

Regional Centers

What are they?

Regional Centers are nonprofit, private corporations that contract with the Department of Developmental Services to provide or coordinate services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. This system was established in statute by the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Act. There are 21 centers throughout California which serve individuals living within their regions.

What services do they provide?

Regional centers provide diagnosis and assessment of eligibility and help plan, access, coordinate and monitor the services that are needed because of a developmental disability. There is no charge for the diagnosis and eligibility assessment.

Once eligibility is determined, a case manager or service coordinator is assigned to help develop a plan for services, tell a consumer where services are available, and help the consumer get the services. Most services and supports are free regardless of age or income.

Some of the services provided by the regional centers include:

- Information and referral
- Assessment and diagnosis
- Counseling
- Lifelong individualized planning and service coordination
- Purchase of necessary services included in the individual program plan
- Resource development
- Outreach
- Assistance in finding and using community and other resources
- Advocacy for the protection of legal, civil and service rights
- Early intervention services for at risk infants and their families
- Genetic counseling
- Family support
- Planning, placement, and monitoring for 24-hour out-of-home care
- Training and educational opportunities for individuals and families
- Community education about developmental disabilities

There is a requirement for parents to share the cost of 24-hour out-of-home placements for children under age 18. This program, called the Parental Fee Program, does not have a flat income threshold. Instead fee rates are based on family size, client age, and family income. Total monthly fees are capped at \$541 for clients up to age six, \$585 for clients age 7-12, and \$662 for clients age 13-18. Fees are deposited into the Developmental Disabilities Program Development Fund, and used to initiate new programs.

The Family Cost Participation Program (FCPP) also assesses a share of cost to parents of children who receive three specific regional center services: day care, respite, and/or camping services. The FCPP applies to families at or above 400% of the Federal Poverty Level, with a child living at home, who is not Medi-Cal eligible. The program also considers

a family's ability to pay, number of children receiving regional center services, and other factors. A family's annual share is capped at \$6,400 for children up to age six, \$7,000 for children age 7-12, and \$7,900 for children age 13-17. Under FCPP, families directly pay providers for services not covered by the State.

Who is eligible for services?

Eligibility is established through diagnosis and assessment performed by regional centers. To be eligible for services, a person must have a disability that begins before the person's 18th birthday, be expected to continue indefinitely and present a substantial disability as defined in Section 4512 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code.

Infants and toddlers (age 0 to 36 months) who are at risk of having developmental disabilities or who have a developmental delay may also qualify for services. The criteria for determining the eligibility of infants and toddlers is specified in Section 95014 of the California Government Code.

State Expenditures

Total state expenditures for regional center services are contained in the Department of Developmental Services' Community Services Program. The Local Assistance category excludes state operations (headquarters) expenditures.

Regional Center Allocations			
Fiscal Year	State Operations	Local Assistance	Community Services Program total
2009-10	\$23,734	\$4,096,986	\$4,120,720
2008-09	\$23,562	\$3,881,423	\$3,904,985
2007-08	\$23,510	\$3,591,322	\$3,614,832
2006-07	\$23,539	\$3,288,232	\$3,311,771
2005-06	\$21,694	\$2,884,286	\$2,905,980

*Dollar amounts are in thousands.