

Social Recreation, Camping, Art, Dance and Music



Goals for this Presentation

- Develop a shared understanding of social recreation, camping and non-medical therapy services
- Understand how the law applies
- Learn the steps to request services effectively



What are social recreation activities?



- Community-based activities
- Examples:
 - Sports, swimming, karate
 - Dance, music, arts
 - Summer camps, day camps
 - Clubs

Social recreation activities promote:



- Community connection and participation
- Relationship building
- Shared activities and interests
- Personal growth and independence
- Skill-building
- Well-being
- Inclusion

Background: Social Recreation Funding

- Social recreation funding was suspended in 2009 due to budget cuts.
- The suspension had a negative impact on underserved communities.
- Community advocacy led to efforts to restore funding.
- In the summer of 2021, funding was restored by lifting the suspension, but implementation guidance was unclear, creating challenges.
- Effective July 1, 2023, a new law expanded access to social recreation, camping, art, dance, and music for individuals served by regional centers.



Where in the law is this stated?

Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) §
4688.22:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=WIC§ionNum=4688.22



Important legal points

The intent of the law is to expand the availability of social recreation and camping services and the supports needed to access them, particularly for:

- children,
- people who have experienced disparities in regional center services,
- and those who can't afford to pay for services upfront and wait for reimbursement.



Important legal points (cont.)

Prohibits certain tactics (access barriers) used by the Regional Centers (RCs) to limit access

- **Cannot require IHSS to be exhausted as a generic resource first.**
 - The point of generic resources is that if another agency provides the same type of service you're asking for, you need to go and ask them first.
 - But IHSS is for personal support IN HOME, while social rec and camping takes place outside the home. IHSS and social rec/camping are two very different services, not the same type of service.
- **Cannot require people to exchange respite or any other service to receive social recreation and camping services.**

Important legal points (cont.)

- **Cannot require families to pay a copayment or otherwise share costs of social recreation/camping services to receive them.**
 - Services under the Lanterman Act must be provided at no cost, with only few exceptions:
 - Daycare
- Regional centers can't decide on their own when families have to share costs for something. Under the Lanterman Act, only the Legislature can make that determination, because only the Legislature can change the law.

Important legal points (cont.)

Available through “participant-directed services”

- Consumers can choose to go through a regional center vendor or choose someone who is not a vendor who can be paid through a Financial Management Service (FMS).



Department of Developmental Services (DDS) role in implementation

- DDS distributes guidance and instructions on policy issues to RCs. These include:
 - **Directives:** instructions RCs must follow
 - **Program Guidelines:** rules RCs must follow for specific programs.
 - **Guidance:** details on items RCs are encouraged to do or approaches to consider but not required.
 - **Correspondence:** how DDS shares helpful information with RC's.
- Can be found here: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/regional-center-directives/>

Barriers to access addressed by the law

- Lack of vendored providers
- Payment issues
- Purchase of Services (POS) policies



Recent Guidance



CALIFORNIA HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
1215 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.dds.ca.gov



March 25, 2026

G-2026-Case Management-003

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS
SUBJECT: STANDARDIZED PURCHASE OF SERVICE POLICY FOR SOCIAL RECREATION, CAMPING AND NON-MEDICAL THERAPIES

This letter provides regional centers with a standardized purchase of service (POS) policy for Social Recreation, Camping and Non-Medical Therapy Services (Attachment). The Department of Developmental Services (Department) recommends that the standardized policy be used as is, without modifications. Regional centers that adopt and submit this standardized POS policy will be deemed as having the policy approved by the Department upon receipt.

The Department recommends that the standardized POS policy be adopted without modifications, except for two pre-approved updates:

- 1) Regional centers should insert their regional center exception policy language pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) Section [4620.3\(f\)](#), and in consideration of the requirements of [the March 2026 directive](#) on POS considerations;
- 2) Regional centers should put the policy on their regional center letterhead before returning to the Department.

If a regional center modifies the attached POS policy, beyond these two items, the Department will complete its standard review process pursuant to [Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4434 \(d\)](#).

Regional centers who have submitted a Social Recreation, Camping and/or Non-Medical Therapy Services POS policy to the Department and are awaiting approval, can choose to resubmit using the standardized POS policy. For regional centers who have an existing, approved POS policy, the Department as part of its monitoring responsibilities, pursuant to WIC Section 4434(d), will be reviewing these policies for alignment with the legislative intent of WIC Section 4688.22. Regional centers must submit any revisions to their policy by email to cob@dds.ca.gov.

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If you have questions about this letter, contact your Primary Regional Center Liaison in the Community Operations Branch at cob@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

ERNIE CRUZ
Deputy Director
Community Services Division

Attachment

cc: Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services
Regional Center Community Services Directors
Association of Regional Center Agencies

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/G-2026-Case-Management-003.pdf>

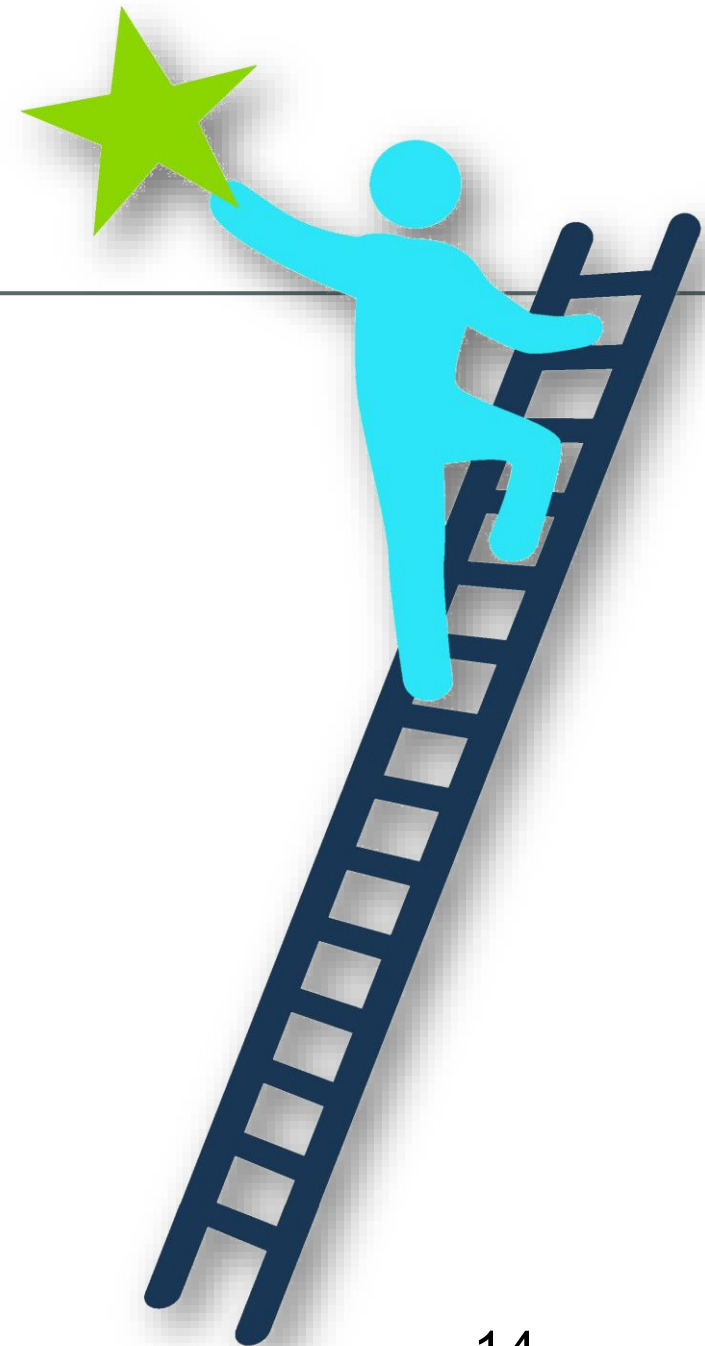
Steps for an effective request

1. Identify the Need

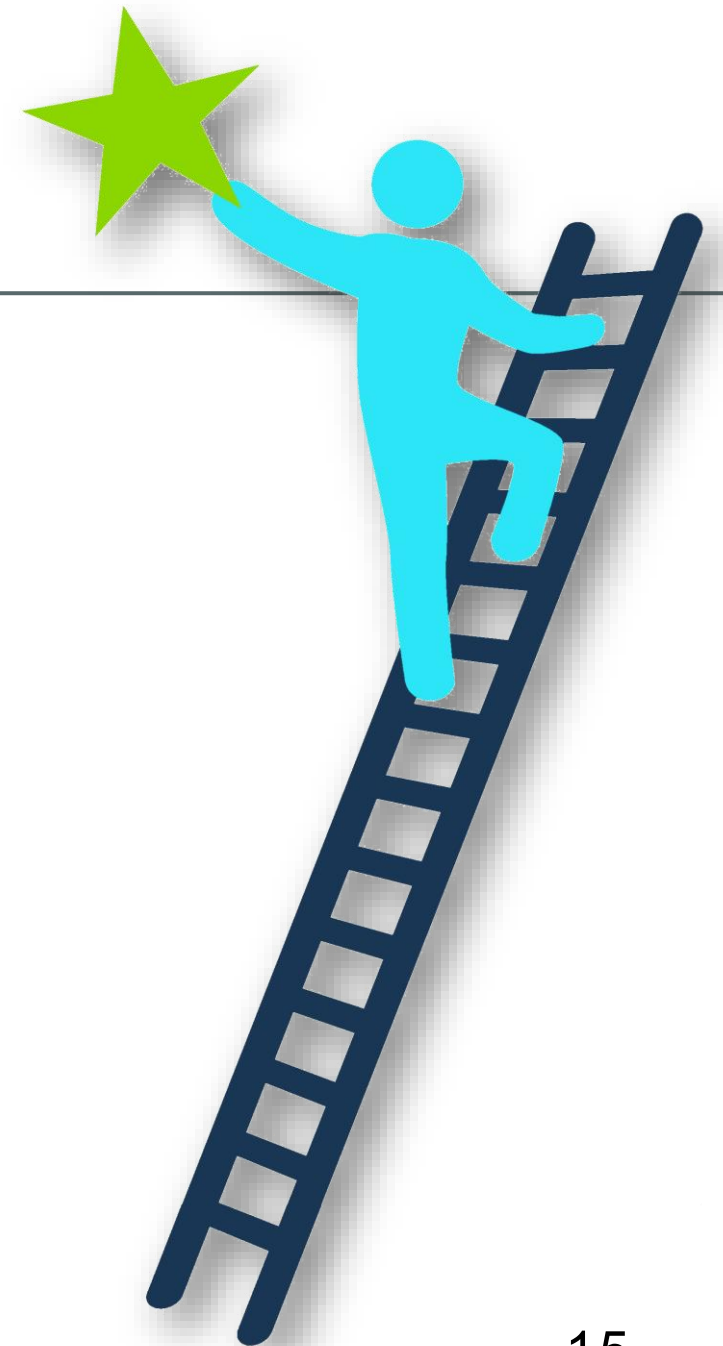
- Why are you asking for this service?
- What need would this service address?
 - Alleviate the developmental disability
 - Social, personal, physical, or economic habilitation
 - Rehabilitation
 - Achievement and maintenance of an independent, productive life
- What benefit are you hoping to get out of the service?

2. Connect the Need to an IPP Goal/Life Area

- Will the service help you accomplish one of the goals in your current IPP?
 - ✓ If yes, which one and how?
 - ✓ If no, amend the IPP to make a stronger case for the need



Steps for an effective request



3. Show There is No Generic Resource Available

- Services from another agency that serves the general public
- Examples: Medi-Cal, Medicare, School Districts, Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), SSI
- RCs are payors of last resort

4. Consider Less Costly Alternatives

- Least costly provider of comparable service
- Able to accomplish all/part of the IPP
- Consistent with the needs of the individual and family as identified in the IPP

Resource

Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) § 4688.22:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=WIC§ionNum=4688.22

Regional Center Directives:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/regional-center-directives/>

Standardized Purchase Of Service Policy For Social Recreation, Camping And Non-medical Therapies

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/G-2026-Case-Management-003.pdf>

Questions

Intake:
[1-800-776-5746](tel:1-800-776-5746)