



Regional  
Center of  
Orange  
County

A black and white close-up portrait of a young boy with light hair, smiling broadly at the camera.

Working  
Together



In Service to  
People With  
Developmental  
Disabilities

# Welcome to the Regional Center of Orange County



**p**roviding life enhancing services and support to people with developmental disabilities — that's the job of Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC). We partner with individuals and families to help ensure that they are afforded the opportunities and choices that will enable them to maximize the quality of their lives.

Established after passage of California's Lanterman Act in 1969, RCOC is one of 21 nonprofit regional centers contracted by the State of California to coordinate and monitor services for any resident of our community who:

- **has a developmental disability,**
- **is believed to have a developmental disability,**
- **has an infant who is at high risk of having a developmental disability, or**
- **is at high risk of parenting an infant with a developmental disability.**

At RCOC, we serve people with substantially handicapping developmental disabilities which began before age 18, are expected to be lifelong, and are attributable to intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or conditions similar to intellectual disability.

As part of the California Early Start program, the Regional Center also provides early intervention services to children 36 months of age and younger who are at risk of having a developmental disability.



## Individual Assessment

**b**efore a person can receive services, experienced intake staff do an individual assessment that includes:

- a social skills evaluation,
- a review of the person's medical and psychological history,
- other medical and psychological evaluations, as needed, and
- specialized assessments by other professionals, as necessary to determine eligibility.

## Service Coordination

Once individuals are determined eligible for RCOC services, they and their family members are



teamed with service coordinators who work with them to identify their abilities and challenges. This partnership respects the wishes of each person, honors the family relationship and offers the best possible options for living and learning.

The first step is the development of a person-centered Individual Program Plan. For those who are 36 months of age or younger, we work with the parents to design an Individualized Family Service Plan. Once the plan is set, we work together with the person and the family to select the specific services and programs that meet their needs.



## Services Offered

*Among the many services*

***RCOC provides the people we serve are:***

- Residential care
- Independent living services
- Adult day care and activity programs
- Respite care and family support groups
- Referral for behavior management services
- Referral for psychological counseling
- Infant development programs and help in preventing disabilities
- Social/recreational opportunities
- Physical, occupational and speech therapy services for children in the Early Start program
- Mobility training
- Vocational training and work placement services
- Coordination with schools and Department of Rehabilitation
- Educational programs, workshops and support groups
- Transportation services
- Legal and human rights advocacy services

## Ongoing Support

RCOC service coordinators also provide ongoing support to those we serve, helping them – and their families – deal with the impact of a developmental disability on their lives and ensuring that their Individual Program Plan works well for them over time.

We offer lifetime service to people whose disability warrants it. For those who need us, we will always be there.

# Determining Eligibility

**a** parent, relative or guardian who believes that a family member meets the criteria for RCOC services may contact the center for an evaluation. *(A social service or health care agency representative or a friend also may initiate the process, but RCOC can assess an individual only after a family member or guardian requests our services.)*



## **The four criteria for eligibility are:**

- the disability is due to intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, or a condition similar to intellectual disability,
- the disability began before the age of 18,
- the disability is likely to continue indefinitely, and
- the disability is substantially handicapping.

*An important note on referrals; when in doubt, call us! Our intake and assessment process is carefully designed to determine eligibility.*



*It's better to refer someone for evaluation than to assume they don't qualify for our services.*

# Developmental Disabilities

## *Guidelines to Eligibility Criteria*



**h**ow is someone officially identified as having a developmental disability? Here are a few guidelines that may help you determine whether a child or other loved one meets the criteria for Regional Center of Orange County services.

## **Intellectual Disability**

People with intellectual disability experience difficulties in learning and social adjustment, and develop intellectually at a below-average rate.

Depending on the level of intellectual impairment, people with intellectual disability can experience varying degrees of academic, vocational and social skills growth.

To qualify for services at RCOC, people with intellectual disability usually have full-scale and verbal or performance IQ's of 70 or below; and are substantially handicapped in communication, learning, self-care, mobility, self-direction, and the capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency. In addition, their condition is not solely psychiatric and not solely a learning disability.

## **Cerebral Palsy**

Cerebral palsy is a disorder of posture and movement that results from brain dysfunction. Some people with cerebral palsy are intellectually disabled; others have normal intelligence.

The disorder is characterized by stiff and difficult movement, or involuntary movement and balance problems, or poor body tone. Speech problems are also common.

Since early intervention can be quite helpful, early diagnosis is important. Among the measures that determine whether a person with cerebral palsy will qualify for RCOC services are substantial handicaps in communication, learning, self-care, mobility, self-direction, and the capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency.

## Epilepsy

Epilepsy occurs when there is a sudden, brief change in the way the brain works — a disturbance in the brain's electrical activity. Repeated disturbances of this type — called recurrent seizures — can affect a person's actions, movement or consciousness for a brief period of time, and are the defining feature of epilepsy. To qualify for services at RCOC, people with epilepsy must experience substantial handicaps in communication, learning, self-care, mobility, self-direction, and the capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency.

## Autism

A developmental disability that usually appears during the first three years of life, autism is characterized by impairment in social interaction, nonverbal and verbal communication skills, and imaginative activity.



Early signs of autism may include a failure to cuddle, indifference or resistance to physical contact, lack of eye contact, absent or delayed language, monotonous voice tone, repetitive speech and body movements, a strong reaction to small changes, and a low tolerance for frustration.

Individuals with autism who may qualify for RCOC services function on a level comparable to that of an intellectually disabled person, and have a major impairment in their cognitive or social functioning.

## Other Conditions

Other conditions may also qualify for RCOC services. Typically, these are conditions that are similar to intellectual disability; cause a substantial handicap in communication, learning, self-care, mobility, self-direction, and the capacity for independent living or economic self-sufficiency.

## The Eligibility Process



**W**hen you contact Regional Center of Orange County, you will speak first with an intake screener, who will ask some preliminary questions to determine if you may qualify for our services. Within 15 days of your initial contact, RCOC will schedule an assessment appointment.

## Early Intervention

One of RCOC's most important jobs is our service to infants who are at risk of developing disabilities. Through early intervention, we often are able to help young children and their families overcome the conditions that put the children at risk, or to help parents of youngsters with developmental disabilities as they help their children maximize their potential.

Children who receive services from RCOC are reviewed periodically, since early intervention often eliminates developmental delays that bring children to RCOC.

*(Please see our Early Intervention literature for more information on these services.)*





# Realizing Each Person's Potential



All people – whether they have developmental disabilities or not – need to feel fulfilled, to believe that they have made the most of their interests and abilities, done the most with their lives. Each person's goals are different, each dream is unique. To help the people we serve pursue those goals – to achieve those dreams – while helping to ensure their health and safety, is why RCOC exists, and it is what we work toward every day. That is why we are here.

**i**n keeping with the spirit and the purpose of the 1969 Lanterman Act, Regional Center of Orange County serves people with developmental disabilities and their families.



It is our mission to help the people we serve obtain the services and the support they need to live their lives as fully and independently as their abilities enable them to do. We accomplish this by securing and coordinating the services, and by establishing the support network, every individual needs to live, work, learn and recreate in the community.

In all we do, we strive to provide maximum satisfaction to those we serve and their families, to offer quality services that honor the dignity of every individual, and to welcome opportunities for innovation that will benefit both the people we serve and the communities in which they live.

# Regional Center of Orange County

*Convenient Locations to Serve You*

## **Mailing Address**

### **For All Locations:**

P.O. Box 22010  
Santa Ana, CA 92702-2010

## **Corporate Office**

1525 N. Tustin Ave.  
Santa Ana, CA  
(714) 796-5100 (24 hours)  
(714) 796-5200 fax  
[www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)

## **Central Area Office**

1525 North Tustin Avenue  
Santa Ana, CA  
(714) 796-5100 (24 hours)  
(714) 796-5200 fax  
(714) 667-6021 TTY  
[www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)

## **West Area Office**

10803 Hope Street, Suite A  
Cypress, CA  
(714) 796-5100 (24 hour)  
(714) 796-5200 fax  
(714) 252-8165 TTY  
[www.rcocdd.com](http://www.rcocdd.com)





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