

Date March 16, 2026

C-2026-Reporting Requirements-001

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Case Management and Fiscal System Data Collection

This letter explains the importance of engaging in various data quality improvement initiatives. Collecting identifying information for individuals is the foundation for submitting, processing, and approving federal claims, as well as accurately reflecting the demographics and contact information of the people receiving regional center services.

Accurate data are necessary to correctly verify eligibility, maintain program integrity, communicate timely and effectively with individuals and families, and facilitate efficient fiscal management. The California Department of Developmental Services (Department), in partnership with regional centers, has started efforts to update and verify data contained within the case management and fiscal systems. The first phase of these efforts has focused on collecting and cleaning identifying information such as age, gender, date of birth, and Social Security number.

This identifying information allows California to secure and maximize federal matching funds for services provided to federally eligible people. These federal matching funds currently support approximately 37 percent of the developmental services budget for programs— a percentage intended to increase with these efforts. Engagement in data quality improvement efforts (more accurate and complete information) helps to promote the sustainability of California's unique entitlement to regional center services for individuals, as evidenced by the \$254 million in additional federal funding that allowed the Governor's proposed January budget to avoid budget cuts for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2026.

These data also are needed to validate and demonstrate the integrity of administered programs, in ways listed below.

- Verification of Program Eligibility Federal Requirement: Federal regulations require departments in California to collect identifying information to confirm federal eligibility and maximize federal reimbursements.
- Coordination of Benefits: Coordinating and prioritizing generic services for each person improves outcomes by using other supports first, preventing duplicated or conflicting services, and integrating health, education, and social supports. Maximizing the use of generic services also promotes compliance with state law through coordination of public benefits by correctly utilizing sources of other support,

such as K-12 special education, Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), first, for each individual.

- Program Integrity: The federal government uses identifying information to check for duplicate enrollment across different states to check that federal dollars are not paid twice for the same individual.
- Cost Recovery and Payer of Last Resort: Regional centers are the payer of last resort under California law ([WIC section 4659](#)) and collection of this information allows California to identify if an individual seeking or receiving regional center services has other private health insurance or Medicare. If other coverage is found after Medi-Cal has paid a claim, these identifiers may enable recovery of costs from the primarily responsible entity.
- Compliance with Federal Mandates: Accurate identity information helps ensure audit readiness. In January 2026, federal administrators (CMS) formally requested detailed information from California regarding its program integrity controls, specifically targeting how California verifies eligibility and prevents waste.

Additionally, valid and reliable address information helps improve communication with individuals and families, increase contact during emergency events, and improves the delivery and response rates of surveys such as the four National Core Indicator surveys.

The Department acknowledges the efforts required to gather this information and the caution and reluctance of some individuals and families have with respect to sharing it, particularly considering recent actions at the federal level. As part of this effort, our community should know and understand all information about them is stored and used securely in compliance with all state and federal privacy laws. Additional information about these protections can be found in the fact sheet on privacy protection. Improving data quality, for the reasons provided above, helps preserve the important programs available through regional centers.

We appreciate your partnership in efforts to correctly capture this information when it originates, and for the efforts to clean up our system's historical data.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by:*

Aaron Christian

Chief, Division of Population Risk, Quality Assurance, and Data Operations

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