

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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TO: REGIONAL CENTERS

SUBJECT: SEEKING REGIONAL CENTER INTEREST FOR START TRAINING AND SERVICES

The Department of Developmental Services (Department) has funding available for regional centers to develop Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources and Treatment (START) services for individuals at risk for acute crisis or who are currently experiencing crises. The Department is requesting a letter of interest from any regional center that would like to develop START services in their area.

The START Model

The START service model is a comprehensive approach to crisis prevention and intervention for people with developmental disabilities and co-occurring mental health conditions. The model provides crisis planning and wraparound services that help support individuals at risk for acute crisis or loss of residential placement, and individuals who are currently experiencing crises.

The START model has demonstrated positive outcomes in other states with published scientific papers reporting reductions in psychiatric hospitalizations and emergency room visits, improved mental health symptoms, reductions in challenging behavior, and maintaining residential placements in the community.

The University of New Hampshire Center for START Services provides training and certification in the START model to community providers who make up the local START teams. Each local START team consists of a program director, clinical and medical directors, START coordinators, therapeutic coaches, coordinator team leads, coaching team leads, and administrative support.

Project Details

The Governor's Budget includes funding for nine additional teams in Fiscal Year 2021-22; allowing for up to a total of nine interested regional centers to develop START services in their area. The proposed funding covers the following:

- Local START Team – Three months of start-up operating costs associated with the local provider team, including hiring and training staff, renting office space, acquiring materials and equipment, etc., before the team is prepared to accept consumers and begin providing services.

“Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices”

- START Training – First, second, and third year training covers all aspects of the START model training provided by the University of New Hampshire Center for START services to the local START team. This includes personnel costs, travel, printed materials, online training platform, data management, and technical support, as well as quarterly evaluations of the local START teams using collected data, and an annual independent, comprehensive evaluation.

Requirements for Funding

Submit a letter of interest of up to two pages by email to SafetyNet@dds.ca.gov within two weeks of the date of this letter with the following information:

- Your regional center's demonstrated need for supporting children and adults with mental health needs in their current residential arrangement and preventing admissions into more restrictive settings, such as Institutions for Mental Diseases, out-of-state services, acute psychiatric settings, Community Crisis Homes and STAR services.
- Your regional center's previous experience and existing services tailored to individuals with specialized needs.
- Reasoning as to how and why the START Training Model will benefit the individuals served by your regional center.
- Description of how your regional center plans to utilize START services in the area.
- A statement conveying your regional center's willingness to participate and collaborate in the planned START workgroup meeting.

Determinations for funding will be based on the information provided in the letter of interest. The Department will hold a START workgroup meeting for selected regional centers with START teams to develop a shared framework of expectations for the START model in California and standards for delivery of the service.

If you have any questions regarding the START Training Model, project details or submitting letters of interest, please contact Lauren Libero by phone at (916) 202-0569 or email at lauren.libero@dds.ca.gov.