

**Department of Developmental Services
Proposed Trailer Bill Legislation
Fiscal Year 2026-27**

**State-Operated Transitional and Rehabilitative Services
FACT SHEET**

Proposal:

The Department of Developmental Services (Department) proposes statutory changes to establish time limits on the length of stay at Canyon Springs Community Facility (CS) and for Porterville Developmental Center (PDC). See attachment for details of proposed changes to the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC).

Background:

CS is a state-operated facility licensed for 63 individuals and staffed to support an average of 56 individuals. As of December 2025, the facility's average census at CS was 34 individuals. Admissions to CS are permitted only through transfers from PDC under WIC section 6500(a)(1) court commitments, which are determined through clinical certification and judicial review. CS does not currently impose limits on lengths of stay, and transitions depend on a regional center's ability to identify or develop appropriate community resources. As of January 2026, individuals served at CS had an average stay of 4 years, ranging between 8 days to 19 years.

PDC is a state-operated secure treatment facility for 469 beds, with 99 beds in suspense and an average census of 166 individuals. Admissions to PDC occur under Penal Code section 1370.1 court commitments. After two years, individuals determined unrestorable and who continue to pose a danger to themselves, or others may be committed as a WIC section 6500(a)(1). As of December 2025, 72 individuals with WIC section 6500(a)(1) commitments resided at PDC, with an average stay of 5.5 years, ranging from 7 months to 26 years.

Justification for the Change:

The absence of time limits has led the developmental services system to rely on CS and PDC for long-term residential placements rather than prioritizing transitional and community-based options. As a result, some individuals remain in highly restrictive settings for extended periods, well beyond what is necessary for rehabilitation and transition.

A full continuum of care is essential to meet the needs of individuals with complex forensic backgrounds. The proposed changes will realign the purpose and programming of CS and PDC WIC section 6500(a)(1) placements with their intended roles as therapeutic and rehabilitative step-down settings. By establishing clear transition timelines and expectations, CS and PDC will function as transitional programs that provide the support, training, and preparation necessary for individuals to reintegrate successfully. This approach makes sure that people are safe, equipped, and stable for community living, while preventing the use of these facilities as long-term placement options.

Summary of Arguments in Support:

- Makes sure that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and forensic backgrounds are not placed at CS or PDC as long-term residents, which hinders successful community transitions.
- Preserves appropriate access to CS and PDC for therapeutic and rehabilitative interventions, while preventing extended stays in restrictive settings by requiring timely transition planning and pre-determined discharge timelines.

BCP or Estimate Issue # and Title: Local Assistance Estimate, State Operated Services, page K-4 – 5 and K-8 – 9

Details of Proposed Changes to the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC):

WIC Section 4462

- Removes outdated language requiring conservator consent for state operated transfers, as voluntary placements are no longer permitted to state operated settings.

WIC Section 4508

- Removes outdated language requiring parental or guardian consent for provisional placement, as voluntary placements and admissions of minors are no longer permitted.

WIC Section 6500

- Clarifies that a determination of "dangerousness to self or others" requires both a finding of incompetence to stand trial and a felony violation of the Penal Code, as specified.

WIC Section 6506

- Requires WIC 6506 orders for temporary placement at CS or PDC pending a court hearing for a 6500 commitment.

WIC Section 6509

- Starting July 1, 2031, no one can be committed to PDC under a WIC section 6500(a)(1) commitment for more than 24 months from that date forward. Anyone who is already living at PDC on or before July 1, 2031, cannot stay there past July 1, 2034.
 - Staggering discharges creates alignment for individuals at different stages of their annual commitment cycle, without requiring additional court proceedings to resolve timing discrepancies between the time limit and annual commitment orders. It also allows the Department and regional centers to effectively transition the approximately 70 individuals currently at PDC under a WIC 6500 (a)(1) commitment.
- A WIC 6500(a)(1) commitment order for placement at CS lasts for one year unless the regional center asks the court to extend it. To request an extension, the regional center must explain why the person still needs to be there and provide an updated assessment and plan. No one can remain at CS more than 24 months after July 1, 2027, unless a specific legal exception applies.
- Effective December 31, 2026, repeals obsolete language for acute crisis admission to PDC as acute admissions to PDC are no longer permissible.

WIC Section 7502.6

- Effective December 31, 2026, repeals obsolete language allowing temporary commitments at CS, formerly known as Desert STAR. Admissions have not been permissible since June 30, 2024.

WIC Section 7505

- Effective January 1, 2027, limits CS placement to 24 months, with one 60-day extension if specified criteria are met.
 - Requires regional centers to notify the court in writing if an extension is needed after the initial 12-month 6500 commitment. Courts must review placement every six-month interval during the final 12 months of placement at CS; and,
 - At each hearing, the court must review an updated assessment and placement plan, the Department's determination that continued placement is necessary, and an Individual Program Plan specifying the services needed, supports and a timeline for community transition.
- Effective July 1, 2027, repeals obsolete language for acute crisis admission criteria for CS, previously Desert STAR, and the five community treatment beds. Admissions have not been permissible since June 30, 2024. The repeal date allows a therapeutic transition for the remaining two individuals, both of whom have transition plans in progress.
 - Amendments clarify the June 30, 2024, admissions sunset and require a comprehensive assessment every six months with additional monitoring responsibilities.
- Restricts the right of return only to PDC and eliminates the five-person limit. This option remains critical as a last resort to reduce recidivism and avoid cyclical judicial involvement. If a community placement fails, the individual may return to PDC, rather than reentering local carceral and court systems.
- Effective December 31, 2026, repeals obsolete language for acute crisis admission criteria to PDC, previously the location of Central Valley STAR. Admissions have not been permissible since June 30, 2024, as Central Valley STAR transitioned to the community.