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Coronavirus (COVID-19) Rights of People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Who Live On Their Own or With Family

**This page will be updated as more information is made available*

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This is for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who live on their own or with family and receive services from “regional centers.”

What Are Regional Centers?

The regional center is your main point of contact for getting services and supports. You can find contact information for regional centers at this link: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/listings/>

How Can Regional Centers Help Me Prepare for COVID-19?

Now is a good time to plan for emergencies like COVID-19. Contact your regional center service coordinator. Ask them to help you develop an plan in case your caregivers can no longer help you because of COVID-19. You can ask what will happen if you are attending a program during the day that tells you it must close.

IHSS and Other Caregivers: What Is My Plan and What Can the Regional Do?

If you rely on IHSS or other caregivers from programs that are not paid for by the regional center, ask your caregivers to help you with a plan if they can no longer help you.

You can also ask your regional center service coordinator to help you with a plan. This is because the regional center can pay for different services if your IHSS caregiver is no longer available. These services include:

- Personal Attendant or Homemaker services: These services are a lot like IHSS. They are paid for by regional centers, not the county.
- Respite: This service helps your caregiver support you by making sure they can take breaks.
- Independent Living Skills or Supported Living Services: These services help people live as independently as possible in their own homes with the support they need.

Ask your regional center about these options and other options that may be available. Some of these services can be provided by family members or roommates that already live with you.

What is the Role of the State Department of Developmental Services?

The Department of Developmental Services is the state agency in charge of all 21 regional centers. This agency is sometimes called DDS.

DDS has the power to tell regional centers what to do. Because of COVID-19, DDS has told regional centers to make sure that people who receive regional center services are healthy and safe. For example:

- DDS has told regional centers it is okay to not meet with people in person. Instead, regional centers can use technology like telephones, video conferences, Skype, and FaceTime. You can talk to your regional center about these options and how they work.
- DDS has given regional centers the power to pay providers more money to keep people healthy and safe because of COVID-19. This is called a “Health and Safety Waiver Exemption.” Ask your regional center if this may be an option for you.

How Can I Get More Information About My Rights?

If you have a question about your legal rights or if the regional center is not helping you prepare for COVID-19:

- Call DRC's intake line at: 1-800-776-5746.
- Call DRC's Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA) at:
 - Northern California 1-800-390-7032 (TTY 877-669-6023)
 - Southern California 1-866-833-6712 (TTY 877-669-6023).