

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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August 13, 2021

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE REGARDING ALTERNATIVE NONRESIDENTIAL SERVICES

As follow up to the Department of Developmental Services' (Department) [August 31, 2020](#) Directive regarding Alternative Nonresidential Services (Alternative Services) during the COVID-19 State of Emergency, the purpose of this correspondence is to give further guidance for the provision of Alternative Services.

The Department recognizes the diverse range of priorities emerging among regional center consumers, families and service providers. While some people are eager to return to traditional in-person services, others are interested in continuing to engage in recently developed services which limit exposure to large group settings, and some may be looking for a new combination of services.

As circumstances have changed considerably since the initiation of Alternative Services, it is important to assure services and supports are adapted accordingly. This guidance is intended to make sure consumers have opportunities to discuss their current and/or changing needs and interests with service providers and regional center service coordinators. Therefore, by November 1, 2021:

- 1) Providers of Alternative Services shall engage each consumer about their current need for and interest in Alternative Services as an option. This may be a continuation of ongoing communication and/or may be combined with other review meetings with the consumer.
 - a) With the consumer's or authorized representative's permission, the provider is encouraged to work with other providers that also have service authorizations for the same consumer to best support the consumer's needs.
 - b) To the extent possible, providers should initiate discussion about the consumer's ideas for future services. Enclosed is an Engagement Guide with sample discussion items.
 - c) The provider shall document the consumer engagement including at minimum, the date, the participants, and a description of the consumer's input.
 - d) Following the engagement, the individual service plan should be reviewed and amended as needed and the consumer and regional center shall be given a copy of the plan.
 - e) If new or changing needs are identified, or if a consumer is discontinuing Alternative Services, providers shall notify the regional center.

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- 2) Regional center service coordinators shall engage each consumer receiving Alternative Services about their current needs and interests in services. This may be combined with other review meetings with the consumer.
 - a) To the extent possible, regional centers should initiate discussion about the consumer's ideas for future services. See enclosed Engagement Guide for sample discussion items.
 - b) The regional center shall document in the individual consumer record the engagement including at minimum, the date, the participants, and a description of the consumer's input.

The Department is interested in adaptations to services that meet the needs of consumers and will offer additional opportunities for stakeholders to provide this valuable information.

Consumers, family members or providers should contact their local regional center with any questions. Questions from regional centers only should be directed to DDSC19Directives@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

BRIAN WINFIELD
Chief Deputy Director

Enclosure

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