

Department of Developmental Services
UPDATE REGARDING SB 138 INITIATIVES
January 2025

This document provides the Master Plan for Developmental Services' Committee and its workgroups with an update on implementation of the 2023 Developmental Services Budget Trailer Bill, [Senate Bill 138](#) (Chapter 192, Statutes of 2023). That law has several topics. After each bolded topic below, there is a description of the law's requirements, and an update on the work being done to meet that requirement. This document intentionally is written to be easily understood. The actual law is the most accurate description of the law's requirements.

1. Generic and Common Regional Center Services

WIC [4435.2](#) tells the Department of Developmental Services (Department) to:

- a. Provide a definition of generic services, identify barriers to individuals using generic services, describe what regional centers do to help people get generic services, and identify ways to help more. This must be done by July 1, 2025 with community input.
- b. Review whether the new electronic records management system can track generic services that individuals use.
- c. Do an evaluation of the regional center services individuals most often use, and find out if they all are available across the state. Make recommendations for making their availability more equal.
- d. An update must be provided to the Legislature by January 10, 2025.

Update:

- The law says an individual has to try to use generic services before the regional center can provide funding for services from a regional center vendor or service provider. The difficulty in obtaining generic services can be a barrier to some individuals getting needed supports.
- The Department will provide a definition for generic services. Generally, generic services are services that are provided by another public agency that should be available to anyone who qualifies for them. Some examples are school, health, dental, housing, behavioral health, and in-home supportive services.
- The generic services and common regional center services identified in this work will be used to inform the design of the State's new electronic case management system.
- The evaluation of common regional center services will be done when some important changes have been made. For example, rate reform will make it easier to understand what kinds of services are being provided. The provider directory will give us information about service providers, their capacities, and geographic availability. The evaluation will take at least one year to complete because it depends on the availability of this information. The Department

will continue to provide updates as it becomes more clear when the evaluation will be completed.

- The Legislature meets quarterly with the Department, and received this update verbally at the most recent December 2024 meeting. The Legislature also is receiving a copy of this written document.

2. Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data Definitions

WIC [4435.1\(b\)](#) tells the Department to:

- a. Create a standard definitions and individual choices for race, ethnicity and language so that our data can be more useful.
- b. All regional centers must use these new definitions and individual choices to record data beginning January 1, 2025.

Update:

- After a lot of research, work with the community and other state departments, and a month-long public comment period, standard definitions and individual choices were established on July 1, 2024, for the following things:
[Updated Requirements for Collecting Race, Ethnicity, and Language Data](#)
 - [Enclosure A - Race and Ethnicity](#)
 - [Enclosure B - Preferred Language](#)
 - [Enclosure C - Name, Pronouns, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#)
 - [Enclosure D - Residence Codes](#)
 - [Enclosure E - Status Codes](#)
- Creating common data definitions is an important step to improve our understanding of individuals, and allowing individuals to identify and see themselves in the information that is collected.
- Over 400 regional center staff have been trained so they will be ready to use the new data categories beginning January 1, 2025. They also are training other staff at each regional center.
- These changes have been programmed into the regional center case management systems.
- These changes comply with recently updated federal reporting requirements, and with state laws.

3. Respite Assessment Template and Processes

WIC [4435.1\(c\)](#) tells the Department to:

- a. Create one way for all regional centers to review an individual's need for respite services. This must be done by June 30, 2025.
- b. All regional centers must begin using the new way on January 1, 2026.

Update:

- Respite services are intended to give a break to people who take care of someone else.
- To provide respite services more consistently across the State, a tool is being created that will be used by all regional centers to figure out an individual and family's need for respite services.
- This tool also will be used to figure out how much day care and personal assistance an individual may need. These services are being added because they are similar to respite, although they have different purposes.
- A single tool used consistently across the State will make it easier for individuals and families to provide information, and understand the amount of their services.
- A draft version of the tool will be provided for the public to comment about in early 2025.
- The tool and instructions for how to use it should be finalized by June 30, 2025 so regional centers can be trained to use it beginning January 1, 2026.

4. Intake Processes

WIC [4435.1\(f\)](#) and WIC [4642\(a\)](#) tell the Department to:

- a. Create one way for individuals to find out if they are eligible for regional center services. This must be done by January 1, 2025.
- b. All regional centers must report how many individuals went through the process and how long it took them. This begins June 30, 2025 and must be done every three months.
- c. The new electronic records management system must be able to include certain information about these individuals.

Update:

- There are many different reasons people contact a regional center to find out if they are eligible for services. Today, each regional center has its own process for working with individuals and families to determine eligibility. This process is called intake and assessment.
- The intake and assessment requirements for Early Start services (ages 0-3) and Lanterman Act services (ages 3 and older) are different, so they need to be reviewed and planned separately.
- To make the experience of applying for regional center services easier to understand, the law requires one process that all regional centers will use. This will help make access to regional center services more consistent across the State, and provide a consistent experience for individuals and families.
- The law's deadline of January 1, 2025 will not be met. The intake and assessment process is complex, and it is important to get it right by working with everyone. The work on changes to the intake process is being done in stages.
- Beginning in 2025, community input will be requested in public meetings, focus groups, testing groups, and perhaps through surveys.

- This is expected to take at least one more year. A better idea of the timeline will be known after some of the community input in 2025.

5. Vendorization Procedures

WIC [4435.1\(e\)](#) tells the Department to:

- a. Create one way for new service providers to become vendors of the regional centers. This must be defined by June 30, 2025.
- b. All regional centers must use the new way beginning January 1, 2026. They must provide an updated list of their service providers every 3 months.

Update:

- Having one way to become a vendor of a regional center can make it easier to get more service providers and make the approval process easier for them.
- Having more service providers available should help individuals get support sooner and have provide more choices in their services.
- Participant-Directed Social Recreation and Camp, and Coordinated Career Pathways, are new services. For these services, regional centers must approve new service providers in the same way. These requirements can serve as a model for approval of all vendors.
- The Department is working closely with regional centers and the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) to create one way that all regional centers will use.
- The statewide [Provider Directory](#) will be the single list of available service providers, after its development is complete. See the link for more information.

6. IPP Template and Procedures

WIC [4435.1\(d\)](#) tells the Department to:

- a. Create one way to make an individual program plan (IPP) and provide directions. This must be done by June 30, 2024.
- b. All regional centers must use the new IPP beginning January 1, 2025.
- c. The new electronic records management system must be able to include information from the IPP.

Update:

- The Department started working on this in 2022 with the Regional Center Performance Measures workgroup. The workgroup recommended having one way to do an IPP and making it more person-centered.
- After a lot of community engagement, the new IPP template and an instruction guide was released on June 28, 2024:
[Standardized Individual Program Plan Template and Procedures](#)
 - [Enclosure A – Individual Program Plan Template](#)
 - [Enclosure B – Individual Program Plan Agreement and Signature Form \(latest\)](#)

- [Enclosure C – Individual Program Plan Guide for Regional Centers \(latest\)](#)
- All regional centers were trained to use the new IPP during the Summer of 2024.
- A guide for adults, called Your Plan, was created. This optional guide can be used to prepare for an IPP meeting. It will be available in 11 languages, on the “Your Plan” section of this [webpage](#).
- Additional versions, called “Your Child’s Plan” for families with children ages 3-13 and “Your Youth’s Plan” for young adults ages 14-22 and their families are available on the same [webpage](#). These guides also are being translated into 11 languages.
- Family Resource Centers and community-based organizations were trained, and public meetings were held, in December 2024. Community education will continue into 2025.