2026_03_18 – Guidance on Waiver Enrollment

Waiver, Law, Directives · https://completeguidetosdp.org/docs/2026_03_18-guidance-on-waiver-enrollment/

Brief:

Coming soon

Directive:

March 18, 2026

D-2026-Case Management-002

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: SELF-DETERMINATION PROGRAM (SDP): GUIDANCE ON WAIVER ENROLLMENT

This letter provides information to regional centers regarding increasing Self-Determination Program (SDP) Waiver participation amongst those individuals currently accessing Self-Determination services.

Existing law (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4685.8(d)(3)(G)) states “If eligible, with the assistance of the regional center, if needed, [a participant] timely apply for Medi-Cal in order to maximize federal funding. The participant may consider institutional deeming in order to qualify for Medi-Cal services.”

Enrollment in Medi-Cal is the first step to qualify for federal funding for SDP services. It must be accompanied
by enrollment in the SDP Waiver to get reimbursements from the federal government for SDP services.

To maximize federal reimbursements, the Department of Developmental Services will begin transmitting quarterly lists of prospective Waiver enrollees participating in SDP starting in April 2026, through the regional center portal. Regional centers will review these lists for accuracy, and work with individuals and families to enroll all eligible and willing individuals. Enrollment in a Waiver increases federal funding for the program.
Additionally, the existing regional center operations funding allocation is partially driven by the percentage of individuals at each regional center who are enrolled on a Waiver. Together we also can consider whether future performance measures may be tied to the percentage of eligible regional center caseload enrolled on a Waiver.

Next Steps for Regional Centers:

1. Identify Individuals Not Enrolled in the Waiver: Upon receipt of the list through the regional center portal, review and verify waiver eligibility for identified individuals.
2. Outreach and Education: Contact identified individuals and their families to explain the benefits and requirements of waiver enrollment, including its role in sustaining the SDP, and facilitate waiver enrollment.
3. Monitor and Report Progress: Track enrollment efforts and report progress to the Department quarterly to maintain statewide compliance and program integrity. Report any discrepancies or issues with the list of individuals to the email address identified below.

Your partnership is essential to the ongoing sustainability of the SDP. Thank you for your commitment to supporting individuals in achieving person-centered planning and choice while maximizing federal reimbursements for this program.

For additional information, please contact Federal.Programs@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

JONATHAN HILL, Branch Chief

Waiver and Rates Division

cc: Regional Center Administrators

Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services

Regional Center Community Services Directors

Association of Regional Center Agencies

Link to Directive:

Self-Determination Program: Guidance on Waiver Enrollment (English)