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DIRECTOR

CALIFORNIA HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

1215 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.dds.ca.gov



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

June 23, 2026

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY

Larry Landauer, Executive Director
Regional Center of Orange County
P.O. Box 22010
Santa Ana, CA 92702

Dear Larry Landauer:

This letter is to convey the results of the Department of Developmental Services' (Department) review of the Early Start Program at Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC). This review was conducted through the Department's Self-Assessment Monitoring (SAM) system November 6, 2026, through January 8, 2026, to ensure that California meets Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements. This review included areas of longstanding noncompliance identified in RCOC FY 2023-2024 review.

RCOC completed a self-assessment of 90 records through SAM. This consisted of 45 regular records and 45 transition records. The Department verified the documentation and the findings for each of the 90 records. The Department identified findings of noncompliance in the following areas:

- Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) must be completed within 45 days from the date of referral.
- The IFSP should clearly specify the frequency and length for all identified Early Intervention Services.
- Periodic reviews of the IFSP are required whenever an Early Intervention Service is added, decreased or changed.
- The referral date must be documented in the infant's or toddler's record.
- The Transition IFSP, with steps and services, should be developed at least 90 days prior to the child's third birthday, or at the discretion of all parties, as early as 2.3 years.

Longstanding Noncompliance

- Early Intervention Services must be provided in the natural environment.
- The transition conference must occur 90 days and not more than nine months prior to the child's 3rd birthday.

The details of the findings are in Monitoring Report Summary (see the Attachment).

Required Action:

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires the state lead agency, the Department, to verify correction of noncompliance based on the individual child level (prong 1) and the systemic level (prong 2) as soon as possible, and no later than one year from the date of this letter. A plan, signed by you, addressing the systemic level

(prong 2) areas of noncompliance is required to be submitted to the Department within 30 days of the date of this letter.

As part of the plan of correction, RCOC shall identify and address the root cause of noncompliance on each outstanding finding. Identifying the root cause ensures that corrective actions are meaningful and effective. Please forward the required evidence of clearance on each of the outstanding individual findings (prong 1) as soon as it becomes available, if applicable. The Department will also require RCOC to provide subsequent records to address systemic-level findings.

Please see recommendations listed on page 7 of the monitoring report.

Furthermore, due to ongoing noncompliance, RCOC must take the following actions:

- Within 30 days, submit a comprehensive training plan that addresses federal requirements for a timely transition conference and services delivered in the natural environment. The plan should include strategies to improve and sustain compliance.
- All RCOC Early Start staff must complete the Transition Module training within 90 days of this report's issuance. RCOC must submit documentation verifying that all Early Start staff have completed the Transition Module, including their names and dates of completion.
- If 100 percent compliance is not achieved at the next subsequent review, RCOC will participate in monthly meetings with the Department's Early Start liaison. These meetings will focus on discussing challenges and exploring solutions to ensure timely transition conferences and services in the natural environment. The goal is to provide guidance, foster continuous improvement, and support RCOC in consistently meeting Early Start requirements so that children and families receive timely and effective support and services.

Thank you for your cooperation during the monitoring review of the Early Start program at RCOC and your commitment to serving children and families. If you have any questions, please contact Reyna Ambriz, Early Start Branch Manager, at (916) 651-0364, or by email at Reyna.Ambriz@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

MARICRIS ACON
Deputy Director
Early Childhood and Youth Services Division

Attachment

cc: Sandy Martin, Board Chairperson, RCOC
Araceli Mendez, RCOC

**EARLY START MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY
REGIONAL CENTER OF ORANGE COUNTY**

DATE OF REVIEW: NOVEMBER 6, 2025 – JANUARY 8, 2026

FINAL REPORT DATE: JUNE 23, 2026

ITEMS AT 100% COMPLIANCE				
REQUIREMENT		RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE
R1	Obtained written parental consent for evaluation/assessment. 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Sections 303.321(a) and 303.420(a)(2)	45	45	100%
R2	Initial evaluation determined the infant's or toddler's level of functioning in all developmental domains, including hearing, vision, and health. 34 CFR, Sections 303.21, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, California Early Intervention Services Act (CEISA) Section 95014	45	45	100%
R3	Initial assessment for service planning identified unique strengths and service needs in all five developmental domains, including hearing, vision, and health, prior to the initial Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). 34 CFR, Sections 303.21, 303.24, 303.310, 303.321 and Title 14, CEISA Section 95014	45	45	100%
R6	Timely provision of services. 34 CFR, Sections 303.344(f)(1) and 303.420(b)(2) Title 17, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 52109(b)	45	45	100%

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CLEARED FINDINGS Findings cleared prior to the issuance of the report. No further action is required.							
REQUIREMENT		ORIGINAL RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	ORIGINAL COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE	SUBSEQUENT RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL SUBSEQUENT RECORDS REVIEWED	SUBSEQUENT COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE
R4	Written notice of the IFSP meeting. 34 CFR, Section 303.342(d)(2)	43	45	95.56%	3	3	100%
T2	Timely notification to Local Educational Agency (LEA). 34 CFR, Sections 303.209(b) and 303.401(d)	43	45	95.56%	3	3	100%
O4	Location of all services is specified on the IFSP. 34 CFR, Section 303.344(d)(1)(iii)	43	45	95.56%	3	3	100%

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NONCOMPLIANCE

Regional Center of Orange County must clear findings on both the child-specific and systemic levels. Systemic level findings must be cleared as soon as possible but no later than one year from the final report date. **A Plan of Correction and subsequent review are required to clear these items.**

REQUIREMENT		RECORDS IN COMPLIANCE	TOTAL RECORDS REVIEWED	COMPLIANCE PERCENTAGE	PRONG 1 (CHILD-SPECIFIC)	PRONG 2 (SYSTEMIC)
					OUTSTANDING	OUTSTANDING
R5	Initial IFSP meeting was conducted within the 45-day timeline. 34 CFR, Sections 303.310 and 303.342(a)	37	45	82.22%		X
R7	The IFSP included the frequency and length for all early intervention services. 34 CFR, Section 303.344(d)(1)(i) Title 17, CCR, Section 52109(b)	38	45	84.44%		X
R8	Early intervention services are provided in the natural environment or the IFSP contains an appropriate justification when services are not provided in a natural environment. 34 CFR, Sections 303.26, 303.126 and 303.344(d)(1)(ii)	34	45	75.56%	X	X
T1	The IFSP included timely transition steps and services. 34 CFR, Sections 303.209(d) & (e) and 303.344(h)	41	45	91.11%		X
T3	Transition Conference occurred in a timely manner and the LEA was invited to the transition meeting. 34 CFR, Section 303.209(c)(1)	41	45	91.11%		X

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					OUTSTANDING	OUTSTANDING
O5	A Periodic Review was completed when early intervention services were added, decreased or changed. 34 CFR, Section 303.342(b)(1)(ii)	43	45	95.56%		X
O7	The date of referral is documented in the infant's or toddler's record. Title 17 CCR Section 52060(a)	18	45	40.00%		X

Key:

R – “Regular” corresponds to the Regular Review Tool item, followed by the number of the Regular Review Tool item (ex.- R1 refers to the Regular Review Tool item number 1).

T – “Transition” corresponds to the Transition Review Tool item, followed by the number of the Transition Review Tool item (ex.- T3 refers to the Transition Review Tool item number 3).

O – “Other” refers to an additional finding, not included in the Regular or Transition review tools.

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OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL FINDINGS (PRONG 1)

RR#	UCI	ITEM R8 Natural Environment
RR 12	8405051	X
RR 13	8405008	X
RR 22	8405032	X
RR 31	8405041	X
RR 33	8405109	X
RR 42	8405149	X

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering what is outlined above, the Department recommends RCOC to align practices/procedures related to:

- Timely initial IFSP,
- Frequency and Length,
- Natural Environment,
- Timely Transition Plan with Steps and Services,
- Timely Transition Conference,
- Periodic Review, Addendum/Amendment, and
- The Referral is Documented in Infant's and Toddler's Record

For further information, the Department encourages RCOC to further review available technical assistance resources related to the IFSP. These resources include but are not limited to:

- Early Start Transition Modules: <https://eso.eipdonline.org/#/login>
- IFSP Resources through the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center: <https://ectacenter.org/topics/ifsp/ifspprocess.asp>
- Educational & Developmental Intervention Services - IFSP Process Guidance Handbook: <https://ectacenter.org/eco/assets/pdfs/EDISIFSPProcessGuidanceHandbook.pdf>

As required by 34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Sections 303.310, 303.342(a), 303.342(d)(2), 303.26, 303.126, 303.344(d)(1)(ii), 303.209(d)(e), 303.344(h), 303.209(c)(1), 303.342(b)(1)(ii), Title 17 California Code of Regulations Section 52060(a), 52109(b).