

OCRA SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
(July 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020)

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I. INTRODUCTION

Disability Rights California provides state-wide clients' rights advocacy services for regional center clients under a multi-year contract, HD119002, with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) through the Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA). The contract was renewed effective July 1, 2016, for this 5-year period ending June 30, 2021. OCRA is in the fifth year of this five-year contract. This semi-annual report covers July 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020. During this time period, the COVID-19 pandemic was and continues to cause schools and day programs to be closed, people sheltering in place in their homes, and unemployment and financial hardships impacting our community. People are focused on securing needed services to stay safe and healthy. People are also trying to deal with grief and the trauma of the pandemic. COVID-19 has impacted not only regional center clients and their families but our staff also.

Between July 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, OCRA handled 4,305 issues for 2,965 clients, which continues to be well over the required 30 per month, per office. OCRA staff continue to handle a variety of legal issues with positive results. OCRA participated in 199 trainings during this period, presenting to approximately 6,443 people. All of these trainings were virtual due the shelter in place order. See section II.A.4 for details.

OCRA operates offices throughout the state, most of which are staffed by one Clients' Rights Advocate (CRA) and one Assistant CRA. This enables our staff to be accessible to and best understand the local community. Most OCRA offices are near the regional center office. OCRA has increased access to its services by using "Statewide" CRAs and ACRAs to help busier offices handle cases and cover when staff were out. OCRA also has a team dedicated to coordinate Outreach efforts, with a Managing Attorney, Supervising Attorney, Outreach Coordinator, and Peer Advocate in southern California. We are recruiting for an Outreach Coordinator for northern California.

OCRA continues its involvement in helping people moving from restrictive settings like crisis placements, Institutions for Mental Disease, and large facilities, into the community. OCRA has one full-time "Community Integration CRA" who, along with Statewide CRAs and local CRAs, provide direct advocacy to clients in restrictive settings or at risk of losing community placement, trainings to entities and professionals serving these clients, technical assistance to public defenders and other advocacy

professionals, and participation in systemic meetings involving community integration and service to clients. OCRA also participates in required meetings in Enhanced Behavioral Support Homes and Community Crisis Homes. These meetings and other check ins have become even more important during COVID-19 as a monitoring tool. A list of the current staff and office locations is attached as Exhibit A.

II. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Disability Rights California's contract with DDS requires performance objectives as established in Exhibit A, Page 14, Paragraph M, of the contract. Each of the specific required outcomes is discussed in the following Sections A through F. The contract does not set specific numbers for the performance outcomes.

A. Services are provided in a manner that maximizes staff and operational resources.

OCRA continues to serve many people with developmental disabilities. OCRA handled 4,305 issues for regional center clients during this 6-month period, which is fewer than the same period last year. OCRA served 2,965 clients during this semi-annual review period, which is fewer than served during the same reporting period last year. The lower numbers are likely a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, where consumers and families are trying to meet basic needs for food and shelter. It could also be because fewer clients are in restrictive settings such as developmental centers, so OCRA staff are receiving fewer comprehensive assessments to review and requests for help with community integration issues.

OCRA staff strive to give a higher level of service when there are fewer calls to the office. For example, last semi-annual review period, staff did 17 hearing-level cases. This period, they did 21. This is significant because during this time, due to the pandemic, hearings are by phone or video. Many people chose postponements, to wait until they can have an in-person hearing. While we would have expected fewer hearing cases, OCRA staff did more.

OCRA represented and educated people on many legal issues and helped to remedy systemic issues. The statistics, attached as Exhibit B and discussed below, show the wide variety of issues and the many cases handled by OCRA staff. The advocacy report, covering July through

December 2020, included as Exhibit C, tells the stories and the impact our work has had on clients' lives.

1) Advocacy Reports.

OCRA's effective service to the community and the impact of that work is best demonstrated in advocacy stories. Advocates regularly submit summaries of cases or outreaches with practical value and that demonstrate a good outcome or teach a lesson. The examples also show the wide variety of legal issues handled by OCRA. Many of these stories reflect resolution of systemic problems through high-level direct representation, while others are resolved through negotiation because of collaborative relationships. In an effort toward brevity, the stories are just a sampling of the cases that OCRA handled. A longer Advocacy Report is available upon request. The summaries from July 2020 through December 2020 are compiled and attached as Exhibit C.

OCRA posts advocacy reports and other success stories on our website and social media regularly. These stories are a quick and easy way for DDS and the public to see examples of our work and have a snapshot of the rights of people with disabilities. OCRA staff focus on cases where there are no other advocacy resources the client can access, such as cases other attorneys do not handle. Staff provide different levels of service to solve problems. Services can be a phone call, a letter, attending a formal meeting like an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Program Plan (IPP), or representing the person at a hearing. Since receiving fewer callers to our office because of the pandemic, staff have handled cases at a higher level.

Here are four examples of OCRA's mediation- and hearing-level advocacy.

Michael Wins at His Social Security Hearing.

Michael's mother contacted OCRA for help with Michael's upcoming SSI hearing after he was denied twice for SSI benefits. Michael's mother was worried about the hearing because she did not know how to represent her son in front of a judge. OCRA agreed to represent Michael. OCRA reviewed over 1,000 pages of medical and regional center records, wrote a brief to the judge arguing the severity of Michael's disability, and represented Michael at his hearing in front of an administrative law judge. The judge agreed verbally with OCRA's arguments at the hearing.

Later, the judge issued a written decision awarding Michael SSI benefits with backpay.

Nicole Wins Protective Supervision Hours and Retroactive Benefits.

Nicole's mother contacted OCRA for help getting protective supervision hours through the IHSS program. Nicole appealed the county's previous denial of protective supervision a year ago, and lost after an administrative hearing. Nicole's mother applied for protective supervision a year later, and the county again denied the application. OCRA agreed to represent Nicole at an administrative hearing to challenge the county's determination. OCRA reviewed records, consulted an expert, prepared witnesses, drafted Nicole's position statement, and represented her at the hearing. The administrative law judge found Nicole eligible for IHSS protective supervision hours and awarded retroactive eligibility. She will receive a lump sum award in addition to hours going forward. Nicole now has the help she needs to stay safely at home.

Regional Center Reimburses \$3500 for Home Modifications and Moving Expenses.

Chadwick asked OCRA for help getting the regional center to reimburse the costs of modifying his current apartment to make it accessible and then years later, moving to a more accessible apartment. The regional center had denied these requests back when Chadwick and his family made them, so OCRA agreed to provide direct representation. OCRA represented Chadwick at an informal meeting where the regional center agreed to fund the home modifications, but not the moving expenses. OCRA then represented Chadwick at a state-level mediation, where the regional center agreed to also pay for the moving expenses.

Jason Wins his Freedom after Almost Two Years in Jail.

Jason was arrested for resisting a peace officer. After seven months in jail, he was found incompetent to stand trial and the court ordered the regional center to make a placement recommendation. A month later, the regional center said it could not identify any appropriate residential facilities. Six more months passed while Jason remained in jail. OCRA wrote a letter to the judge explaining the regional center's legal obligations under the Lanterman Act to find the least restrictive environment for clients. OCRA

was invited by the court to attend the hearing where the judge said “(Jason) has been in jail way too long...not getting the treatment he needs...and I’m concerned about his rights.” The judge then ordered Jason released in four days and the regional center and the public guardian to “work hand in hand to find (Jason) an interim placement, whether hotel or motel or group home or somewhere and provide appropriate security necessary to avoid possibility of elopement...to continue to receive care he both needs and deserves after having been incarcerated for so long.”

2) Analysis of Clients Served.

OCRA handled 4,305 cases from July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Exhibit B contains the complete compilation of data for the fiscal year.

The data has been compiled by:

1. Age
2. County
3. Disability
4. Ethnicity
5. Race
6. Gender
7. Living Arrangement
8. Type of Problem (Problem Codes)
9. Service Type

The reports included here are in non-table format so they are accessible to people who use screen-readers. Although the data is still in grids, each row of the chart is self-explanatory as read from left to right and does not need the navigational reference of a table header row for context.

The largest percentage of clients OCRA served by age were age 3 to 17, at 40 percent of clients served. This means parents or caregivers of children with developmental disabilities are the most frequent callers to OCRA. The regional center serves 36 percent of clients age 3-17, according to the DDS Fact Book, 16th edition. OCRA served only 1.1 percent of clients age 0-2, whereas these Early Start clients are 13.2 percent of the regional center population. The next largest was the 23-40 age group with 26.2 percent. Persons age 51 and older account for 9.4 percent of OCRA clients.

For gender, as in the past, OCRA served more males than females, with 67.7 percent of the clients served identifying as male and 32.3 percent

identifying as female. These numbers continue to be consistent with the gender percentages served by regional centers, according to the recent Fact Book. The Fact Book attributes the gender imbalance partly to individuals with an Autism diagnosis, currently over 80 percent male.

Statistics on the ethnicity of clients served for this first half of the year show OCRA's continuing commitment and success in serving underserved communities. For example, 43.7 percent of clients served by OCRA identified as Hispanic/Latino. This is a higher percentage than OCRA served during last year's semi-annual period, and higher than the 38.9 percent of Hispanic/Latino regional center clients, per the Fact Book.

African-American and Asian client data is in the report for "race," which is separated from "ethnicity" in our reporting system. African-American clients represent 8.9 percent of regional center clients and 10.5 percent of clients served by OCRA. This is an increase in African-American clients served by OCRA from last semi-annual reporting period which was at 8 percent.

Asian clients make up 6.9 percent of regional center clients, but a higher 7.6 percent of clients served by OCRA. OCRA does use a designation for "two or more races." If a client identifies as such, the system will not capture if they are African-American or Asian. Although OCRA has surpassed parity as compared to regional center client percentages for Latino, African-American, and Asian clients, staff continue to target outreach to these underserved communities. They have had success in building meaningful relationships in those communities by increasing people served. OCRA is now in the second year of two-year outreach plans. See section A.4 for more details on outreach plans.

Clients residing in the family home remains the largest number of service requests for clients served by OCRA, with 3,074 service requests showing clients living in the family home or 71.4 percent of cases handled. This percentage is similar to the last semi-annual report and is lower than the regional center percentage of clients served in this living arrangement, at 79.1 percent, per the DDS Fact Book. As in previous review periods, the next largest group served by OCRA are those living independently, with 484 service requests or 11.2 percent with this living arrangement. This is the same percentage as last year during the same period and higher than the regional centers' 8.2 percent of clients living in ILS/SLS.

3) Analysis of Clients Assisted with Moving to a Less Restrictive Living Arrangement.

The law requires regional centers to notify OCRA about people living in restrictive settings such as developmental centers, IMDs, and MHRCs, and people whose community placements are at risk of failing. The law requires regional centers to send OCRA comprehensive assessments and meeting notifications for clients in these restrictive settings, and clients in Enhanced Behavioral Support Homes (EBSHs) and Community Crisis Homes (CCHs). Statewide, OCRA staff have been contacting providers of EBSHs and CCHs to discuss clients' Individual Behavior Support Team (IBST) meetings, review clients' behavior plans as part of the team, and ensure clients' rights are respected. It is important to maintain a relationship with the administrators and staff of these homes now serving clients formerly in restrictive settings for much of their lives especially since during COVID clients have access to fewer people. The law also requires regional centers to notify OCRA about clients whose 6500 commitments are expiring or have a hearing scheduled, clients under a 5250 or higher-level commitment, clients for whom a petition is filed for a Lanterman Petris-Short (LPS) conservatorship, and clients referred to Porterville Developmental Center for any reason or commitment.

Local and statewide CRAs handle most of these cases. OCRA also has one full-time community integration CRA and one Assistant CRA who does half-time community integration cases and support. The community integration and local CRAs form relationships with and provide training or technical assistance to regional centers, developmental centers, IMDs, public defenders, public guardians, family members, and other stakeholders to discuss systemic concerns with restrictive settings and placement issues.

Assistance or representation in cases involving restrictive settings or statutory notifications to OCRA often takes considerable time and many activities. These include speaking with the client about their wishes, reviewing records, attending a variety of meetings, negotiating through phone calls, drafting and filing documents for court, speaking with the client's public defender, service coordinator, family members, or home administrators about possible living arrangements and services, and attending discharge planning meetings and court dates, all to advocate for movement back to the community or for additional services to stay in the community. This has become more challenging during COVID because of

restrictions on moving to new placement. OCRA staff often educate about and advocate for the least restrictive environment.

Some regional centers have not been consistent with notifications required by law. OCRA created a chart for regional centers to use as a quick guide about notifications to send, and will continue working with regional centers about this responsibility. For example, OCRA received no notifications during this period about any client considered for an LPS conservatorship. OCRA handled 16 cases where a regional center consumer was held under a 5150 or 5250 and worked with the hospital and regional center to help the consumer move back to the community.

Since most clients have moved out of developmental centers, regional centers send fewer comprehensive assessments overall. They send assessments for clients in Porterville Developmental Center, IMDs and MHRCs, and 4418.7 assessments when a client's community placement is at risk of failing. OCRA staff regularly review these assessments and Individual Behavior Support Plans (IBSPs) for clients who live in EBSHs and CCHs. During this review period, OCRA staff reviewed 124 assessments and IBSPs. This is significantly more than last semi-annual period's 96, because of OCRA's commitment, especially during the pandemic, to work closely with regional centers to receive information about clients in restrictive settings.

OCRA staff attend a variety of meetings for clients in restrictive settings – Individual Program Plan meetings, Transition Planning and Review Meetings, 5-day and 30-day meetings held after a client is placed in the community, deflection meetings, meetings with potential providers, Individual Behavior Supports Team meetings for clients in EBSHs and CCHs, among others. During this review period, OCRA staff attended 244 meetings on behalf of clients in developmental centers or IMDs, who were at risk of losing their community placements, or who had moved into EBSHs and CCHs. This is significantly more meetings than last year during this review period, again because staff have handled more cases at a higher level since fielding fewer calls during the pandemic. OCRA staff have attended 9 court hearings for clients in restrictive settings during this review period.

Here is one story highlighting how a client achieved community integration.

Daniel Moves into the Community After Years in a Developmental Center.

The regional center contacted OCRA with concerns about Daniel, whose case had not been adjudicated properly. Daniel was placed in a developmental center in 2001 after being charged with a crime. The court suspended the sentence and placed Daniel on formal probation for life. Daniel's service coordinator requested help from OCRA to advocate for community placement. Every time community placement was discussed at his annual IPP meetings, Daniel's probation officer insisted that the probation department was opposed to any type of community placement. OCRA carefully reviewed Daniel's case file and researched the statutes under which he was being held at the developmental center. OCRA also attended IPP meetings. After listening to everyone on Daniel's IPP team describe the kind of community services available, the probation department was no longer opposed to Daniel's community placement. Once the probation department stopped objecting to Daniel's community placement, the regional center found an Enhanced Behavioral Supports Home where Daniel receives services and supports to succeed in the community again.

4) Outreach/Training.

Outreach and Training serve two important purposes: 1) notifying people about the availability of OCRA assistance and 2) educating people about the law and their rights. OCRA provides training on numerous issues to a wide variety of people. Training topics include clients' rights, abuse and neglect issues, IHSS, Medi-Cal, special education, voting rights, Social Security benefits, rights in the community, alternatives to conservatorships, self-determination, and other topics. Training audiences include direct clients, family members, regional center staff and vendors, and community members.

During this 6-month review period, OCRA presented at 199 trainings with a total attendance of approximately 6,443 people at the various trainings. This represents a decrease in the number of trainings from the last semi-annual report. 17 additional trainings were scheduled, but cancelled due to COVID-19. OCRA staff presented all trainings via Zoom or other videoconferencing method. See section II.F for details.

To assist individuals from traditionally underserved communities, OCRA has developed target outreach plans. Each OCRA office targets at least six outreaches per year to a specific underrepresented group in the office's catchment area. These are two-year plans based upon evaluating prior outreach plans' results, new census data, a review of regional center purchase of service data, and the race and ethnicity of clients served by each regional center. This semi-annual report covers six months of a two-year outreach cycle that ends June 30, 2021.

OCRA created an Outreach Team to help develop new and innovative trainings. This team has been critical in planning statewide and local trainings, while also helping individual offices reach people and groups in new ways during the COVID-19 pandemic. One example is our Information is Power webinar series on substantive legal topics, presented entirely in Spanish. This was originally going to be an in-person day-long conference but was converted to a seven session weekly webinar. People could attend one or all of the weeks depending on topic interest. This was an excellent way to connect with Spanish-speakers throughout the state. For more details on this and all outreach and training, see our report in Exhibit D.

B. Issues and complaints are resolved expeditiously and at the lowest level of appropriate intervention.

From July 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020, OCRA resolved 4,305 issues for clients. Of those, all but 21 were resolved informally. Over 99 percent of all the matters that OCRA handled were resolved without using administrative hearings or court proceedings. Data showing this is attached as Exhibit E.

C. Collaborative and harmonious working relationships are fostered.

OCRA staff continue to collaborate with the local regional centers, stakeholders, and community members. Some examples of collaboration include serving on regional center diversity committees, disparity task force meetings, bioethics committees, Behavioral Modification Review Committees, Risk Assessment Committees, County Coordinating Councils, Supported Life Training Planning Committees, meetings with counties about benefits, services, and appeals issues, LA County Dependency Court Educational Developmental Rights Committee, State Hearings

Division meetings, county appeals department stakeholder meetings, SSI Statewide Advocates' Meetings, DS Taskforce Implementation Workgroups, UCEDD CACs, Fiesta Educativa planning committees, Health & Wellness Committee-Forensic Task Force, Criminal Justice Task Force, Multi-Agency Advisory Board (MAAB), Healthcare Task Force, Adult Transition Task Force, Resident Transition Advisory Group, Quality Management Advisory Group, and meetings for the developmental center closures quality assurance, among others.

All CRAs participate in their regional centers' Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee meetings. Many OCRA staff provide training to regional center staff and vendors on topics such as clients' rights, OCRA services, or a substantive area of the law such as Social Security benefits. This has been true during the COVID-19 pandemic, where OCRA staff have provided trainings via Zoom. OCRA staff meet regularly with regional center staff and community partners to spot trends, share experiences and expertise, and collaborate on many subjects. During this review period, meetings have continued via Zoom. Many regional center staff have made OCRA their primary contact if one of their clients has a legal issue.

This philosophy of collaboration is not only incorporated into Disability Rights California's contract with DDS, but is also a recognition that some of the most effective advocacy takes place because of interpersonal relationships and informal advocacy. The success of this philosophy is demonstrated by the number of calls OCRA receives from varied sources, its ability to resolve matters informally, and its recognition as an excellent resource for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

1) Memorandums of Understanding.

OCRA has established Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with each regional center that address the center's individual needs, concerns, and method of operation. Generally, MOUs are updated as needed. However, changes to the law mean that MOUs may be reviewed and meetings held or scheduled. These meetings have been productive and positive. OCRA has very good working relationships with most regional centers. During this review period, OCRA and these regional centers updated their MOUs: Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center, North Los Angeles County Regional Center, Kern Regional Center, San Diego Regional Center, and North Bay Regional Center. OCRA has forwarded copies of all MOUs to DDS. The status of each revised MOU is listed in Exhibit F.

2) Meeting with Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA).

ARCA and OCRA meet regularly to discuss various issues. Katie Hornberger, OCRA Director, met with ARCA several times during this review period. ARCA and OCRA also serve on committees together and regularly discuss current issues.

D. Clients and families are satisfied with the services provided.

Disability Rights California recognizes the importance of client satisfaction. OCRA is committed to serving clients and family members in a manner and with results that ensure client and family satisfaction with the services provided. Survey results show positive client satisfaction over the past semi-annual review period.

1) Client Satisfaction Survey.

OCRA measures client satisfaction by a survey developed jointly by staff, the OCRA Advisory Committee, and DDS. 730 surveys were mailed out. 152 people returned surveys. This represents a 21 percent return rate.

Of those responding to the questions, 97 percent of the respondents who answered the questions felt they were treated well by the staff, which is slightly higher than last year during this review period. One respondent said, "Ms. Miller is an EXCELLENT attorney with a lot of knowledge and experience. They helped me a lot and their support was key to my process with the Regional Center. She and Maria Rojas make an excellent "team". They treat families with empathy." Another said, "Thanking you for the services you offer, because they are very helpful, as in my case, I am a person with limited economic resources, thank you."

88 percent of the respondents believed their call was returned within two days, which is higher than last year during the same reporting period. One respondent said, "Muy agradecida por el apollo que me brindaron muy contenta que de por medio de la Sra Maria Rojas que contesto todas mis llamadas y especialmente a Jacqueline Miller (Very grateful for the support you gave me, very happy that through Mrs. Maria Rojas who answered all my calls and especially Jacqueline Miller.)" 95 percent of the respondents reported that they understood the information they received. This percentage is higher than last year during the same period. One person wrote, "Maitria and Brenda were very accommodating and compassionate.

They listened to all my concerns. They would always simply inform me as easy as possible for me to understand. I've speak to Maitria about hoping to meet her in person one day, or even stop by office to personally thank her myself. I wish this day is possible!"

During this reporting period, 93 percent of respondents felt their Clients' Rights Advocate listened to them, slightly lower than last year. One responded wrote, "Alejandra was kind understanding and very knowledgeable. She listened and explained everything in detail! Thank you!" 87 percent of respondents felt they were helped with their question/problem, which is the same as last year during this period. One respondent said, "I am so overjoyed that mrs. scott helped me win my case with Regional Center. She was able to prepare me well and now my son is a regional Center Client. I'm so happy with her Service and Staff and will continue calling for Advice and recommending OCRA with friends and families. Thank you !!!" Another person said, "Alexander Scarlis Really Helped me get my Social Security Benefits Back. I am Really Thankful and Greatful for His Help and Service." Finally, 94 percent of respondents said they would ask their Clients' Rights Advocate for help again, which is higher than last time. One respondent wrote, "We had great service. We were advised and cared for we would definitely use your services again. Thank yo so much." And a final comment, "This is a very important service. Since ggrc case mgrs. no longer do this, it is imperative that the OCRA exists."

These satisfaction numbers are almost all higher than the last semi-annual review period. To remedy concerns of any unhappy callers, a member of the OCRA management team calls back all responders who either request a call back or made any negative responses and supplied their contact information. See Exhibit G, which discusses the results of OCRA's survey.

2) Letters of Appreciation.

OCRA clients and family members often take the time to write letters of appreciation. These kind words and the time people take to send them represent the high value of the work performed by OCRA staff. Below is just a sampling of the many letters received. OCRA is providing the letters of appreciation with the wording from the originals, including any grammatical errors, unless otherwise indicated. We have also redacted client names.



[Thank you very much Jacqueline for everything, we really appreciate, Happy Holidays!]

Ceci y yo estamos muy emocionada de tener este fabuloso entrenamiento en nuestro UN PASO MAS en la INCLUSION gracias por tu apoyo a educar y emponderar a nuestra comunidad, ya que la misión de nosotros es que las personas con necesidades especiales aprendan a abogar y sean incluidos en nuestra comunidad.

Gracias por tu APOYO!!!! Ahí estaremos mañana, cualquier cosa que necesites, siente libertad de llamarme.

EMAIL TRANSLATION

[Ceci and I are very excited to have this wonderful training for Un Paso mas and in conclusion, thank you for your support to educate and empower our communities since our mission is to support people with special needs, to learn how to advocate and to be included in our communities. Thank you so much for your support!!!]



[Concord, CA July 16, 2020

Dear Mr. Arthur Limpscom:

I thank you so much to you for coming to my house, meeting _____ and taking your time, work and dedication defending my son disability rights. I want to give you and your entire team that defended the disability rights for _____. My most sincere thanks from the bottom of my heart
Congradulations!
God bless you!]

Hello Anne,

Happy Holiday Season and I hope you and your family are safe.

I just want to share with you that I just got the judge decision letter and I won my appeal. It was held last Oct 29. You have helped me a lot with all the things you sent me to read. It was a lot of stress those past several months but I made it. I was able to fight for my daughter.

I hope you are doing well and also Yulalhia.

Have a great day,

Good Morning!

Hope everyone is in good health and safe!

This is a good news! Richard G,'s SSI has been approved and the money has been automatically deposited into his account.

On behalf of Richard, thank you all for your helped especially Alejandro for your amazing support and non stopped follow up to SSI department.

Buenas Tardes Abogada Jacqueline y Sra. Maria.

Les envio la carta del SSI sobre la Resolucion dada en el caso del sobrepago.

Este resultado NO se hubiera logrado sin toda su ayuda, profesionalismo y gran dedicacion por resolver este caso.

Les estoy inmensamente agradecida por todo lo que arduamente nos han ayudado. Que Dios las bendiga siempre.

Muchas Gracias

EMAIL TRANSLATION:

[Good afternoon Attorney Jacqueline and Mrs. Maria.

I am sending you the SSI letter regarding the resolution given in the overpayment case. This result would NOT have been achieved without all your help, professionalism, and great dedication to solving this case.

I am immensely grateful for all that you have worked so hard to help us.

May God bless you always.

Thank you so much]



December 2020

Dear Aimee,

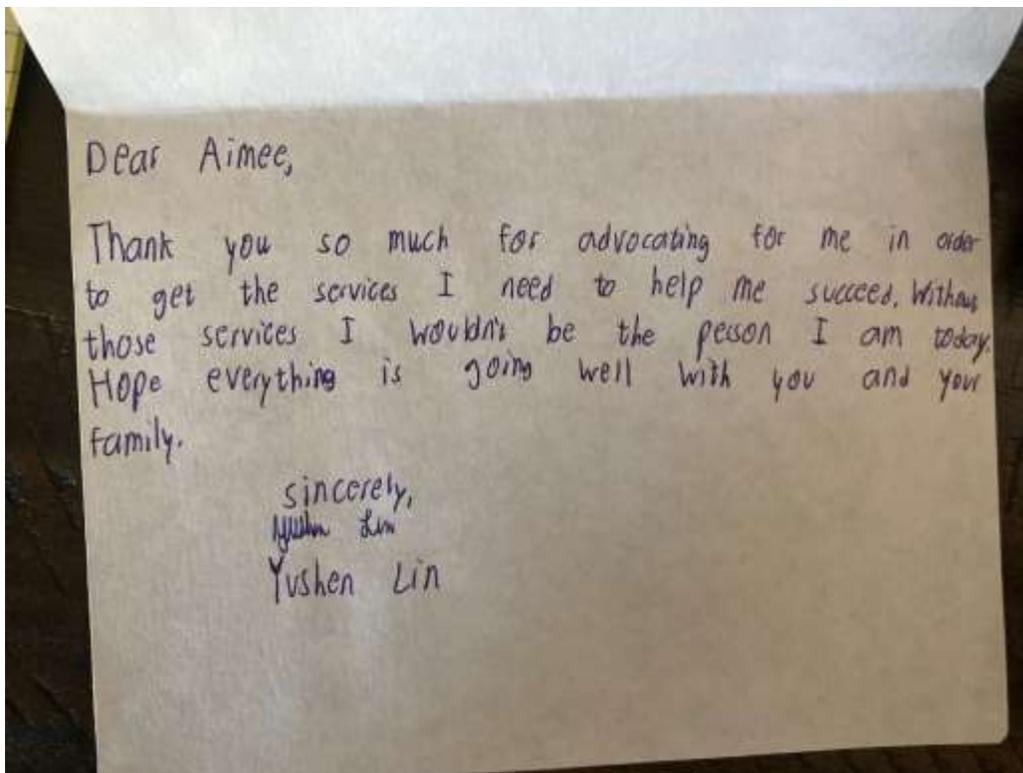
I hope it's all right to send you a copy of the book I wrote about our journey w/ James. You and OCRA are now part of his story and we are deeply grateful for all that you do for us.

May this season be a meaningful and blessed one for you and your loved ones. Merry Christmas! 😊

Sincerely,
Ruth, James, &
family

[Dear Aimee,
I hope it's all right to send you a copy of the book I wrote about our journey with _____. You and OCRA are now part of his story and we are deeply grateful for all that you do for us.
May this season be a meaningful and blessed one for you and your loved ones. Merry Christmas! (smile)
Sincerely,
_____, _____, & family]

To the amazing ladies in Disability rights California, thank you so much for the help and guidance you gave us, for the time you took to answer every single one of my questions, because I always have like millions of those, for reviewing every single document that I send, the patience and always have your email and phones open for every single one of my concerns, for having our back to keep advocating for my son's needs, it means the world for me that finally _____ is getting this services after more than two years fitting by myself is amazing having the support from people that really knows how to handle the situations and cares about the necessities of every child, from the bottom of my heart I just want to say Thank you!
Sincerely,



[Dear Aimee,
Thank you so much for advocating for me in order to get the services I need to help me succeed. Without those services I wouldn't be the person I am today. Hope everything is going well with you and your family.
Sincerely,

3) Cases will be handled in a timely manner.

Clients and families contact OCRA because something has gone wrong. They may be losing a government benefit, forced to move to a new more restrictive environment, or facing another urgent situation. Therefore, OCRA staff must be responsive. OCRA has always had a policy that all calls will be returned as soon as possible, but not later than the close of the next business day. OCRA staff note this policy on the outgoing voicemail message that callers hear when reaching the office voicemail.

OCRA measures its performance in this area by its client satisfaction survey; see Exhibit G, discussed more above. OCRA statistics shows that 88 percent of all callers to OCRA received a call back within two days during this review period. This is an increase from the same reporting period last year. OCRA uses Statewide CRAs and ACRA's to handle calls in offices with a high call volume or when the local staff are out of the office. Staff also use electronic call logs to improve timeliness and client satisfaction.

Once the caller completes an intake and a case is opened, OCRA staff use internal timelines to move through the case timely. OCRA supervisors work with staff to track each case to see how many days it has been open and how many days it should be open, given the timelines. For example, a case under the category "Information and Referral" should be resolved within 7 calendar days. For this type of case, OCRA staff provide information, such as publications, and/or a referral to another legal aid organization, attorney, or resource. The 7-day timeline ensures the caller gets this information and referral timely. A case under the type, "Counsel and Advice" should be resolved within 28 days. The OCRA Office Manager runs a report each month, as a check and balance, to show each case's number of days open and any that need immediate attention.

E. The provision of clients' rights advocacy services is coordinated in consultation with the DDS contract manager, stakeholder organizations, and persons with developmental disabilities and their families representing California's multi-cultural diversity.

OCRA has worked through the OCRA Advisory Committee to ensure this performance outcome is achieved. Attached as Exhibit H is a list of the members of the Disability Rights California Board of Director's OCRA Advisory Committee effective December 31, 2020.

The OCRA Advisory Committee has provided valuable insight to OCRA staff on a wide variety of topics. The September 10, 2020 Minutes are included as Exhibit H. The December 10, 2020 OCRA Advisory Committee Meeting was cancelled by the Chair. OCRA is examining the best way to solicit input from the community, and if that can be done in a better way than the Committee. For example, OCRA's community listening sessions with the Latinx community have been informative and effective. Expanding this concept and finding new forums tailored to different communities may yield better and more information than OCRA has been able to gather through the Committee. We will keep DDS apprised of any changes.

F. Self-advocacy training is provided for clients and families at least twice in each fiscal year.

Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4433(d)(5), requires that the contractor providing advocacy services for clients of regional center services provide at least two self-advocacy trainings for clients each year. Disability Rights California's contract with DDS mirrors this language. OCRA strongly believes in the importance of self-advocacy and requires at least one self-advocacy training by each of the 21 OCRA offices per year, far exceeding the two mandated trainings. Many offices provide more than one training per year. During this 6-month review period, OCRA staff provided 16 self-advocacy presentations statewide. Self-advocacy trainings are usually hands-on, with Bingo cards or skits, for example. Staff had to get creative to present all 16 trainings to consumers by videoconferencing instead.

Staff may present any of the approved self-advocacy trainings. To date, OCRA has developed seven separate packets of information for OCRA staff to use in the mandated trainings in addition to the DDS Consumer Safety materials and the living arrangement options materials developed by DDS. The Outreach Team within OCRA will continue to explore new self-advocacy training ideas.

Samples of the OCRA self-advocacy packets (all are in both English and Spanish), were provided separately in a binder marked OCRA Training Materials with the 2007-2008 Annual Report. In discussions with DDS's previous Contract Manager, it was decided that OCRA should not submit duplicate training packets. As always, OCRA welcomes comments from

DDS on any training packets. A list of Self-Advocacy Trainings held last year are in Exhibit I.

Here are some comments from self-advocacy training surveys, which participants completed after a video training, all digital rather than hand-written surveys.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Question 8. Any additional comments:

“She showed handouts on camera which was helpful.”

“Shared ideas to prepare in case of emergency.”

“As a result, I have more advocacy skills.”

“Very informative.”

“It was great.”

VOTING RIGHTS

Question 8. Any additional comments:

“Very informative.”

“I enjoyed the presentation. Information was clear and to the point. Excellent!”

“Great meeting looking forward to the next one. Gabriel and Scott do an excellent job.”

“I want to express gratitude for such a wonderful presentation.”

Question 5. How did this training meet your needs.

“By speaking clearly and professionally.”

WHAT IS OCRA

Question 8. Any additional comments:

“Great speaker. Loved that it was short and sweet.”

“Great presentation, useful information re services offered and good feedback on questions asked.”

“We appreciate all your efforts to help the individuals we serve and we look forward to strengthening our partnership.”

III. TITLE 17 COMPLAINTS

CCR, Title 17, Section 50540, sets forth a complaint procedure whereby a regional center client, or his or her authorized representative, who believes a right has been abused, punitively withheld or improperly or unreasonably denied, may file a complaint with the Clients’ Rights Advocate. The Complaint process is similar to that established by Welfare & Institution

Code, Section 4731. However, the later law offers more client protections. OCRA handled no Title 17 Complaints during this review period, as noted on Exhibit J.

IV. DENIAL OF CLIENTS' RIGHTS

CCR, Title 17, Section 50530, sets forth a procedure whereby a care provider may deny one of the basic rights of a client if there is a danger to self or others or a danger of property destruction caused by the actions of a client. The Clients' Rights Advocate must approve the denial. The regulation require that OCRA submit a quarterly report to DDS by the last day of each January, April, July, and October. Instead, OCRA is including the reports concurrently with the contractually-required Annual and Semi-Annual reports. If this is not acceptable to DDS, OCRA will submit duplicate reports, if requested. Attached as Exhibit K is the current log of Denials of Rights from the OCRA offices.

V. CLIENT GRIEVANCES

Exhibit A, Paragraph 12, of the contract between DDS and Disability Rights California requires OCRA to establish a grievance procedure and to inform all clients about the procedure. DDS has approved the grievance procedure developed by OCRA. The procedure is posted prominently in both English and Spanish at each office and is available in all 11 threshold languages. And the grievance procedure is offered in all letters to clients or others who contact OCRA, when an office declines to provide the requested service to that person.

During the 6-month review period, OCRA handled 4,305 matters. There were six grievances filed against OCRA during this review period. Attached as Exhibit L is the grievance chart.

VI. COLLECTION OF ATTORNEYS FEES

OCRA does not charge clients, their families or advocates fees for services nor does OCRA seek to recover costs from these individuals. Clients' Rights Advocates who are licensed to practice law in California, or Assistant, Associate, or unlicensed Clients' Rights Advocates, all of whom work under the supervision of an attorney, can collect attorney's fees and costs similar to those collected by private attorneys or advocates for special education cases or other cases where there are statutory attorney's fees.

Neither Disability Rights California nor OCRA ever collect attorney's fees from clients.

OCRA collected no attorney's fees during this review period, see Exhibit M.

VIII. CONCLUSION

OCRA has continued to provide exceptional service to people with developmental disabilities throughout the state. Clients and callers are satisfied with OCRA's cases and outreaches, shown in the high client satisfaction numbers and the low number of grievances compared to the number of cases. OCRA handled 4,305 cases for 2,965 clients in a wide variety of legal problem areas. And OCRA provided 199 trainings to 6,443 clients, family members, regional center staff and vendors, and interested community members - all while meeting each of its performance objectives. OCRA has also surpassed parity with underserved communities such as Latino, African-American, and Asian communities. OCRA looks forward to continuing to work with people with developmental disabilities and helping access the services and supports they need to live the most independent and productive lives in the least restrictive environment.