



## VENDORIZATION - GENERAL

**Q1. What is vendorization and what is its purpose?**

A1. Vendorization is the process for identification, selection, and utilization of service providers based on the qualifications and other requirements necessary in order to provide services to consumers. The vendorization process allows regional centers to verify, prior to the provision of services to consumers, that an applicant meets all of the requirements and standards specified in regulations. Applicants who meet the specified requirements and standards are assigned a unique vendor identification number and service code.

**Q2. Are service providers vendored by DDS or regional centers?**

A2. DDS does not vendor service providers. Service providers are vendored by the regional center in whose catchment area the service is located, known as the vendoring regional center. Although vendors are prohibited from being vendored by more than one regional center, a vendored service provider may be utilized by non-vendoring regional centers, known as “user” or “utilizing” regional centers, as well as the vendoring regional center. The vendor identification number assigned by the vendoring regional center must be used by all regional centers purchasing the vendored service (Title 17, Sections [54326\(a\)\(14\)](#) and [54340\(a\)](#)).

**Q3. What are the different roles of the Department and regional centers in vendoring service providers?**

A3. The vendoring regional center is responsible for ensuring that the applicant meets licensing and Title 17 requirements for vendorization, determining the appropriate vendor category for the service to be provided, and approving or disapproving vendorization based upon their review of the documentation submitted by the applicant. Although not involved in the vendorization process, the Department does establish rates for community-based day programs and respite agencies after completion of vendorization.

**Q4. What documentation do I need to submit to the regional center when requesting vendorization?**

A4. In addition to a Vendor Application (Form [DS 1890](#)), and the Applicant/Vendor Disclosure Statement (Form [DS 1891](#)), applicants must submit the documentation specified in Title 17, Section [54310](#). Contact your local [regional center](#) for a

vendorization package.

**Q5. If I meet all of the requirements, must a regional center vendor me?**

A5. A regional center must vendor an applicant who meets all the requirements for the service to be provided if the service is to be provided in that regional center's catchment area. While a program cannot be denied vendorization due to a perceived lack of need for the service by the vendoring regional center, vendorization in no way obligates that regional center to purchase service from that vendor. (Title 17, Section [54320](#)).

**Q6. Do I have to be vendored by each regional center that uses my service?**

A6. No. You must be vendored by the regional center in whose catchment area you are located only. Once vendored, any regional center may refer consumers to that program.

**Q7. How can I determine in which regional center's catchment area my program/service is located?**

A7. Location for site-based programs is determined based upon the address of the program site. For programs which are conducted solely in the community, location is determined based upon the vendor's business address. (Title 17, Section [54340](#)).

**Q8. Does my program have to be licensed?**

A8. Most site-based programs have to be licensed by the Departments of Social Services or Health Services (Title 17, Sections [54342](#), [56740](#), [56760\(a\)\(1\)](#)).

**Q9. Where do I find Day Care & Residential Facility licensing requirements?**

A9. Department of Social Services' licensing requirements may be found in [Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations](#). For Department of Public Health licensing requirements, call 916-445-2070.

**Q10. What is the importance of a vendor number or a service code?**

A10. The vendor number provides an identification number unique to each vendor. The service code identifies the type(s) of service provided by that vendor. The vendor number and service code are assigned for the purpose of identifying providers of a specific type(s) of service and allowing tracking of expenditures by vendor and/or service type.

**Q11. Are regional centers restricted to purchasing services from vendored service providers only? Are there exceptions?**

A11. Yes. Regional centers are prohibited from referring any consumer to an applicant until the vendor application is approved and cannot reimburse a vendor for services provided before vendorization. However, if the regional center determines that the health or safety of a consumer is in jeopardy, and no current vendor is available to provide the needed service, the regional center may approve emergency vendorization.

(Title 17, Sections [50612](#), [54324](#), [54326\(c\)\(4\)](#)).

**Q12. What is emergency vendorization?**

A12. Emergency vendorization allows a regional center to approve vendorization of an applicant prior to completion of the vendorization process if the regional center determines that the health or safety of a consumer is in jeopardy and no current vendor is available to provide the needed service. If emergency vendorization is approved, the applicant may provide services for no more than 45 days, after which the emergency vendorization will lapse if the regional center does not approve vendorization within 45 days of the initial authorization. If a lapse of emergency vendorization occurs, the vendor will not be allowed to reapply for emergency vendorization. (Title 17, Section [54324](#)).

**Q13. If I move my program within the same regional center catchment area, what must I do?**

A13. You must notify the vendoring regional center, in writing, at least 30 days prior to the change in location. Keep in mind that the new location must be licensed before being used, so this must be figured into your timeframes. (Title 17, Section [54330](#)).

**Q14. Can State employees or regional center employees be vendored to provide services to regional center consumers?**

A14. Officers or employees of the State of California and regional center employees may not be vendored to provide services to consumers. (Title 17, Sections [54314](#), [54500](#), [54505](#), [54510](#), [54511](#), [54512](#), [54520](#), [54521](#), [54522](#), [54523](#), [54524](#), [54525](#)).

**Q15. If I open a new/additional location(s), do I have to submit a new vendor application and request a new rate for the new program(s)?**

A15. Yes. Each location must be separately licensed and vendored and a new rate must be established for the new/additional location(s). (Title 17, Sections [54340\(a\)\(1\)\(A\)](#), [54302](#), [54306](#), [54308](#), [54310](#), [54312](#), [54314](#), [54316](#), [54318](#), [54319](#), [54320](#), [54322](#), [54324](#), [54326](#), [54327](#), [54327.1](#), [54327.2](#), [54330](#), [54332](#)).

**Q16. Can I contract out for some of my direct care services?**

A16. Yes, you may under certain circumstances. Any consultants, subcontractors or community resources must be identified on the vendor application submitted to the vendoring regional center. Subcontracting is allowed where the unique needs of a consumer can only be met by a licensed professional not available on program staff, and must be approved by the regional center. (Title 17, Sections [54310](#), [56710](#), [56756](#), [56772](#), [58524](#)).

**Q17. What appeal rights do I have?**

A17. A service provider may appeal the denial of vendorization by a regional center, and perceived non-compliance with the vendorization regulations by regional centers, or the setting of a rate by the Department. There are also appeal provisions for audits.

It is probably best to refer to regulations for the specifics of each type of appeal. (Title 17, Sections: Vendorization appeals, [54380](#), [54382](#), [54384](#), [54386](#), [54388](#), [54390](#); Rate appeals, [57940](#), [57941](#), [57942](#), [57944](#), [57946](#), [57948](#); Audit appeals, [50730](#), [50731](#), [50732](#), [50750](#), [50751](#), [50752](#), [50753](#), [50754](#), [50755](#)).

**Q18. What is the relationship between Provider Directory and Standardized Vendorization?**

A18. Provider Directory is an online portal that enables applicants to apply for vendorization through the standardized vendorization process. This is an enhancement to Provider Directory being implemented to meet time-sensitive, business needs and enhance the applicant experience. Additional features and capabilities will be introduced in future enhancement releases.

**Q19. What is a case?**

A19. A case is used to document and manage an applicant's request for vendorization. It enables regional center staff to track all related activities and communications throughout the vendorization process. A case remains open until either party closes the case, applicant does not meet requirements or vendorization decision has been made.

**Q20. Can anyone apply to become a vendor, or must it be in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP)?**

A20. In accordance with [Title 17, Section 54320](#), an applicant that meets the requirements of the service can apply for vendorization and it does not need to be in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP). A regional center must vendor an applicant who meets all the requirements for the service to be provided in the regional center's catchment area.

**Q21. When can an applicant apply for vendorization?**

A21. Beginning December 3, 2025, the application process for vendorization is fully online and available 24/7, however mandatory implementation of the Provider Directory for all new vendorizations will be effective March 1, 2026. See directive for exceptions. During this implementation window, check with your vendoring regional center if you can begin the process in the Provider Directory.

**Q22. How does an applicant submit their required documents?**

A22. An applicant can upload documents to the case at any point in the vendorization process in which documents are requested. In the Submission stage, the applicant will receive a customized checklist of documents that must be submitted to support the application. The Provider Directory offers help tips throughout the process. The step-by-step guide provides specificity on where and how to submit documents.

**Q23. How will new applicants know where to start the vendorization process?**

A23. The steps to Become a Service Provider will be on the Department of Developmental Services' website in the Vendor/Provider Information page and on each

regional center website under “How to Become a Service Provider” webpage.

**Q24. Will the vendorization packet be standardized across all regional centers?**

A24. To establish a more consistent vendorization process, a standardized list of documents will be used. For each application, the vendoring regional center will identify and select all applicable documents based on the service being requested. The finalized list will then be shared with the applicant within the case.

**Q25. How will applicants know where they are in the vendorization process?**

A25. Progress is tracked in the system and represented visually. The standardized vendorization process is defined by four stages. Once the applicant creates or accesses a Provider Directory profile and creates a case, the remaining three stages are represented visually within the case, enabling applicant and regional center to track their respective statuses in the vendorization process.

**Q26. During the application process, what is the preferred method of communication?**

A26. During the application process, applicants and regional center staff can communicate within the case in the Provider Directory. Both parties can post and view comments and attachments in the activity stream, providing maximum visibility and traceability.

**Q27. Will providers be able to view all communications and notifications within the Provider Directory?**

A27. Each application submitted creates a case. The applicant and the vendoring regional center can view, communicate and exchange information within the case. Notifications are delivered to the applicant by email and saved to the case. However, applicants cannot view emails within the case, only regional center users.

**Q28. Is the checklist generated during the Requirement stage customized by service code?**

A28. No. At implementation, there is no validation or automation by service code.

**Q29. Can a provider cancel their application?**

A29. Yes, providers can cancel their application at any time, which will close their case.

**Q30 If the applicant is not the authorized signer, how can the signer receive and e-sign the required digital documents?**

A30. Applicants may designate a third party for e-signature. They must provide the regional center with the signatory's email address.

**Q31. What happens to the vendorization documents that are submitted during the application process?**

A31. For applications that are approved, the documents will be applied to the vendor record and will be accessible by the service provider and all regional center staff. For applications that are denied, the record closes and the documents remain with the closed record.

**Q32. Does vendorization guarantee referrals or service authorization?**

A32. In accordance with [Title 17, section 54322](#), vendorization does not guarantee that individuals will be placed or referred to the vendor by the regional center.

**Q33. What vendorization scenarios are excluded from the standardized vendorization intake process in the Provider Directory?**

A33. Apart from FMS service codes (315-317), all Self-Determination Program (SDP) service codes are excluded from Provider Directory.

**Q34. Can providers reuse previously submitted documents when applying to multiple regional centers?**

A34. As applicable, yes, an applicant can download a document from a vendor record or case and submit to a new application. However, submission of the vendor application (DS 1890) and applicant/vendor disclosure statement (DS 1891) cannot be reused. They are generated within the case and unique to each application.

**Q35. What are the processing time requirements for regional centers during the vendorization process?**

A35. Regional centers are subject to three separate processing time requirements. They have 15 calendar days to respond to the applicant in the Requirements stage, 30 calendar days in the Submission stage, and 45 calendar days in the Decision stage.

**Q36. What is an "applicant" in the standardized vendorization process within the Provider Directory?**

A36. An applicant is the person that submits the vendorization application. It may or may not be the applicant/vendor or authorized representative that signs the vendor application form (DS 1890) and applicant/vendor disclosure statement (DS 1891).

**Q37. What happens if a provider uploads a blank or incorrect document during the Requirement stage?**

A37. If a document is blank, incorrect, or missing, the regional center will contact the applicant and request the correct document. The applicant will upload the requested document using Provider Directory communication tools (e.g., notifications, emails).

**Q38. Does the 45-day review window reset after each provider revision, or does it pause and resume?**

A38. No. In the Decision stage, which has a 45-day processing time requirement, the clock does not pause or reset.

**Q39. What information is collected in the Requirements stage?**

A39. During the Requirements stage, the applicant will provide information about the business (e.g., name, service and mailing address), the type of service to be provided, and licenses and certifications, if applicable, for the service for which they are applying. Requirements stage is intended to assess whether the applicant meets the minimum requirements to proceed with a full application.

**Q40. Can letters generated by the Provider Directory, such as approval and denial letters, be sent in languages other than English?**

A40. No. Currently, letters generated by the Provider Directory are only in English.

**Q41. Is there a processing time requirement between the Requirements stage approval and the applicant's submission of requested documents and how may the time be used?**

A41. No. There are no processing time requirements for either the applicant or the regional center during this period. Regional centers can use this time to help applicants prepare for a successful submission of documents, including the program design. This could be facilitated in several ways, including interviews, orientations and working sessions for complex requirements such as program designs.

**Q42. How long will comments and attachments be accessible in a case?**

A42. Storage of comments and attachments in the case will comply with DDS retention policies.

**Q43. Is the Letter of Intent (LOI) process eliminated from the vendorization process?**

A43. Yes, letter of intent (LOI) proposals are eliminated in the standardized vendorization process. Instead, introductory information about the applicant and the service they would like to provide are captured in the Requirements stage.

**Q44. Will vendors be allowed to apply for multiple services or office locations at once?**

A44. Applicants with at least one approved vendorization, in other words, they are an approved service provider with a record in Provider Directory, will be able to submit multiple applications at once. Applicants that are applying for vendorization for the first time must complete one approved vendorization before being able to submit additional applications.

**Q45. Does the standardized vendorization process and timelines include rate entry and contract completion?**

A45. No. Assigning a rate, as well as contract completion, is outside the processing time requirements in Provider Directory. Approved applicants/providers should not bill until the Regional Center approves an effective date to start services.

**Q46. Will the vendor application (Form-DS 1890) be available in languages other than English?**

A46. Currently, e-sign documents that are system generated during the application process will only be available in English.

**Q47. What is the definition of a service address?**

A47. For site-based services, your service address is the location where you provide your service. For non-site-based services, your service address is your primary office or operating location within the regional center's catchment area.

**Q48. Can someone with a role of Provider Directory Admin or Provider Directory Change Requestor see any pending vendorization requests that are in progress?**

A48. No, in progress applications are only accessible by the user who created the application. It can be sent to other, multiple users for signature, however. Once vendored, all vendorizations under the "Parent Organization" are visible to any users assigned a role, Provider Directory Admin, Provider Directory Change Requestor or Provider Directory Read Only.

**Q49. After vendorization, how are changes to applicant/vendor disclosure form (DS 1891) managed?**

A49. At implementation, the Directory is unable to generate a new or updated DS 1891 after vendorization. It is recommended that a paper or e-sign version is completed, signed, scanned and sent to the regional center.

**Q50. How does the Provider Directory handle timing when an applicant delays their response or submission?**

A50. At implementation, there are no automated actions when an applicant exceeds their processing time requirement. If an applicant is missing information or documents in the Submission stage, the system will send them a notification, when triggered by the regional center. The system will send an email reminder to the applicant 2 calendar days before the processing time expires. If the applicant does not respond within the processing time window, the regional center is empowered to close the case.

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