November 3, 2026
Important notice from the Department of Developmental Services about:

2026 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

D-2026-Legislation-003

What to Know

This directive explains new laws. These laws may affect regional centers, people they support, services people receive, vendors, and the Department. The changes will start January 1, 2027, unless the directive says something different.

These Laws Affect Developmental Services

AB 1713 (Ransom)

Students can use their individualized education, 504, or regional center individual program plans to show they have a disability when asking California colleges or universities for extra supports.

AB 1821 (Pacheco)

Agencies will have 10 business days (not 10 calendar days) to answer California Public Records Act requests. Extensions may be 14 business days (not 14 calendar days).

AB 2007 (Bauer-Kahan)

Youth programs outside of school must get written permission from a guardian to use a child's personal information in public materials. Children cannot be denied or removed if permission is not given. Parents can take legal action if rules are broken.

AB 2796 (Committee on Public Safety)

More fingerprint background checks are needed for some licensed facilities, providers, workers, volunteers, and others.

SB 577 (Laird)

Updates to laws about childhood sexual abuse include:

- Rules for legal action
- New training for people that must report abuse
- New rules for schools and licensed children's residential facilities to prevent, watch for, and report abuse

SB 974 (Seyarto)
Some family members can transfer a home or family farm into a special needs trust. They can keep some property tax benefits. A special needs trust helps protect benefits for people with disabilities.

SB 1114 (Cabaldon)
Updates privacy rules for how state agencies and public schools get and share information about sexual orientation, gender identity, and intersex status.

More Laws to Know About

AB 375 (Ngyuen)
Trained autism service professionals who are supervised can offer services by phone or video. They would be defined as health care providers.

AB 871 (Stefani)
Businesses that handle money think there is elder or dependent adult financial abuse must:

- File a report with the Federal Bureau of Investigation Internet Crime Complaint Center within two working days
- Tell people that may be affected within 48 hours
- Give training every year to people that must file reports of abuse

AB 1126 (Patterson)
Makes billing easier for some Medi-Cal providers when a person also has other health insurance (not Medicare). Instructions are given on how to use both types of benefits.

AB 1331 (Elhawary)
Limits how employers use tools for watching employees in workplace bathrooms. Employers could be fined up to $500 each time they break a rule.

AB 1575 (Arambula)
Updates words in the Lanterman Act.

- Replaces “consumer” with “person eligible for services” or “person looking for services”
- Removes gender-specific words

AB 1598 (Quirk-Silva)
Changes licensing rules for the Board of Behavioral Sciences. This includes:

- More time for associates to finish required
- Update for some professionals and faith-based counselors

AB 1688 (Carrillo)
When a child in foster care or out-of-home placement has been abused, neglected, or taken from their home, county welfare agencies must tell the:

- Child's attorney
- Parent's attorney, unless parental rights stopped
- Tribal representatives
- Attorneys for other dependent children in the home

AB 1689 (Quirk-Silva)
Juvenile courts may choose not to tell people when a temporary guardianship (approved in probate court) ends or changes. This is allowed if it is best for the child.

AB 1824 (Ramos)
Makes protections stronger for Native American children in custody, guardianship, and conservatorship cases that match federal law. Families and tribes must be told about court hearings. Experts can speak in court to support these children.

AB 1836 (Gabriel)
Allow nonprofits at high risk of violence or hate crimes to apply for grants that help with security at events.

AB 1946 (Wicks)
Social media must report, review, and remove child sexual abuse material. This adds responsibility when they do not follow rules.

AB 2161 (Bonta)
This changes Medi-Cal rules for some adults to match federal laws. It includes:

- How often eligibility is looked at
- Look at information before denying or ending coverage
- What is required for work or community engagement
- Administrative steps
- Keep coverage longer during reviews
- After five days, a notice is seen as received
- Accept a person's statement if a notice is missing
- Check all options a person may qualify

AB 2233 (Ta)
Health plans cannot limit the number of approved behavioral health hours in a six-month period. When hours are approved, all hours may be used, if they follow the treatment plan and instructions.

AB 2241 (Boerner)
The California Department of Education (CDE)'s website must have a process about play areas that all children with and without disabilities can use.

AB 2324 (Gonzalez, J)
CDE must add instructions for younger caregivers who support older adults and people with disabilities with in-home care and other support services. Young caregivers may earn school credit through work experience. The deadline to give instructions is July 1, 2028.

AB 2414 (Nguyen)
The term “direct service professionals” is changing to “direct support professionals.” These are people who:

- Provide direct support to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Work for a vendor who is paid by regional center funds
- Spends half their time on direct support work

AB 2466 (Fong)
The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office has until June 30, 2027, to change paid work-based learning steps. This helps fund regional programs that support students and employers.

SB 177 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review)
The Department of Finance must give the Legislature a plan by March 1, 2027. The plan will include options for employers with 250 or more employees to help pay for employees' Medi-Cal coverage. This applies to nonprofit or public agencies too.

SB 331 (Menjivar)
Starting January 1, 2028, large group health plans must cover hearing aids and related services needed for people under age 21. Coverage may have limits based on the plan.

SB 837 (Reyes)
Aging and Disability Resource Connection programs must help older adults and people with disabilities:

- Prepare for emergencies
- Stay safe before, during, and after the emergency

SB 874 (Weber Pierson)
The Department of Health Care Service will look closely at Medi-Cal Behavioral Health Treatment (BHT) by:

- Doing background checks for some providers
- Getting community input on coverage, billing, and clinical instructions

SB 1304 (Wahab)
This updates respiratory care licensing rules and what tasks Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) may perform in more settings. Training is patient-focused until 2027, and standard training starts January 1, 2028.

SB 1316 (Smallwood-Cuevas)
Helps make sure rules for wage claims are followed. Changes let the Labor Commissioner renew some liens for 10 more years. This limits the use of employment records when they are not given to the Labor Commissioner on time.

Questions?

Individuals and families should contact their service coordinators with questions about how these updates may change their services.

Learn More

Please visit the Department's website to read the full D-2026-Legislation-003 directive (https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/D-2026-Legislation-003.pdf)