

October 31, 2025

D-2025-Legislation-003

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS
REGIONAL CENTER BOARD PRESIDENTS

SUBJECT: 2025 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

This directive provides a summary of the legislation signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2025 that may affect regional centers, services, and/or the Department of Developmental Services. Unless otherwise specified, the changes will take effect on January 1, 2026.

- [AB 91 \(Harabedian\) State and Local Agencies: Demographic Data](#)
- [AB 251 \(Kalra\) Elders and Dependent Adults: Abuse or Neglect](#)
- [AB 341 \(Arambula\) Oral Health for People with Disabilities Technical Assistance Center Program](#)
- [AB 815 \(Ortega\) Vehicle Insurance: Vehicle Classification](#)
- [AB 951 \(Ta\) Health Care Coverage: Behavioral Diagnoses](#)
- [AB 992 \(Irwin\) Peace Officers](#)
- [AB 1076 \(Addis\) Qualified ABLE Program: CalABLE Accounts: Funding](#)
- [AB 1172 \(Nguyen\) Adult Day Programs: Administration of Intranasal Emergency Antiseizure Medications](#)
- [AB 1318 \(Bonta\) Public Social Services: Tax-Exempt Nonprofit Organizations](#)
- [AB 1412 \(J. Gonzalez\) Special Education: Pupil Transfers: Residency Requirements: Records](#)
- [SB 258 \(Wahab\) Crimes: Rape](#)
- [SB 470 \(Laird\) Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: Teleconferencing](#)
- [SB 471 \(Menjivar\) Office of the Developmental Services Ombudsperson](#)

AB 91 (Harabedian)

AB 91, starting January 1, 2028, would require state and local agencies that collect demographic data as to the ancestry or ethnic origin of Californians to use separate collection categories and tabulations for major Middle Eastern or North African groups. This bill also requires those agencies to disclose the aggregate data they collect, and prevents those agencies from disclosing personal identifying information about individuals whose demographic information is collected.

Status: Chapter 357, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2028.

Implementation: There is no direct impact on regional centers. Most requirements already are included in the data categories established in the July 2024 [directive](#), and the remainder will be added to SANDIS and required data collections by January 2028.

AB 251 (Kalra)

AB 251 authorizes a court under specified circumstances, to reduce the standard of proof required to establish abuse, abandonment, or neglect of an elder or dependent adult in a civil action from clear and convincing evidence to preponderance of the evidence, when the defendant has engaged in spoliation of evidence substantiating the abuse. This applies to claims brought against residential care facilities for the elderly, adult community care facilities, or skilled nursing facilities.

Status: Chapter 433, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: This legislation is included in this letter for informational purposes. It reduces the standard of proof for elder and dependent adult abuse in civil court actions under certain limited circumstances in which evidence may have been spoiled by a defendant residential care facility for the elderly, an adult community care facility, or a skilled nursing facility.

AB 341 (Arambula)

AB 341 requires the Department, if funding is provided by the Legislature, to contract with a public or private California dental school or college to administer the Oral Health for People with Disabilities Technical Assistance Center Program. The contractor may partner with another dental school or college. The goal of the program is to improve dental care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by reducing or eliminating the need for sedation and general anesthesia during treatment.

- This bill will take effect if funded by the Legislature, and the contract will end on June 30, 2032.
- The selected school or partnership must meet specific criteria and collaborate with the Department to engage regional centers.
- The Department must submit an annual report to the Legislature and provide guidance and develop protocols to support the program.

Status: Chapter 612, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: The 2025 Budget Act did not include funding for this purpose. The Department is seeking to expand access to dental services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by consulting with experts in the field of dentistry and existing regional center dental coordinators to identify opportunities to develop and implement a unified program model, increase provider capacity and establish effective care pathways.

AB 815 (Ortega)

AB 815 prohibits a motor vehicle insured under a policy of automobile liability insurance from being classified as a common carrier, commercial vehicle, for-hire vehicle, permissive use vehicle or livery, solely for the reason that the policyholder uses the vehicle for public social services or social service transportation.

Status: Chapter 713, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation – AB 815 will prevent insurance companies from labeling social services professionals as commercial drivers. It helps protect the ability of these professionals, which include employees of regional center-funded transportation services providers, to provide transportation services when needed.

AB 951 (Ta)

AB 951 prohibits any health care service plan contract or health insurance policy issued, amended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2026, from requiring an enrollee or insured individual with a prior diagnosis of pervasive developmental disorder (PDD) or autism to undergo a new diagnosis in order to continue receiving coverage for behavioral health treatment (BHT).

Status: Chapter 84, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: This new law allows people with these diagnoses to continue BHT through their health care service plan contract or health insurance policy. This may reduce the need for regional centers to cover BHT as the payor of last resort, as health plans will no longer be permitted to deny coverage due to failure to reestablish eligibility for BHT under autism or PDD. Regional centers should communicate this change in policy to individuals served and their families.

AB 992 (Irwin)

AB 992 requires peace officers to obtain an associate's degree, bachelor's degree, modern policing degree, or professional policing certificate within 36 months of receiving their basic certificate from the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

- Peace officers hired by the Department after January 1, 2031, must earn specified degrees or certificates within 36 months of receiving their basic POST certificate.
- Exemptions apply to:
 - Officers with at least 8 years of experience as a sworn peace officer or with military service in the United States Armed Forces.
 - Peace officers employed by the State Department of State Hospitals.
 - Peace officers who as of December 31, 2030, are enrolled in a basic academy or employed as a peace officer by a public entity in California.

Status: Chapter 175, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: There is no impact on regional centers. The requirement applies to peace officers beginning January 1, 2031. This requirement applies to the Department's Protective Services Branch.

AB 1076 (Addis)

AB 1076 authorizes the California ABLE Act Board to receive funding from grants, gifts, legislative appropriations, and other contributions from philanthropic organizations. The bill also authorizes the CalABLE Act Board to use these funds to encourage participation in the CalABLE program through public outreach and education. In addition, it requires the Franchise Tax Board to give taxpayers the option to deposit part of their refund directly into a CalABLE account.

Status: Chapter 722, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation:

AB 1076 strengthens the financial security of individuals with disabilities by expanding contribution options and increasing awareness of the CalABLE program.

AB 1172 (Nguyen)

AB 1172 establishes a framework to allow licensed adult day programs or adult residential facilities (ARF) to authorize a trained administrator or authorized volunteer to administer intranasal emergency antiseizure medication to individuals diagnosed with seizures or epilepsy during a seizure emergency. This authorization is a voluntary option for each service provider.

By January 1, 2028, the State Department of Social Services (CDSS) must establish minimum training standards and identify appropriate entities to provide training. The bill also requires licensees who choose to serve people who have a prescription for intranasal emergency antiseizure medication to have a seizure action plan for the individual, that includes written authorization for nonmedical staff to administer medication as well as procedures for situations when trained personnel are not available. Facilities also must inform volunteers about their rights and liability protections. Volunteers and trainers who act in good faith are protected from legal liability.

Status: Chapter 448, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: *The Department will issue guidance to regional centers after CDSS establishes minimum training standards and identifies approved training entities by January 1, 2028. The Department will collaborate with CDSS to develop training standards and support linkages to regional centers and providers, to the extent appropriate. Once available in 2028, regional centers and service providers must review and update policies, procedures, publications, and other materials as needed to reflect this new law.*

AB 1318 (Bonta)

AB 1318 expands the definition of a "qualified nonprofit organization" for administering services to refugees and undocumented individuals, as well as for the administration of the Rapid Response Program and the Enhanced Services for Asylees and Vulnerable Noncitizens (ESAVN) program. The bill allows contracts or grants to be awarded to nonprofits with either state tax-exempt status or federal 501(c)(3) status.

Status: Chapter 451, Statutes of 2025. AB 1318 included an urgency clause and took effect immediately.

Implementation: *This bill could impact regional centers if the federal administration were to change their tax-exempt status. If private nonprofit organizations that receive state or local grants and contracts lost their federal tax-exempt status, the expanded definition would allow organizations to qualify for tax-exempt status under state and local laws and thus maintain their ability to receive contracts or grants for the purposes described above.*

AB 1412 (J. Gonzalez)

AB 1412 requires local educational agencies, within 30 days of receiving a student's official records or specified unofficial records, to either adopt and implement the individualized education program (IEP) or develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP in accordance with federal and state law.

Status: Chapter 453, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: This bill improves educational continuity for students with disabilities transferring into California schools, including those from military families, by establishing faster records transfer procedures and requiring timely implementation of IEPs.

SB 258 (Wahab)

SB 258 removes the spousal exception from the definition of rape in California law, thereby making it a crime of rape to have non-consensual sex with a spouse if that spouse cannot legally consent due to a mental disorder, developmental, or physical disability. The bill also declares that a person with a developmental, mental health, or physical disability shall not be presumed to be unable to give legal consent to sexual intercourse due to that disability.

Status: Chapter 599, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: This legislation is included in this letter for informational purposes.

SB 470 (Laird)

SB 470 extends the existing provisions of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act (Act), from January 1, 2026, to January 1, 2030. The Act specifies the rules for public meetings held by state entities and includes requirements for teleconferencing and remote participation.

Status: Chapter 222, Statutes of 2025. Effective January 1, 2026.

Implementation: This bill does not affect regional centers or service providers. However, it extends the existing Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act provisions that apply to the Office of Administrative Hearings Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to the Department and the Office of Administrative Hearings about the Lanterman Act eligibility and services appeal process. Under this bill committee members would continue to have the option to participate in meetings remotely, rather than losing that flexibility. The bill also affects the State Council on Developmental Disabilities and its Local Office Regional Advisory Committees.

SB 471 (Menjivar)

SB 471 provides statutory authority supporting the existing independent and autonomous Office of the Developmental Services Ombudsperson within the Department. This bill defines the Office's duties, which include sharing information, providing training and technical assistance, and receiving and investigating complaints made by or on behalf of individuals served by a regional center. The Office of the Ombudsperson is authorized to access and inspect facilities, records, and individuals served under the jurisdiction of state

or local agencies, regional centers, contractors, vendors, or licensed residential facilities at any time to perform its official duties. It also authorizes the Office to assist people seeking eligibility for and/or receiving services from, all Department programs including Self-Determination Program, the California Early Intervention Services Act (known as Early Start), and the Lanterman Act. It further provides statutory confidentiality for individuals who contact the Office, consistent with confidentiality protections authorized for other state government ombudsperson offices.

Status: Chapter 223, Statutes of 2025. SB 471 included an urgency clause and took effect immediately.

Implementation: The provisions of the bill became effective on October 1, 2025. The Ombudsperson and its staff have operated since December 2022, and now has clear statutory authority for its functions and the confidentiality of people contacting the Office.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

PETE CERVINKA
Director

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