models of care that can separate people from family, community, and everyday life.

SCDD will advocate for policies that expand, strengthen, and improve access to high-quality, person-centered services and supports, reduce barriers to eligibility and delivery, and ensure that services are responsive to the needs and choices of people with I/DD and their families.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

Federal and state laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Medicaid requirements, ensure that people with I/DD have the right to equal access to health care services, reasonable accommodations, and care without discrimination.

For people with I/DD this means having access to affordable, accessible, and coordinated health care that meets both physical, behavioral, and specialty health needs, with providers who are trained to support disability-related needs, and in health care settings that are equipped to serve patients with disabilities. Access to quality health care is essential to maintaining health, preventing avoidable complications, and supporting independence and community participation.

SCDD will advocate for policies that improve access to equitable, high-quality, and coordinated health care for people with I/DD, address disparities in care, and promote systems that are responsive to the needs and preferences of individuals and their families.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

People with I/DD have the right to live free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination and to receive the supports necessary to live safely and fully participate in their communities, consistent with the protections afforded by the California Constitution, the Lanterman Act, and federal disability rights laws. Public safety requires disability-informed law enforcement and first responders, emergency planning, communication, evacuation, shelter, recovery, and continuity of essential services and supports.

This means having accessible environments, services, and supports that prevent harm, respect personal autonomy, and ensure that safety concerns are identified and addressed promptly. It also means having a voice in decisions that affect personal safety and emergency preparedness, and access to protections when harm, risk, disaster, or service disruption occurs.

SCDD will advocate for policies that advance public safety and emergency response for people with I/DD and their families. SCDD will work to improve public safety and emergency preparedness for people with I/DD and their families by identifying emerging concerns, providing training and other capacity-building, promoting accessible and inclusive emergency planning, supporting continuity of essential services and supports, and ensuring meaningful inclusion of people with I/DD and their families in the development of policies, programs, and solutions that affect them. This includes advancing flexible, person-centered approaches when traditional service models do not meet a person's needs or are insufficient to support safety, autonomy, emergency response, recovery, and community inclusion.

IMPROVE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY LIVING

People with I/DD, like all people with disabilities, have the right to live in the community of their choice. Federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, recognizes that people with disabilities have a right to receive services in integrated community settings. California law further affirms that people with I/DD are entitled to live with the services and supports they need in the least restrictive and most integrated setting appropriate to their needs and preferences.

Community living depends on access to affordable, accessible, safe, and inclusive housing, together with the services and supports necessary to remain connected to family, community, work, school, and everyday life. Housing policy should expand integrated, community-based housing opportunities that allow people with I/DD to

choose where and with whom they live, exercise autonomy, and fully participate in community life.

SCDD will advocate for policies and engage in systems-change efforts that expand affordable, accessible, and inclusive housing opportunities, reduce barriers to community living, and promote the services and supports necessary for people with I/DD to live in the community of their choice.

RESPOND TO EMERGING ISSUES

People with I/DD and their families are affected by changing laws, policies, budgets, programs, technologies, emergencies, and social conditions that may create new opportunities, barriers, or risks. SCDD must be able to respond to emerging issues that affect the rights, services, supports, safety, inclusion, and quality of life of people with I/DD and their families.

Emerging issues may arise across any system that affects people with I/DD, including education, employment, housing, health care, community services, civil rights, public safety, emergency preparedness, transportation, technology, and state or federal policy. These issues may require timely analysis, public education, policy engagement, partnerships, training, technical assistance, or systems-change activities.

Consistent with the State Plan, this Policy Platform, and SCDD's core values, SCDD may identify, monitor, analyze, and respond to emerging issues as they arise. This authority includes undertaking activities necessary to protect rights, address barriers, improve services and supports, and advance self-determination, independence, integration, inclusion, and quality of life for people with I/DD and their families.

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

Recommended Action

- The Committee recommends that the Council adopt the proposed revisions to the Legislative Platform to take effect on October 1, 2026.

Questions?

