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GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

November 3, 2026 D-2026-Legislation-003

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: 2026 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

This letter provides a summary of the legislation signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2026 that may affect developmental services, regional centers, and/or the Department of Developmental Services (Department). Unless otherwise specified, the changes will take effect on January 1, 2027.

Legislation Requiring Action

- AB 1713 (Ransom) Public Postsecondary Education: Students with Disabilities: Verification: Academic Accommodations
- AB 1821(Pacheco) California Public Records Act: Agency Response Time
- AB 2007 (Bauer-Kahan) Youth Programs: Identifying Information of Youth
- AB 2796 (Committee on Public Safety): Criminal History Information: Background Checks
- SB 577 (Laird) Public Entities
- SB 974 (Seyarto) Property Taxation: Change in Ownership: Generational Transfers: Special Needs Trusts
- SB 1114 (Cabaldon) Data Collection: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Intersex Status: Disclosure

Legislation for Awareness

- AB 375 (Nguyen) Medical Practice Act: Health Care Providers: Qualified Autism Service Paraprofessionals
- AB 871 (Stefani) Mandated Reporters of Suspected Financial Abuse of an Elder or Dependent Adult
- AB 1126 (Patterson) Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans: Enrollees with Other Health Care Coverage
- AB 1331 (Elhawary) Workplace Surveillance
- AB 1575 (Arambula) Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act
- AB 1598 (Quirk-Silva) Behavioral Sciences
- AB 1688 (Carrillo) Child Abuse or Neglect: Reporting
- AB 1689 (Quirk-Silva) Juvenile Courts: Temporary Probate Guardianship
- AB 1824 (Ramos) Indian Children: Guardianship or Conservatorship Proceedings

- AB 1836 (Gabriel) California State Nonprofit Security Grant Program
- AB 1946 (Wicks) Reporting Mechanism: Child Sexual Abuse Material
- AB 2161 (Bonta) Medi-Cal Eligibility: Work or Community Engagement
- AB 2233 (Ta) Behavioral Health Treatment Plans
- AB 2241 (Boerner) School Facilities: Inclusive School Playgrounds
- AB 2324 (Gonzalez, J) Vocational Education: Youth Caregivers
- AB 2414 (Nguyen) Developmental Services: Direct Support Professionals
- AB 2466 (Fong) Strong Workforce Program: Work-Based Learning Opportunities: Regional Consortia
- SB 177 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review).Medi-Cal: Fair Share from Big Corporations Act.
- SB 331 (Menjivar) Health Care Coverage: Hearing Aids
- SB 837 (Reyes) Disaster and Emergency Preparedness
- SB 874 (Weber Pierson) Medi-Cal: Behavioral Health Treatment: Stakeholder Feedback
- SB 1304 (Wahab) Respiratory Care Practice Act
- SB 1316 (Smallwood-Cuevas): Employment

Legislation Requiring Action

AB 1713 (Ransom)
This bill allows students to use an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, or regional center Individual Program Plan (IPP) to verify a disability when requesting academic accommodations at California public colleges and universities.

Status: *Chapter 891, Statutes of 2026. Effective September 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Beginning September 1, 2027, California public colleges and universities must accept a regional center IPP as verification of a student's disability when documentation is required for academic accommodations. Regional centers should inform service coordinators of this change and be prepared to provide IPP copies to students who request copies for this purpose.

AB 1821 (Pacheco)
This bill updates the California Public Records Act (PRA) by changing the initial response deadline for public records requests from 10 calendar days to 10 business days, and in certain instances allowing an extension to respond from 14 calendar days to 14 business days.

Status: *Chapter 899, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers must review and update their PRA policies and procedures to reflect the new response timelines, effective January 1, 2027. Any PRA requests received before January 1 will continue to be subject to the current

10-calendar-day response deadline and, if applicable, the 14-calendar-day extension deadline.

AB 2007 (Bauer-Kahan)
This bill restricts non-school youth programs from using a child's identifying information for public communications or marketing without a parent or guardian's express written consent. It also prohibits conditioning enrollment on such consent, allows consent to be revoked, and allows parents or guardians to sue for violations.

Status: *Chapter 914, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Service providers that operate youth programs, such as social recreation, athletics, educational enrichment, or day or overnight camps, may be affected by this law if the program requires parental consent or authorization and is offered primarily outside of school hours. Affected providers must review their policies and practices for obtaining consent in public communications or marketing.

AB 2796 (Committee on Public Safety)
This bill expands and standardizes fingerprint-based state and federal background check requirements for specified licensed facilities, providers, employees, volunteers and other individuals.

Status: *Chapter 313, Statutes of 2026. Effective September 18, 2026.*

Implementation: Regional center service providers operating community care or residential care facilities may be subject to expanded background check requirements. Affected providers should work with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to understand and comply with applicable requirements, as background check results may affect an individual's clearance to work in or be associated with a licensed facility.

SB 577 (Laird)
This bill makes several changes to prevent and respond to childhood sexual abuse, including changes to civil claims and mandated reporter training. It also establishes additional prevention, monitoring, and reporting requirements for schools, certain licensed child residential facilities, youth corrections and foster care entities.

Status: *Chapter 125, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers must verify that employees who are mandated reporters receive child abuse and neglect training at least once every two years. The training must include grooming behaviors and sexual abuse risks.

SB 974 (Seyarto)
A special needs trust in California is a legal arrangement that holds assets for a person with disabilities without affecting their eligibility for needs-based benefits like Medi-Cal.

This bill expands property tax transfer rules by treating a special needs trust as an eligible way to transfer a principal residence or family farm between qualifying family members.

Status: *Chapter 665, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: This bill may benefit individuals or families receiving regional center services during caregiver succession planning discussions. Regional centers should inform service coordinators to be aware of the changes in SB 974 and share these options during caregiver succession planning discussions.

SB 1114 (Cabaldon)
This bill strengthens confidentiality protections for sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status (SOGISC), and related information collected by California state entities and public higher education systems, while limiting when such data may be disclosed or shared.

Status: *Chapter 471, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: The Department and regional centers must review existing contracts, grants, and other agreements for compliance.

Legislation for Awareness

AB 375 (Ngyuen)
This bill expands the definition of "health care provider" to include qualified autism service (QAS) paraprofessionals, and allows QAS paraprofessionals to practice telehealth.

Status: *Chapter 501, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: This change provides families with additional options for accessing qualified autism services, including through telehealth. Regional centers and service providers should be aware of the expanded provider definition when coordinating or delivering these services.

AB 871 (Stefani)
This bill expands the responsibilities of defined financial institutions when they suspect financial abuse of an elder or dependent adult. It requires a financial institution to file a report with the Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime Complaint Center within two working days, notify the affected person within 48 hours, and provide annual training to employees who are mandated reporters.

Status: *Chapter 360, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2028.*

Implementation: Regional centers are encouraged to share information about AB 871 with Financial Management Services and payee providers and advise them to determine whether they meet the definition of a financial institution or mandated reporter pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 15630.1. Providers subject to the law should update their reporting procedures and mandated reporter training to comply with the new reporting requirements, beginning January 1, 2028.

AB 1126 (Patterson)
This bill makes it easier for certain Medi-Cal providers to bill managed care plans when Medi-Cal recipients have other health coverage (excluding Medicare). It also requires the Department of Health Care Services to revise guidance to managed care plans and to offer educational resources to help enrollees coordinate their coverage.

Status: Chapter 193, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.

Implementation: Educational materials may benefit individuals receiving regional center services who have both Medi-Cal and other health coverage, as well as providers of covered services.

AB 1331 (Elhawary)
This bill limits employers' use of a workplace surveillance tool to track or monitor employees in workplace bathrooms. Employers may be subject to penalties of up to $500 per violation, in addition to other remedies in statute.

Status: Chapter 851, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.

Implementation: Regional centers, service providers, and self-determination program participants will need to review their use of workplace surveillance tools to determine whether any changes are needed to comply with the new requirements.

AB 1575 (Arambula)
The bill updates terminology throughout the Lanterman Act, including replacing "consumer" with "person eligible for regional center services" or "person seeking services from a regional center" and removing gendered language.

Status: Chapter 525, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.

Implementation: There is no direct impact on regional centers. Regional centers and service providers must be aware of the new terminology and use it when applicable.

AB 1598 (Quirk-Silva)
This bill revises the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) licensing requirements, including giving associates additional time to complete certain experience and registration requirements, and updates exemptions for certain professionals and faith-based counselors.

Status: *Chapter 528, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers and providers that employ or contract with professionals licensed or registered by the BBS must comply with updated licensing and registration requirements.

AB 1688 (Carrillo)
The bill requires county welfare agencies to notify a child's or parent's attorney, or tribal representatives when applicable, when abuse or neglect in an out-of-home placement is substantiated or a child is removed from such placement. Attorneys representing other children in active dependency cases also must be notified. Notice to a parent's attorney is not required if the parent's parental rights have been terminated.

Status: *Chapter 888, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers and providers may benefit from awareness of these new requirements when working with children who reside in an out-of-home placement or are involved in dependency proceedings.

AB 1689 (Quirk-Silva)
This bill allows a juvenile court, under specified circumstances, to not require notice of termination or modification of a temporary probate guardianship when doing so is in the child's best interest.

Status: *Chapter 542, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers should be aware that notice of a juvenile court proceeding where a temporary probate guardianship for any children supported by the regional center may be terminated or modified without notice if the court determines doing so is in the child's best interest.

AB 1824 (Ramos)
This bill updates California law governing Indian child custody, guardianship, and conservatorship proceedings to commit to protecting tribal relations and tribal participation and align state law with the Indian Child Welfare Act. This bill makes relevant connections and reviews shared knowledge of tribal participation or affiliation to decrease the separation of Indian children from their tribes. It clarifies proper notification of such proceedings to family, extended family to a certain degree, and ultimately notifying the tribe the child is associated with. It allows for expert witnesses to testify and advocate on the Indian child's behalf. All of these changes are intended to reduce the separation of Indian children from their tribes.

Status: *Chapter 454, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: This legislation may affect some individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who are involved in Indian child custody, guardianship, or conservatorship proceedings.

AB 1836 (Gabriel)
This bill revises the California State Nonprofit Security Grant Program to allow eligible nonprofits that are at a high risk for violent attacks or hate crimes due to ideology, beliefs, or mission to apply for grant funds for security at onsite and offsite events.

Status: Chapter 441, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.

Implementation: This legislation may provide eligible regional centers with additional grant funding opportunities for security at outreach, resource fairs, and other community events.

AB 1946 (Wicks)
This bill strengthens requirements for social media platforms to report, review, and remove child sexual abuse material and increases accountability for noncompliance.

Status: Chapter 185, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.

Implementation: This legislation strengthens protections for minors, including individuals with IDD whose intimate images may have been shared on social media platforms. State and local authorities may impose civil penalties in the event of noncompliance with these additional protections.

AB 2161 (Bonta)
This bill updates Medi-Cal program requirements for certain adults to align with federal House Resolution (H.R.) 1, including eligibility redeterminations, work or community engagement requirements, and administrative procedures. It requires counties to confirm conflicting data before taking adverse action, maintain coverage longer in some redeterminations, treat notices as received after five days, allow self-attestation when a notice is missed, and review all other eligibility bases before denying coverage.

Status: Chapter 209, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.

Implementation: The Department and the Department of Health Care Services are working together to identify affected individuals, and will launch a coordinated communications plan prior to the effective date of January 1, 2027.

AB 2233 (Ta)
This bill prohibits health plans and insurers from limiting or capping authorized behavioral health treatment hours for autism during a six-month authorization period. All authorized hours must remain available as long as the services are consistent with the treatment plan and clinical guidelines.

Status: *Chapter 591, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers should be aware that these changes will allow individuals to be able to use their approved treatment hours at any time during the six-month authorization period, instead of being limited to a set number of hours each week.

AB 2241 (Boerner)
This bill requires the State Department of Education to create and maintain an online resource showing best practices for inclusive school playgrounds.

Status: *Chapter 295, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: This resource supports children and families seeking information about inclusive school playgrounds.

AB 2324 (Gonzalez, J)
This bill requires California to consider adding youth caregiver content to the Personal Care and Services career pathway to support people with developmental, mental health, and physical disabilities, and the needs of older adults and provide implementation guidance by July 1, 2028. It directs the State Department of Education to include guidance for Personal Care and Service jobs, including in-home caregiving and other direct support professional practices. The bill also includes a provision to provide referrals for support to address the risk factors experienced by and support for household youth caregiver, and to clarify that youth caregivers helping a family member at home may qualify for credits through work experience education programs.

Status: *Chapter 95, Statutes of 2026. Effective July 1, 2028.*

Implementation: This legislation may increase the capacity for direct support professionals and provide support for siblings caring for family members with IDD. Regional center community services may need to inform their provider network, and case management may need to inform their families, of this opportunity for youth caregivers.

AB 2414 (Nguyen)
This bill revises the law to replace the term “direct service professionals” with “direct support professionals.” It establishes a standardized definition for direct support professionals as workers who provide direct support to people with IDD, are employed by a service provider receiving regional center funding, and spends at least 50 percent of their time completing direct support tasks.

Status: *Chapter 603, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers and service providers must be aware of the new terminology and use it when applicable.

AB 2466 (Fong)
This bill extends the deadline for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to revise policies and guidance for paid work-based learning and expands the use of Strong Workforce Program funds for these opportunities.

Status: *Chapter 402, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: This legislation may expand paid work-based learning opportunities for individuals with IDD who attend California community colleges.

SB 177 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review)
This bill requires the Department of Finance to develop and submit a plan to the Legislature by March 1, 2027, outlining options for how large employers (250 or more employees) can contribute to the cost of Medi-Cal coverage for their employees. The bill does not include exemptions for nonprofit or public entities. One required proposal must identify a premium for large employers who do not offer health insurance.

Status: *Chapter 64, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: The Department will continue working closely with the Department of Finance as the plan is developed and will share updates with community partners once more information becomes available.

SB 331 (Menjivar)
Beginning January 1, 2028, this bill requires large group health plans and health insurance policies to cover medically necessary hearing aids and related services for individuals under age 21, subject to specified covered limits.

Status: *Chapter 966, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2028.*

Implementation: Regional centers and providers must be aware of the expanded hearing aid coverage when supporting children and families who may need these services and provide this information as needed.

SB 837 (Reyes)
This bill requires Aging and Disability Resource Connection programs to provide older adults and people with disabilities information and education on emergency preparedness and safety before, during, and after emergencies.

Status: *Chapter 984, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: This law may provide additional emergency preparedness resources for individuals with IDD disabilities and their families. Regional center emergency coordinators will need to be aware of this resource.

SB 874 (Weber Pierson)
This bill requires DHCS to strengthen oversight of Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Treatment, including requiring criminal background checks for certain providers and gathering input from community partners on BHT coverage, billing, and clinical guidance.

Status: *Chapter 655, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: Regional centers must be aware of upcoming DHCS requirements and guidance that may affect the delivery of Medi-Cal BHT services, including new background check requirements for certain BHT providers.

SB 1304 (Wahab)
This bill revises respiratory care licensing requirements and the respiratory care tasks that Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) may perform. Beginning January 1, 2027, LVNs may perform specified respiratory care tasks in additional settings. Patient-specific training requirements apply through 2027, followed by standardized training requirements beginning January 1, 2028.

Status: *Chapter 431, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: The Respiratory Care Board (RCB) of California is developing regulations to align with the new statutory changes in SB 1304. The Department is monitoring these regulatory changes and will provide regional centers with updated guidance that reflects revised RCB standards. Regional centers and service providers must be aware of the settings where LVNs are permitted to perform respiratory care tasks, along with the related training requirements. These settings include:

- Facilities licensed by California Department of Social Services, such as Adult Residential Facilities for Persons with Special Health Care Needs, Group Homes for Children with Special Health Care Needs, Adult Residential Facilities, Enhanced Behavioral Support Homes, Community Crisis Homes, Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, Residential Care Facilities for the Chronically Ill, Adult Day Programs, and Therapeutic Day Services
- Veterans Affairs-approved Medical Foster Homes
- Family Home Agencies
- Supported Living Services

SB 1316 (Smallwood-Cuevas)
This bill strengthens enforcement of wage claims by allowing certain Labor Commissioner liens to be renewed for an additional 10 years and limiting the use of required employment records that are not timely provided to the Labor Commissioner.

Status: *Chapter 157, Statutes of 2026. Effective January 1, 2027.*

Implementation: There is no impact on regional centers. This legislation may affect service providers, individuals or families acting as employers or co-employers, as well

as the Financial Management Services (FMS) providers. FMS providers and participants must be aware of the requirements to maintain and provide payroll, time, and employment records promptly when requested by the Labor Commissioner.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

MEGAN SCHLAGER, Chief
Legislation and Regulations Branch, Legislation and Public Affairs Division

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