

November 14, 2025

D-2025-Regional Center Operations-004

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: PROVIDER DIRECTORY - STANDARDIZED VENDORIZATION

This directive establishes a more uniform and consistent statewide vendorization process, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) section [4435.1](#). This letter provides guidance to regional centers for the new standardized vendorization procedures, which are mandatory for all regional centers.

Background

The [Provider Directory](#) (Directory) was launched on October 29, 2024, as a centralized online directory for vendor data. The Directory's capabilities will be expanded and enhanced over time. Today, service providers and regional centers utilize the Directory to review, validate, and approve vendor data changes. The next phase of the Directory introduces enhanced capabilities and system integrations to support a standardized vendorization process. This new process is designed to reduce variability in how providers are vendored across regional centers, while increasing efficiency and transparency.

Stages of Vendorization and Processing Time Requirements

The standardized vendorization process consists of four stages: (1) Profile, (2) Requirements, (3) Submission, and (4) Decision. Each stage includes key expectations, and has specific processing time requirements for regional centers, with three distinct deadlines as illustrated on the [Vendorization Steps & Processing Time Requirements](#) document. Applicants for vendorization are subject to one processing time requirement, applicable only when additional documentation is requested. All timelines are measured in calendar days.

All document submission between the applicant and the regional center must take place in the Directory. The Directory can also be used for ongoing communication. The Directory system supports deadline tracking through automated notifications.

Standardized Vendorization Practices

In accordance with [Title 17](#) of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) and the [1915\(c\) HCBS-DD waiver](#), any applicant for vendorization who meets the required qualifications for a service is eligible to be vendored for that service(s). Regional centers may not impose practices that create barriers or time windows that restrict when or for what services applicants for vendorization may apply.

Regional centers are required to vendor any applicant who meets all requirements for providing supports within the regional center's catchment area. Lack of need for a service or absence of current referrals for a service are not a valid basis for denial of vendorization. However, pursuant to Title 17 of the CCR section [54322\(d\)\(10\)](#), vendorization does not guarantee that individuals will be referred or placed with a vendored provider.

User Regional Center

All regional centers have direct access within the Directory to vendor data and documents submitted through the vendorization process. A user regional center may initiate a request to the vendoring regional center in the Directory to utilize an existing provider. The vendoring regional center will then upload any additional required documents related to the vendorization. Once the request to use a vendor is complete, all parties are notified through the Directory. This request enables the user regional center to collect and review relevant documentation prior to using the provider. Guidance on user vendorization can be found on the Department's [vendorization webpage](#).

Website and Email Requirements

Regional centers shall create and maintain a "How to Become a Service Provider" webpage within the Service Provider section of their websites, and include a link to the Department's [vendorization webpage](#). The attached template must be used by regional centers when creating the webpage. Regional center websites must reflect this update within 30 days from the date of this directive.

Each regional center has established a vendorization email address, using this format: [vendorization@\[regionalcenter\]](#). This email address will be utilized by the Directory for notifications and is intended to standardize the applicant's expectation of how to communicate with regional centers about vendorization.

New Vendorizations

Beginning December 3, 2025, vendorizations may be completed in the Directory. Effective March 1, 2026, all new vendorizations must transition into and be completed within the Directory. Regional centers are strongly encouraged to begin using the Directory for vendorizations as soon as possible, even if initially for a smaller subset of vendorization applicants. After March 1, 2026, the process for loading new vendorizations into the Provider Directory, as described in the Rate Reform Directive ([D-2025-Rate Reform-005](#)), will end.

Purchase Reimbursement (Service Code 024) vendorization applications may continue to be submitted manually through June 30, 2026; and effective on and after July 1, 2026, shall be completed in the Provider Directory.

Existing Vendors

Existing vendorizations that were vendored outside the Directory will complete a process to bring their vendorization data and documents into the Directory. The process and deadline to complete this data and document migration will be established later.

Reporting Requirements for Quality Incentive Program (QIP)

Regional centers must document Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) and Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) compliance, as applicable, during the vendorization process. These compliance indicators do not influence the vendorization decision and instead may inform future eligibility determinations for the [Quality Incentive Program](#) (QIP). Additional details and information about provider requirements to participate in the QIP can be found in the Department's directive ([D-2025-Quality Incentive Program-015](#)).

Additionally, applicants are required to [report the languages served](#) as part of the vendorization process. The absence of language data does not constitute grounds for denial and must not delay or prevent vendorization.

Excluded from the Directory

Entities seeking to provide services through the Self-Determination Program (SDP) are excluded from the Directory, except for Financial Management Services (FMS) service codes 315-317.

Emergency vendorizations are completed outside the Directory. However, providers must complete the vendorization process in the Directory within 30 days of emergency approval and authorization by the vendoring regional center.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Regional centers will continue to manage their RFP processes for new service providers outside of the Directory. Once a provider is identified through an RFP, the provider is required to complete the vendorization process in the Directory to become a vendor.

Procedure Updates for Service Code 525

Vendorization applications for Social Recreation (Service Code 525) shall be completed in the Directory. The prior requirement for the Department to issue a rate letter is no longer applicable. Additionally, submission of Form DS 1897 (Community-Based Day Program Cost Statement) is no longer required.

Learn More

Additional information, guides, and FAQs may be found on the Department's [vendorization website](#).

Regional centers with questions related to standardized vendorization may contact the Department at vendorization@dds.ca.gov. Regional centers with technical support questions are encouraged to contact Directory support at providerdirectory@dds.ca.gov.

Applicant and existing service providers should direct questions to their regional center.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

DANA SIMON
Deputy Director
Waiver and Rates Division

Attachment

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