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DIRECTOR

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Developmental Services
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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

December 18, 2024

Enrique Roman, Executive Director
Kern Regional Center
3200 North Sillect Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93308

Dear Enrique Roman:

This letter is to convey the results of the Department of Developmental Services' (DDS) review of the Early Start Program at Kern Regional Center (KRC). This review was conducted through DDS' Self-Assessment Monitoring (SAM) system on May 3, 2024, through June 17, 2024 to ensure that California meets Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements.

KRC completed a self-assessment of 69 records through SAM. This consisted of 35 regular records and 34 transition records. DDS verified the documentation and the findings for each of the 69 records. DDS identified finding(s) of noncompliance in the following areas:

- Initial assessments including a child's unique strengths and service needs in all five developmental domains (including hearing, vision, and health), must be completed prior to developing (the initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP),
- IFSP must include services to meet the child and family needs; and,
- Written parental consent must be obtained prior to the provision of Early Intervention Services.

The details of the findings are in the enclosed monitoring report.

Required Action:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires the state lead agency, DDS, to verify correction of noncompliance based on the individual child level (prong 1) and the systemic level (prong 2) as soon as possible, and no later than one year from the date of this letter. A plan, signed by you, addressing the systemic level (prong 2) areas of noncompliance is required to be submitted to DDS within 30 days of the date of this letter.

As part of the plan of correction, KRC should identify and address the root cause of noncompliance on each outstanding finding. Identifying the root cause ensures that corrective actions are meaningful and effective. Please forward the required evidence of clearance on each of the outstanding individual findings (prong 1) as soon as it is available (if applicable). DDS will require KRC to provide subsequent records to clear the systemic level findings. In addition, please see recommendations listed on page 4 of the monitoring report.

Thank you for your cooperation during the monitoring review of the Early Start program at KRC and your commitment to serve children and families. If you have any questions, please contact Nathaniel Taleon, Chief, Program Compliance Section, Early Start Branch, at (951) 374-0174, or by email at Nathaniel.Taleon@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

MARICRIS ACON
Deputy Director
Children, Adolescents, and Young Adult Services Division

Enclosure

cc: Tracey Mensch, Board President
Kristine Khuu, KRC
Lulu Calvillo, KRC

**EARLY START MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY
KERN REGIONAL CENTER**

DATE OF REVIEW: MAY 3, 2024 – JUNE 17, 2024
FINAL REPORT DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2024

ITEMS AT 100% COMPLIANCE				
REQUIREMENT		RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE
R1	Obtained written parental consent for evaluation/assessment. 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 303.321(a) and 303.420(a)(2)	35	35	100%
R2	Initial evaluation determined the infant's or toddler's level of functioning in all developmental domains, including hearing, vision, and health. 34 CFR, Sections 303.21, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, California Early Intervention Services Act (CEISA) Section 95014	35	35	100%
R4	Written notice of the IFSP meeting. 34 CFR, Section 303.342(d)(2)	35	35	100%
R6	Timely provision of services. 34 CFR, Sections 303.344(f)(1) and 340.420(b)(2) Title 17, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 52109(b)	35	35	100%
R8	Early intervention services are provided in the natural environment or the IFSP contains an appropriate justification when services are not provided in a natural environment. 34 CFR, Sections 303.26, 303.126 and 303.344(d)(1)(ii)	35	35	100%
T1	The IFSP included timely transition steps and services. 34 CFR, Sections 303.209(d) & (e) and 303.344(h)	34	34	100%
T3	Transition Conference occurred in a timely manner and the LEA was invited to the transition meeting. 34 CFR, Section 303.209(c)(1)	34	34	100%

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KERN REGIONAL CENTER**

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CLEARED FINDINGS

Findings cleared prior to the issuance of the report. No further action is required.

REQUIREMENT		ORIGINAL RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	ORIGINAL COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE	SUBSEQUENT RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL SUBSEQUENT RECORDS REVIEWED	SUBSEQUENT COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE
R5	IFSP meeting was conducted within the 45-day timeline. 34 CFR, Sections 303.310 and 303.342(a)	32	35	91.43%	■	■	100%
R7	The IFSP included the frequency and length for all early intervention services. 34 CFR, Section 303.344(d)(1)(i)	34	35	97.14%	■	■	100%
T2	Timely referral to Local Educational Agency (LEA). 34 CFR, Sections 303.209(b) and 303.401(d)	33	34	97.06%	■	■	100%

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NONCOMPLIANCE

Kern Regional Center must clear findings on both the child-specific and systemic levels. Systemic level findings must be cleared as soon as possible but no later than one year from the final report date. **A Plan of Correction and subsequent review are required to clear these items.**

REQUIREMENT		RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE	PRONG 1 (CHILD-SPECIFIC)	PRONG 2 (SYSTEMIC)
					OUTSTANDING	OUTSTANDING
R3	Initial assessment for service planning identified unique strengths and service needs in all five developmental domains, including hearing, vision, and health, prior to the initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). 34 CFR, Sections 303.21, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, CEISA Section 95014	32	35	91.43%		X
O1	IFSP includes services necessary to meet needs of child & family. 34 CFR, Sections 303.344(d)(1) and (e)	30	35	85.71%		X
O3	Parental consent was obtained prior to the provision of services. 34 CFR, Section 303.342(e)	32	35	91.43%		X
T-O3	Parental consent was obtained prior to the provision of services. 34 CFR, Section 303.342(e)	33	34	97.06%		X

Key:

R – “Regular” corresponds to the Regular Review Tool item, followed by the number of the Regular Review Tool item (ex.- R1 refers to the Regular Review Tool item number 1).

T – “Transition” corresponds to the Transition Review Tool item, followed by the number of the Transition Review Tool item (ex.- T3 refers to the Transition Review Tool item number 3).

O – “Other” refers to an additional finding, not included in the Regular or Transition review tools.

EARLY START MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY KERN REGIONAL CENTER

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering what is outlined above, DDS recommends KRC to align practices/procedures related to:

- Timely initial assessments,
- IFSP includes services necessary to meet needs of child & family; and,
- Written consent prior to the provision of services

For further information, DDS encourages KRC to further review available technical assistance resources related to the IFSP. These resources include but are not limited to:

- Early Start Service Coordinator's Handbook: <https://earlystartneighborhood.org/resources/resources-for-early-start-personnel/service-coordination-handbook/>
- IFSP resources through the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center: <https://ectacenter.org/topics/ifsp/ifspprocess.asp>
- Educational and Developmental Intervention Services – IFSP Process Guidance Handbook: <https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/EDISIFSPProcessGuidanceHandbook.pdf>