

Regional Center Services 2026



Disclaimer

The following presentation is meant for education only and does not constitute legal advice nor counsel. Your situation may be unique and require careful attention.

Keep in mind that the information in these slides could become out of date, as the laws and local practices relating to these matters can change over time.

The Lanterman Act



Proposed by Assembly Member Frank D. Lanterman. Passed in 1977.

The Law and Regulations:

- Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) Sections 4400 – 4906
- California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 2

Link:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/transparency/laws-regulations/>.

Purpose of Services and Supports

- Services and supports to “approximate the pattern of everyday living available to people without disabilities of the same age”
- Consumers can ask for any services and supports to:
 - Lessen the effects of the developmental disability;
 - Have an independent, productive, and normal life; and
 - Learn new skills.



Regional Center Priorities

- **Safety:** Services needed to stay safe
- **Community Access:** Participation in community life
- **Remaining at Home:** Support preferred living situation.
 - For children: Priority to live with family.

What Services do Regional Centers Offer?

- Regional centers can provide virtually any service if there is an established need.
- WIC Section 4501:
<https://codes.findlaw.com/ca/welfare-and-institutions-code/wic-sect-4501/>.
- WIC Section 4512(b):
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=WIC§ionNum=451.

Not Just a Meeting

Understanding the Individual Program Plan (IPP)



What Services do Regional Centers Offer? Is there a list?

- Regional Center Services:
<https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/rc-services/>.
- Look at Vendor List, which includes name, contact information, and types of services offered.
 - Example: https://www.rcocdd.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/vendorsearch/Vendor_List.pdf.



What Services do Regional Centers Offer?



- Regional Center Support Services for Children at Home: <https://rula.disabilityrightsca.org/rula-book/chapter-6-keeping-the-family-together-services-and-supports-for-children/what-family-support-services-can-regional-centers-give-to-help-families-care-for-their-children-at-home/>.

What Services do Regional Centers Offer?

- Camping and Social Recreation:
<https://www.disabilityrightscalifornia.org/latest-news/changes-to-social-recreation-and-camping-faq>.
- Coordinated Family Support:
<https://www.dds.ca.gov/services/coordinated-family-support-service/>.



Important Considerations for Services

To receive a service, should consider the following:

- Is there a disability-related need?
- Does the service meet an Individual Program Plan (IPP) goal?
- Is there a generic resource or natural support available to meet need?
- Is there a least costly alternative that meets the need?



Generic Resources

- Any agency receiving public funds with legal responsibility to serve all members of the general public.
- Regional Center is the “payer of last resort.”

Generic Resources

- Regional centers are prohibited from purchasing any service that would otherwise be available from:
 - ☐ Medi-Cal, Medicare;
 - ☐ In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS);
 - ☐ Department of Rehabilitation (DOR);
 - ☐ School Districts;
 - ☐ Private insurance or a health care service plan.



Use of Generic Resources

- Regional Center is the generic Targeted Case Management provider.
- There shall be no gaps in service.
 - Gap funding: Regional centers can pay for services while the coverage is being pursued, pending a final administrative decision or until the commencement of the services.
- Regional center must identify and pursue all possible sources of funding.

Natural Supports



- **Natural supports:**
 - People who are a part of your life – family, friends, etc...who are able to help you meet your needs for free.
- Expectation:
 - Families will use the same resources they would use for typically developing children to support their child with a disability.

Least Costly Alternative

- Must buy services from the least costly provider that can meet your need(s).

Note:

- “The consumer shall not be required to use the least costly provider if it will result in the consumer moving from an existing provider of services or supports to more restrictive or less integrated services or supports.” (WIC Sec. 4648(a)(6)(D).)

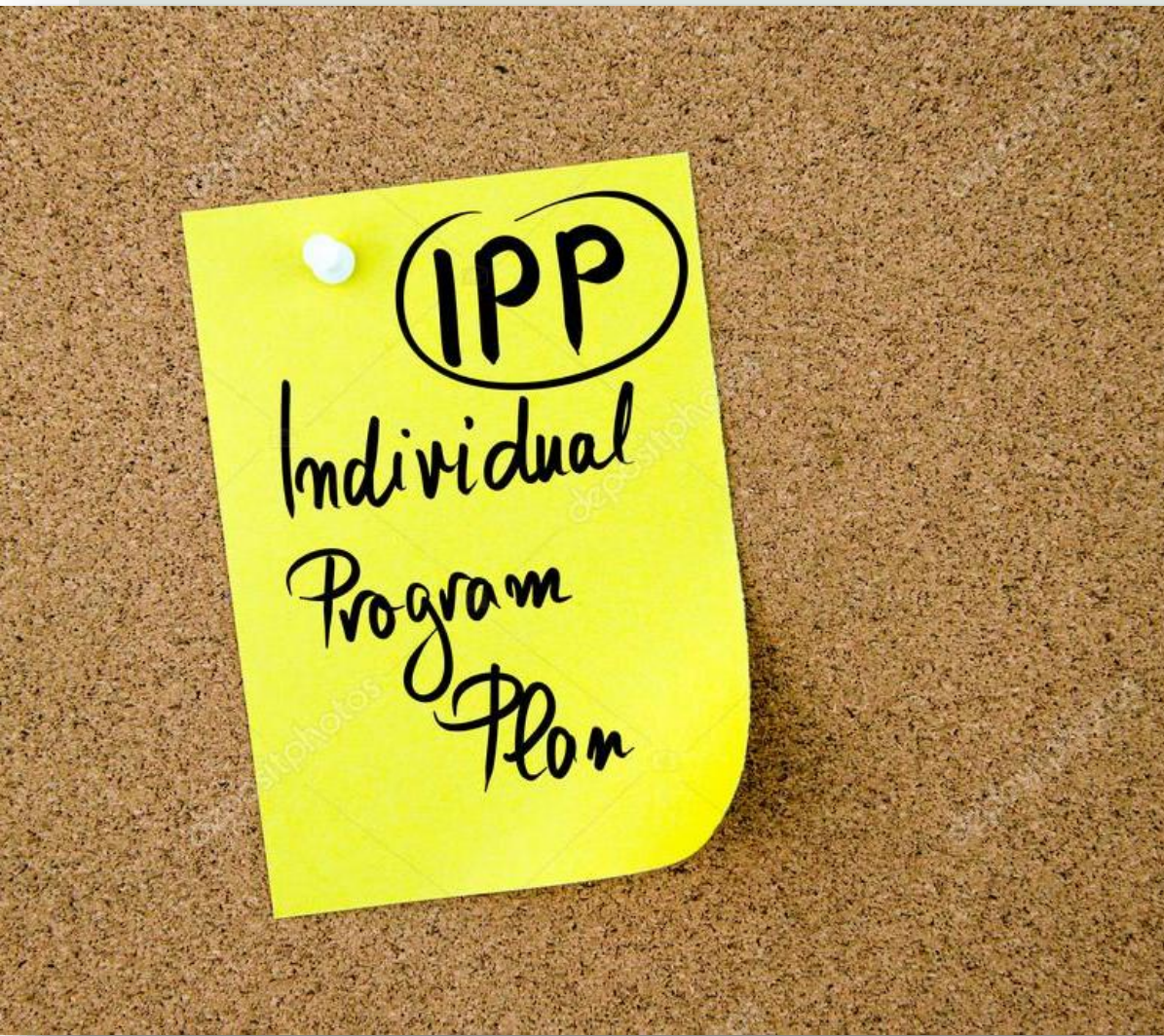
“There Are No Vendors!”

- If it is in the IPP, the regional center must provide that service.



Options for Regional Centers:

- Look for vendors – request for proposals.
- Use vendors from other Regional Centers.
- Approach vendor that provides similar service.
- Ask DDS for funds to develop a new program of services and supports.



Purchase of Service Policies

Purchase of Service Policies (POS)

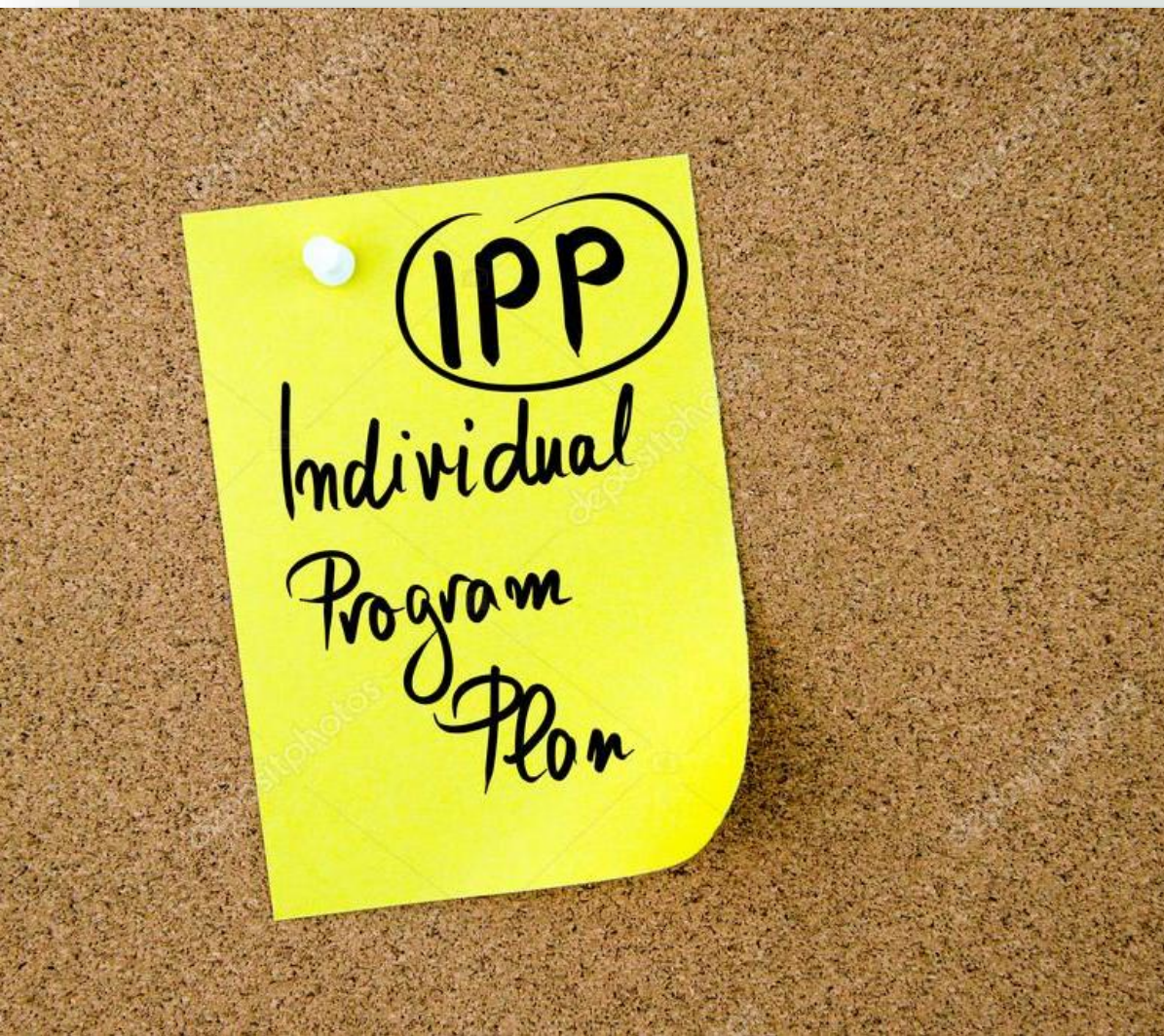
- Also known as “service policies/”
- Guidelines for purchasing services and supports.
- Explains the requirements for receiving services. Sometimes set limits.
- Varies at each regional center.

Purchase of Service Policies (POS)

- Regional centers must post online POS, policies, guidelines, or regional center-developed assessment tools used to determine need for transportation, personal assistance, or independent/support living services. (WIC Sec. 4629.5(b)(5).)

Sample POS:

<https://www.nlacrc.org/about-us/transparency-accountability/policies-dei/pos-policies/>.



The Individual Program Plan (IPP)

Individual Program Plan (IPP) Process

- An IPP is a contract between consumer and the Regional Center.
- Must list all of the services and supports.
- IPP meeting must be held every three years but can occur annually.
- The consumer can request an IPP meeting at any time (and held within 30 days of request).
- Person-centered plan.

IPP Process: Services and Supports

- Look at needs and preferences of the consumer (family).
 - WIC Sec. 4646:
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=WIC§ionNum=4646.
- Need to consider following:
 - The service options proposed by IPP team;
 - How effective are options in meeting the IPP goals; and
 - Cost-effectiveness of each option.

What to Identify at an IPP Meeting



- Hopes, plans, and goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-limited;
- Disability-related needs and how needs will be met (services);
- Amount of service and the range of dates;
- Responsible party for services and funding; and
- What and when each goal will be accomplished.

IPP Template

- DDS videos, tools, and information about Individual Program Planning:
 - Link:
<https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/ipp/>.

MY INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLAN

Legal Name:
UCI Number:
Date of Birth:
Meeting Date:
Amendment Date:
Next Review Date:

Type of Plan: Select type of plan OR ☐ Amendment: Select a reason

INTRODUCTION

Things people should know about me:

What people like and admire about me:

Successes I want others to know about:

HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

Where did my meeting happen?

What part did I choose to play in making my plan?

Who also helped with my plan?

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

My short and long-term visions are:

COMMUNICATION

How I communicate with others:

Important things you should know about how to communicate with me:

Things to Remember Before Your IPP Meeting

- Notify the Regional Center in writing 24 hours before recording the IPP meeting.
 - If the Regional Center wants to record the IPP meeting, you can object. (WIC Sec. 4646.6.)
- Bring a support person or note-taker.
- Right to have a decision-maker present at IPP meeting.
 - If none is present, you can stop the meeting and ask to meet again with a “decisionmaker” present. The regional center must have another IPP meeting within 15 days (unless you agree to extend the deadline).



A Closer Look at Some Services



Respite Services

Respite

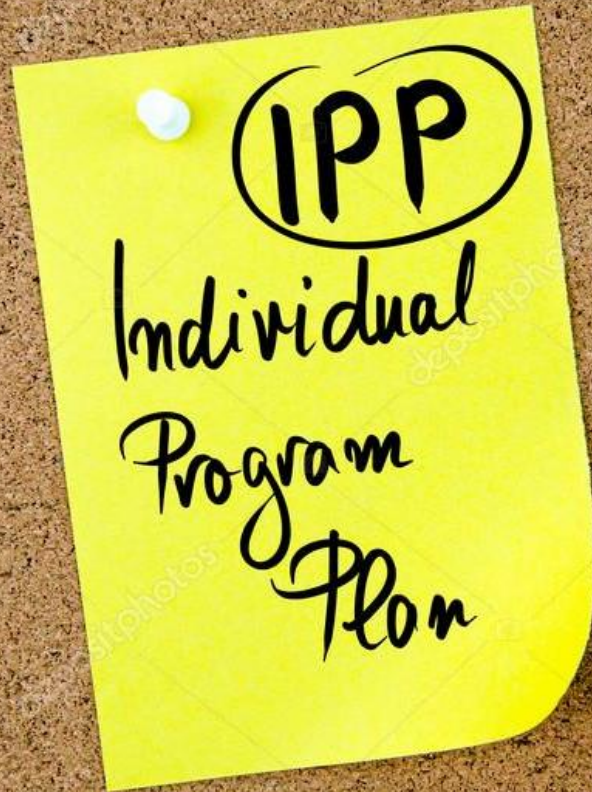
- **Purpose:** Give families a break from directly taking care of a person with a developmental disability.
 - Families can take a break inside or outside the home.
- There are many types of respite services.
 - For example:
 - In-home respite services;
 - Out-of-home respite services;
 - Non-medical care and supervision;
 - Respite services in a licensed residential facility.



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Eligibility for Respite Services

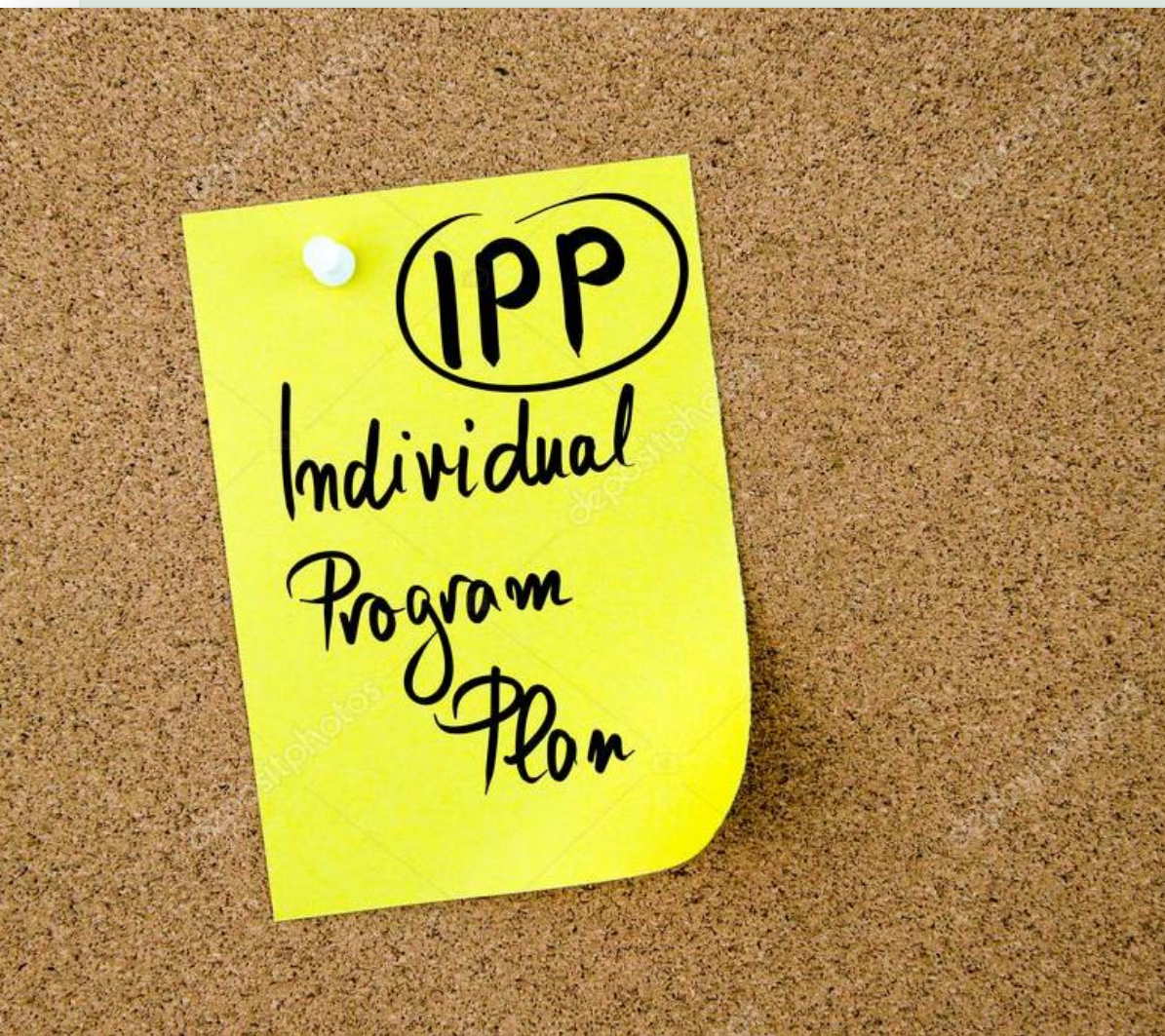
- Client lives with a family member;
- IPP team agrees there is a need for respite;
- IPP objective is developed; and
- The client requires more care and supervision than a person of the same age who does not have a developmental disability.



Behavioral Services

Behavioral Services

- Regional Centers can authorize the purchase of “applied behavioral analysis (ABA) or intensive behavioral intervention services” for consumers. (WIC Sec. 4686.2.)
 - Must not be purchased for the purpose of providing respite, day care, or school services.
- **Note for Medi-Cal beneficiaries:**
 - **Managed Care Plan (MCP)** beneficiaries receive Behavioral Health Treatment (BHT) services from their Medi-Cal.
 - **Fee-for-Service (FFS)** beneficiaries access behavioral services through the regional centers.



Independent Living Services

Independent Living Services

- Independent Living Skills (ILS) services are provided to an adult that wants to live independently in the community.
 - Examples include cooking, housecleaning, grooming, money management, etc.

Link:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/consumers/independent-living-skills-supported-living-services/>.



Independent Living Services

- Supported Living Services (SLS) are services that support people with developmental disabilities so that they can live in their own home or apartment
 - <https://www.dds.ca.gov/service/s/supported-living-services/>

Link:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/consumers/independent-living-skills-supported-living-services/>.



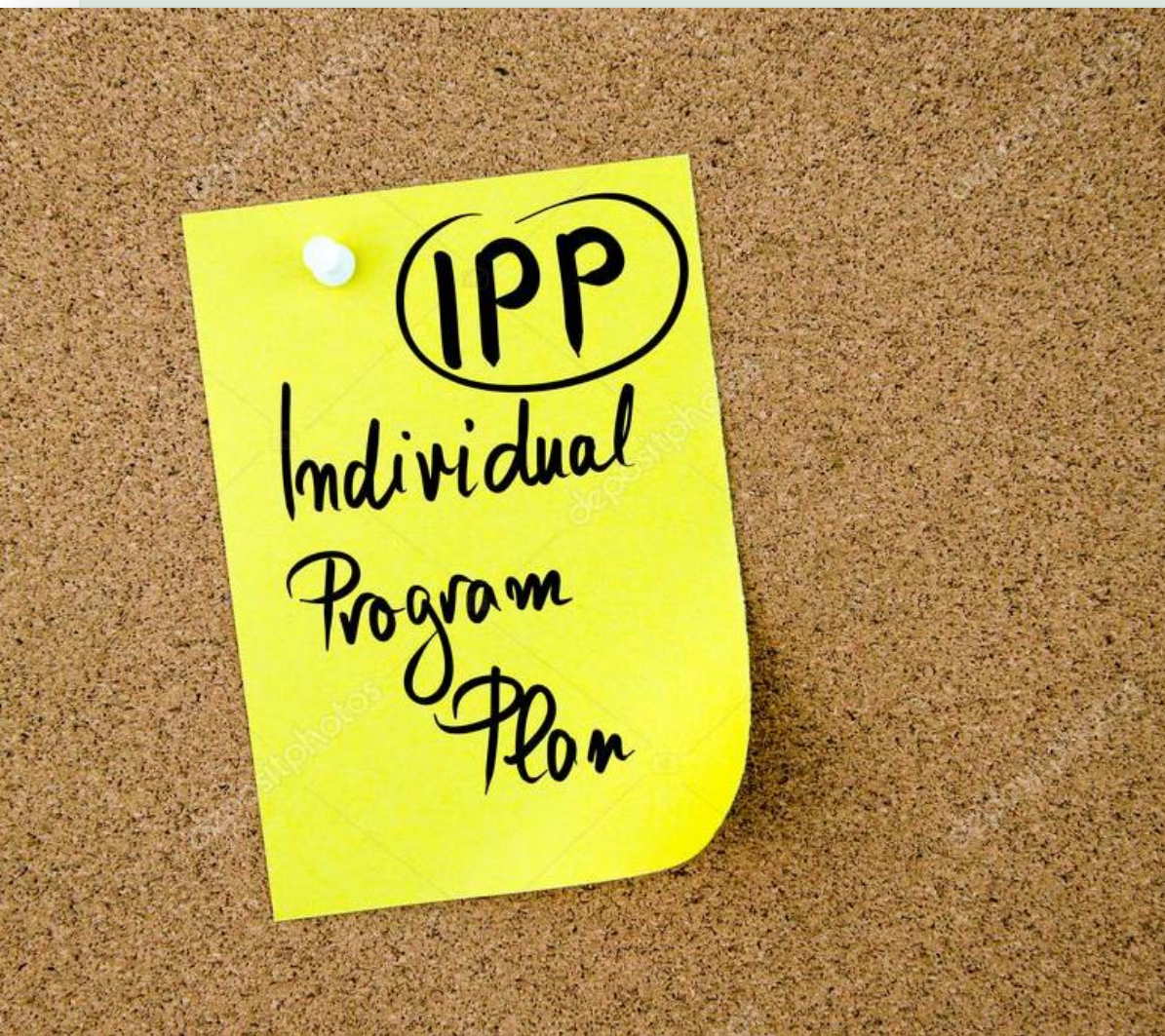
Living Options



DDS list of living options.

Link:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/general/eligibility/living-arrangements/>



Community Participation, Work, Day Activities

Least Restrictive Environment

- Services and supports must be provided in the “least restrictive environment” (LRE).
 - Right to service and supports close to your home community
 - Live in places the same as people without disabilities
 - Consumers are “integrated into the mainstream life” of their communities.

Types of Day Activities

– Work Options



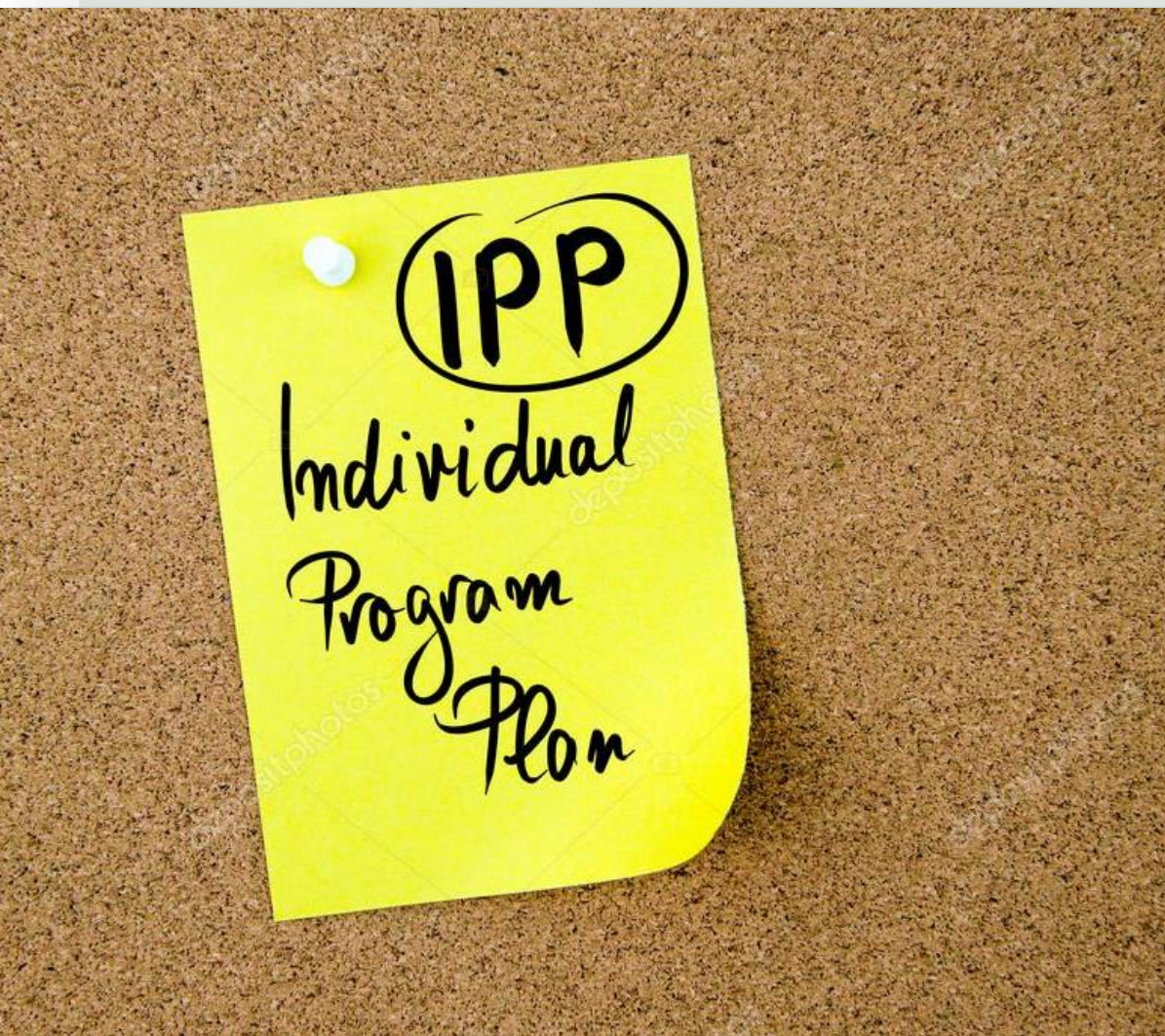
- Competitive integrated employment;
- Self-employment;
- Supported employment (paid work in the community with ongoing support services); and
- Paid internship program.

DDS Employment Services:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/services/work-services/>.

Types of Day Activities – Day Programs

- At a day program, you can learn how to interact with others, express what you need, and follow instructions.
 - Development centers;
 - Activity centers;
 - Behavior management programs; and
 - Tailored day programs/services.
- These programs provide services on an hourly or daily basis but are not 24-hour programs.



Transition Services

Transition from School (Special Education)

- Transition planning from school district:
 - Begins no later than age 16
 - This is through Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting/Individual Transition Plan (ITP) meeting.
 - Can get services until graduating from high school (diploma track) or until age 22 (certificate track).
- DRC Publication:
<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/publications/transition-services-for-students>.

Restrictions on Regional Center Services

- With some exceptions, Regional Centers cannot purchase certain transition services for a consumer if the consumer is:
 - 18 to 22 years old;
 - Eligible for special education and related services; and
 - Has not received a high school diploma.
- Some services that cannot be purchased under these circumstances:
 - Day programs, vocational education, work services, independent living programs, or mobility training (and related transportation) services.

Exceptions

- IPP team determines that your needs cannot be met by the educational system.
- IPP team determines that generic resources are not appropriate to meet your needs.
- You participate in employment that includes:
 - A paid internship program; or
 - Competitive integrated employment that is an outcome of a paid internship.

4731 complaints and appeals

- 4731 complaint
- Appeal

DDS Appeals and Complaints:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/general/appeals-complaints-comments/>.

DRC (RULA): <https://rula.disabilityrightscalifornia.org/rula-book/chapter-10-appeals-and-complaints-disagreements-with-regional-centers-developmental-centers-or-service-providers/>

DRC Resources

- Website:
<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/>.
- Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy
 - <https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/what-we-do/programs/office-of-clients-rights-advocacy-ocra>.
- Rights Under the Lanterman Act (RULA).
 - <https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/publications/rula-rights-under-the-lanterman-act-complete-manual>.

Other Resources

Office of the Ombudsperson
(Regional Center Clients):

- <https://www.dds.ca.gov/initiatives/office-of-the-ombudsperson/>.

Office of the Ombudsperson (Self
Determination Program):

- <https://www.dds.ca.gov/initiatives/sdp/office-of-the-self-determination-ombudsperson/>.

Questions?

Intake Line: 1-800-776-5746.

<https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/get-help>.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday
from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

OCRA Intake Line: 1-800-390-7032.