REGIONAL CENTER
OF ORANGE COUNTY

BOARD

GOVERNANCE

POLICIES

This model of Board of Governance focuses on VISION, VALUES, and ENDS: and, within the guidelines established by other Policies, grants the Executive Director the authority to make all further decisions related to the operation of the organization.

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I. ENDS POLICIES

A. Mission Statement

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) is a private non-profit organization that, as mandated by the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, collaborates with persons with developmental disabilities, their families and the community to secure individualized services and supports that enhance the quality of life for the people we serve and assists them in realizing their full potential.

B. Vision Statement

Every person served by RCOC is a valued member of the community and achieves their individual potential.

C. Value Statements

1. RCOC is a conscientious steward of public funds and recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

2. RCOC abides by the laws of local, state and federal governments at all times and also strives to comply with its own Policies, Procedures and Guiding Principles.

3. RCOC utilizes a person-centered planning framework that demonstrates an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the lifestyle and cultural background of persons served and their families.

4. All information and records obtained by RCOC in the course of intake, assessment and ongoing delivery of services are confidential and disclosed only according to the conditions mandated by the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act.

D. Guiding Principles

Within the context of its mission, vision and values statements, RCOC shall use best efforts to follow the Guiding Principles set forth below.

1. Community Life

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Persons served and their families have knowledge of their healthcare needs, access to qualified medical communities, and support necessary to utilize

recommended health services that prevent illness, promote wellness, and are sensitive to their unique needs.

- Persons served have access to information about ways to live longer, experience better health, and practice health-promoting behaviors such as exercising regularly, refraining from smoking, and obtaining timely health checkups and screenings.

- Persons served and their families have knowledge of, access to and opportunity for participation in community activities and resources of their choosing.

2. Self-Advocacy/Self-Determination Supports

    - Persons served make decisions about all aspects of their lives.

    - Persons served choose the members of their Circle of Support.

    - Persons served have the opportunity and choice to have relationships, get married and have a family.

    - Persons served live, work, learn and socialize in settings that maximize opportunity to be with persons not paid to be with them.

3. Family Supports

    - Families are informed advocates for their loved ones with developmental disabilities.

    - Parents/Guardians are the decision makers for their minor children.

    - Family support services are flexible and innovative in meeting the family's needs as they evolve over time, are tailored to the preferences of the individual family, and are consistent with their cultural norms and customs.

    - Services and supports for families recognize, facilitate and build on family strengths, natural supports and existing community resources.

    - When preferred by the person served, RCOC supports the ongoing involvement of family members of adult children.

4. Early Intervention and Prevention

    - Prevention and early intervention services, supports and public awareness activities are designed and implemented to prevent the onset of a disability and/or to improve developmental outcomes.

    - Persons served are provided with needed services and supports in a family-focused and collaborative fashion.

5. Living Options

    - Culturally-sensitive services and supports are provided so that persons served can make informed choices on where and with whom they live, including owning or renting their own homes.

    - Families whose minor or adult children choose to remain in the family home are supported through available resources.

    - Persons served live in homes where they receive quality care and can form relationships.

6. Education/Lifelong Learning

    - Persons served have the opportunity to be educated with their peers without disabilities in classrooms at their neighborhood schools.

    - RCOC advocates for appropriate educational opportunities for the school-aged persons it serves.

    - Persons served have lifelong learning opportunities to enhance and ensure full participation in community life.

7. Work

    - Persons served have the opportunity and support to work in integrated employment settings that are meaningful, valued by the community, and in which they are appropriately compensated and respected.

8. Socialization, Recreation and Leisure

    - Leisure skills and socialization opportunities are important aspects of life and are considered essential in the development of the Person-Centered Plan.

    - Persons served have the opportunity to participate in personally meaningful leisure activities of their choosing.

    - Families provide and encourage the development of socialization skills and opportunities for their children.

    - Integrated recreation and leisure activities in the community are a valuable part of developing socialization skills and building social networks.

9. Service Planning and Coordination

- Service coordinators are caring, knowledgeable and competent in service planning, coordination and resources.

- Service coordinators inform families of their rights and the services and supports available to them.

- Service planning and coordination is a collaborative effort between RCOC, persons served and their families to identify needed services and supports.

- Person-centered planning takes into account the choices and preferences of the persons served and their families, and the identification of generic resources and natural supports.

- Services and supports assist persons served and their families to develop support networks leading to reduced dependence on paid supports.

- Services and supports are sensitive to the diverse religious, cultural, language, socioeconomic and ethnic characteristics of persons' served and their families' communities.

10. Administration and Governance

    - RCOC will maximize all alternative sources of funding for necessary services and supports including federal and generic funding.

    - The public funds that support the service system are expended in a fashion that is person served-directed, cost-effective, consistent with good business practices, and that reflect RCOC's Guiding Principles and diligent stewardship.

    - RCOC's staffing pattern reflects and is sensitive to the cultural and ethnic characteristics of its service areas.

    - The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

    - RCOC maximizes community input in decision making.

    - RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

    - The RCOC Board of Directors will possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the Orange County community it serves.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will be actively involved in the organization (e.g., attendance and participation). The Board will provide appropriate support to maximize effective participation by all its members.

Last Policy Review Date: May 18, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: June 4, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before June 4, 2028

II. POLICIES ON THE BOARD-EXECUTIVE RELATIONSHIP

To facilitate optimum effectiveness, the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Board of Directors recognizes the Board's responsibility as being generally confined to establishing the broadest of policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Executive Director. The ENDS policies direct the Executive Director to achieve certain results for certain persons; the Executive Limitations Policies constrain the Executive Director to act within acceptable boundaries of prudence and ethics.

All Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Executive Director; likewise, staff accountability also comes through the Executive Director.

A. The Executive Director is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions and develop all activities which are true to the Board's policies. The Board may, by extending its policies, or in response to a matter of major importance, "undelegate" areas of the Executive Director's authority, but will respect the Executive Director's choices so long as the delegation continues. This does not prevent the Board from obtaining information about activities in the delegated areas.

B. Only the Board as a whole, by majority vote, has authority over the Executive Director. While the Executive Director will typically respond to requests from individuals or committees for information or action, if, in the Executive Director's judgment, the request is inappropriate or requires an excessive amount of staff time, the Executive Director may negotiate an alternative response to the original request. In those rare instances where a compromise cannot be successfully negotiated, the Board reserves final authority.

C. The Executive Director may not perform, allow or cause to be performed, any act which is unlawful, insufficient to meet commonly accepted business and professional ethics, in violation of funding source or regulatory agency requirements, or contrary to explicit Board constraints (see Executive Limitations Policies) on executive authority.

D. The Executive Director shall be hired by the Board of Directors to provide professional leadership and administration of the organization's programs and services. When a vacancy occurs in the position of Executive Director, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to appoint an Acting Executive Director, and an Executive Search Committee shall be formed to recruit the most appropriate candidate for the position.

E. The performance of the Executive Director shall be monitored and reviewed annually by the Board of Directors**.** The Executive Committee shall meet with the Executive Director to present the results of the Board's review. The Executive Committee shall, guided by RCOC's Policy on Human Resource Development (found in the Executive Limitations Policies), recommend any adjustments to the compensation of the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors.

F. The Executive Director shall provide the following written documents to the Executive Committee as stated:

1. Annual performance reviews, a statement of total compensation and Conflict of Interest Statements for each executive management employee reporting directly to the Executive Director.

2. Annual confirmation that mandatory employee training requirements have been satisfied by the Executive Director and each executive management employee reporting directly to the Executive Director.

3. Annual confirmation that the Executive Director and each executive management employee reporting directly to the Executive Director are accurately reporting their time and attendance.

4. Annual reporting of monthly expense reimbursement reports for the Executive Director and each executive management employee reporting directly to the Executive Director.

5. Annual succession/development plans for the Executive Director and executive management positions.

6. Biennial leadership survey of the Executive Director by each executive management employee reporting directly to the Executive Director and biennial leadership survey of each executive management employee by employees reporting directly to that executive management employee. A summary and analysis of the surveys will be provided to the Board members.

Last Policy Review Date: October 20, 2025
No Revisions Recommended to Board: November 6, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before November 6, 2027

III. POLICIES ON GOVERNANCE

A. **Policy on Leadership**. The Board of Directors (also referred to as Directors in this policy) and management staff of the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) shall be committed to providing effective leadership and stability for the organization so that its mission can be accomplished. The Board will approach its task in a manner that emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail, clear distinction of board and staff roles, future rather than past or present, and proactivity rather than reactivity.

B. **Policy on Board Members' Responsibilities**. In fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as members of the RCOC Board of Directors, Board members will be expected to demonstrate their level of commitment in the following ways:

1. Commitment to Mission by:

    - Keeping the mission of RCOC clearly and consistently in mind
    - Not compromising principles upon which the organization is based
    - Continually thinking of ways to enhance the organization
    - Endeavoring to assure the rights and entitlements of persons with disabilities
    - Progressively assisting the organization to equip and enable persons with disabilities to attain the fullest possible independence, employment, participation in an integrated community and freedom of choice by supporting the provision of options in daily living
    - Being aware of the changing trends in service delivery to persons with disabilities

2. Commitment to Involvement by:

    - Regularly preparing for, attending and participating in Board meetings
    - Being an active and regularly attending member of at least one Board committee
    - Carefully and clearly considering all decisions on policy issues
    - Attending occasional extended meetings or weekend retreats to increase understanding and commitment to the organization
    - Identifying prospective new Board members and referring them to the Board Recruitment and Training Committee
    - Resigning from the Board if they become unable to continue as a fully committed Board member during their term of office

3. Commitment to Fellow Directors to Keep Board Meetings Friendly, Considerate and Productive by:

    - Listening to the ideas of others with an open mind
    - Being an active voice in promoting change towards excellence

- Having faith in the process of open, purposeful discussion, not being afraid to ask seemingly elementary questions, and steadily attempting to facilitate agreement or consensus on issues
- Listening with understanding to those expressing complaints or concerns and then referring them to the Executive Director or Board Chairperson so that the issue may be further explained and whenever possible, creatively resolved

C. <u>Policy on Officer Responsibilities</u>. Officers of the Board are in the service of the Board. As such, they are bound by Board wishes and by limits of Board authority. The officers may meet as a group with the Executive Director for purposes of preparing agendas or other pre-Board work, but they may not act in place of the Board except as specifically provided in the Bylaws.

Specific officer responsibilities are:

1. **<u>Chairperson</u>**: The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board and the Executive Committee, perform all duties incident to the office, and perform such other duties as provided in the Bylaws or as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board. The Chairperson or Executive Director shall have the authority to take action on the following matters without prior Board approval:

   a. Appeals on legal or administrative proceedings;

   b. Responses on legal or administrative proceedings; and

   c. Procedural matters arising from RCOC's contract with the Department of Developmental Services.

   The above actions may be taken when, in the opinion of the Chairperson it is not feasible to hold a special Board meeting or to defer action until the next regular meeting. All Directors shall be notified immediately, in writing, of the action taken. (RCOC Bylaws Section 3.04)

2. **<u>Vice-Chairperson</u>**: The Vice-Chairperson shall perform all duties and exercise all powers of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is absent or is otherwise unable to act. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform such duties as may be prescribed from time-to-time by the Board of Directors. (RCOC Bylaws Section 3.05)

3. **<u>Secretary</u>**: The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the Directors, shall be the custodian of the corporate records, shall give all notices as are required by law or by the Bylaws, and shall perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may be required by law, the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, or which may be assigned from time to time by the Board. All or part of the above duties may be delegated to the Executive Director or such other staff as may be designated by the Executive Director. (RCOC Bylaws Section 3.06)

4. **Treasurer**: The Treasurer shall render reports and accountings to the Directors from time-to-time regarding the finances of RCOC. All or part of the above duties may be delegated to the Executive Director or such other staff as may be designated by the Executive Director. (RCOC Bylaws Section 3.07)

D. Policy on Board Committees. Board committees will be appointed and function as needed. Standing committees and their purposes are as follows:

1. **Purpose of Committees** – Each Committee shall exist for the purpose of providing advice, recommendations and technical assistance to the Board. A Committee shall not have authority to take any action which requires approval of the Board. (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.10)

2. **Standing Committees** – Standing Committees of the Board may be established by the Board of Directors or the Chairperson. With the exception of the Vendor Advisory Committee, membership on a Committee shall be decided by the Chairperson. For all committees in which the Chairperson is not a member, the Chairperson of the Board shall be an ex-officio member of all such committees or may delegate the Vice-Chairperson to act in that capacity. (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.01)

3. **Executive Committee** – There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary**,** and Treasurer of the Board and if none of these officers is a person served by RCOC, then the Chairperson may appoint a Director who is a person served by RCOC. The Chairperson may include other Board members to provide additional support (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.02). Subject to applicable laws limiting a committee's authority, the Executive Committee shall conduct business as is delegated by the Board of Directors, including annually meeting with the Executive Director to present the results of the Board's Performance Review. The Executive Committee, shall, guided by RCOC's Policy on Human Resource Development (found in the Executive Limitations Policies), also recommend any adjustments to the compensation of the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee shall also be involved in the development of the organization's strategic planning.

4. **Vendor Advisory Committee** – The Board shall establish a Vendor Advisory Committee pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4622(i).

5. **Peer Advisory Committee** – The Board shall establish a Consumer Advisory Committee pursuant to Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4622(h), which RCOC chooses to call a Peer Advisory Committee. The Chairperson also may appoint non-Board members to provide additional support in a non-voting capacity. (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.04)

6. **Policies and Outcomes Committee –** The Board shall establish a Policies and Outcomes Committee composed of members of the Board as appointed by the Chairperson. The Chairperson may also appoint non-Board members to provide

additional support in a non-voting capacity. The Policies and Outcomes Committee shall be responsible for reviewing the outcomes of the organization's efforts towards its Mission/Guiding Principles. This committee shall review and/or draft such additional policies that are necessary to meet the organization's Mission. The committee shall, no less than biennially, review each policy for its continued usefulness and clarity. (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.05)

7. **Legislative and Community Awareness Committee –** The Legislative and Community Awareness Committee shall be composed of members of the Board as appointed by the Chairperson. The Chairperson also may appoint non-Board members to provide additional support in a non-voting capacity. The Committee shall be responsible to develop relationships with RCOC's legislative delegation, to review pending legislation affecting people with developmental disabilities, and to educate the Board on such matters. Additionally, the Committee is charged with increasing awareness of RCOC, identifying community resources available to the individuals served by RCOC and their families, and collaborating with organizations in the community to support people with developmental disabilities in Orange County. (RCOC Bylaws 4.06)

8. **Budget and Finance Committee** – The Budget and Finance Committee shall be composed of the Treasurer and other members of the Board as appointed by the Chairperson. The Chairperson also may appoint non-Board members to provide additional support in a non-voting capacity. The Budget and Finance Committee shall be responsible to oversee the financial stability and integrity of the organization. (RCOC Bylaws 4.07)

9. **Board Recruitment and Training Committee** – The Board Recruitment and Training Committee shall be composed of the Chairperson and other members of the Board as appointed by the Chairperson. The Chairperson may appoint other non-Board members to provide additional support in a non-voting capacity. The Board Recruitment and Training Committee shall be responsible for assessing the composition of the Board and needed skills, recruiting potential new Directors to meet those needs, reviewing and considering candidates for the Board, recommending Director candidates for consideration by the Board and recommending new and ongoing training topics for Board members. (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.08)

10. **Nominating Committee –** The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Chairperson and three members of the Board as appointed by the Chairperson. The Nominating Committee shall nominate one Director for each of the offices of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary and present the nominations to the Board of Directors at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board immediately preceding the expiration of the current officers' terms. (RCOC Bylaws Section 4.09)

Last Policy Review Date: April 21, 2025
No Revisions Recommended to the Board: May 1, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before May 1, 2027

IV. EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS POLICIES

The Executive Director may neither cause nor allow any organizational practices that do not adhere to the following policies:

A. Policy on Legal Requirements. Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) will comply with the legal requirements and regulations of all governmental authorities and legally authorized agencies under whose authority it operates.

B. Policies on Non-Discrimination.

1. Equal Employment Opportunity. RCOC shall recruit, hire, train, and promote in all job titles, including interns, apprentices, and volunteers, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, age, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, military and veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by law. All personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, RCOC-sponsored training, apprenticeships, internships, volunteer opportunities, transfer, demotion, termination, layoff, and return from layoff, shall be administered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, age, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, military and veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by law. Additionally, RCOC will provide registered domestic partners with all rights and benefits as required by law.

2. Non-Discrimination on Basis of Handicap. In furtherance of our nation's commitment to end discrimination on the basis of disability, and in accordance with the provisions of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Fair Employment and Housing Act, and all regulations properly issued there-under to protect the rights of disabled persons, it is RCOC policy that: No program or activity administered by RCOC shall exclude from participation, deny benefits to or subject to discrimination any individual solely by reason of his or her disability. Equal employment opportunity will be extended to qualified disabled persons in all aspects of the employer-employee relationship, including recruitment, hiring, upgrading, training, promotion, transfer, discipline, layoff, recall and termination. It is further affirmed that RCOC will provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled employee or applicant.

C. Policy on Human Resource Development. RCOC is committed to recruiting, managing, developing and retaining appropriate personnel qualified to meet the needs of the people served by the organization and who contribute to the accomplishment of the mission in a high quality manner. Therefore, compensation for all employees will be based upon the following principles:

1. Compensation will support and will be used as a vehicle to communicate RCOC's values, specific objectives, and goals;

2. Pay programs will reflect the external market, yet ensure internal equity; and

3. Flexibility will be incorporated to permit RCOC to respond to the changing regulatory and competitive environments, and to respond to other issues which increase its challenges.

D. Policy Against Harassment.

1. Prohibition Against Harassment. RCOC is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment, as well as harassment and discrimination based on such factors as race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, age, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, military and veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local laws. RCOC prohibits unwelcome, harassing or discriminatory conduct by employees, managers, supervisors, or other third parties towards other employees, interns, apprentices, volunteers, non-employees with whom RCOC has a business, service, or professional relationship, or other persons with whom employees come into contact, even if such conduct does not rise to the level of harassment or discrimination as defined by law.

2. Complaint Procedure. Any individual who believes that they have been the victim of harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or abusive conduct, should immediately report this problem to their supervisor, the Director of Human Resources, or the Executive Director either verbally or in writing. Supervisors must report complaints of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or abusive conduct, to the Director of Human Resources. All complaints will be investigated. Investigations will be timely, impartial, fair, and thorough. Investigations will be as confidential as possible under the circumstances. Employees are prohibited from impeding an investigation, and RCOC will not allow retaliation against any employee participating in an investigation. Information obtained during the process will be only shared with those individuals on a need-to-know basis. RCOC will provide all parties appropriate due process and reach conclusions based on the evidence collected. When the investigation discloses a violation of this policy, appropriate remedial action will be taken and feedback given to the complaining employee. The Human Resources Director or the Executive Director will promptly notify RCOC's legal counsel about the matter.

E. Policy on Professionalism, Rights, Health and Safety.

1. Each RCOC employee will maintain professional and productive conduct. RCOC employees will treat each other professionally and with courtesy at all times. Differences of opinion on work issues should be expressed in a constructive manner that promotes the sharing of ideas and effective teamwork to resolve problems and providing the services and supports needed by those served by RCOC.

2. RCOC will maintain a clean, safe environment and will comply with all applicable governmental regulations related to environment, health and safety, including

training for staff and individuals served, external inspections of the premises and appropriate actions to remedy potential problems, implementation and testing of emergency plans and procedures, and timely review and follow-up on accident and injury reports.

F. Policy on Financial Practices.

1. Budgeting. Budgeting for any fiscal period or the remaining part of any fiscal period shall not deviate materially from Board Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy or fail to show a generally acceptable level of foresight. Accordingly, the Executive Director shall ensure that the budgeting process:

    a. Includes preparation of an annual report, including both operating and capital expenditures, which is used to communicate and monitor RCOC's use of financial resources in a manner which is consistent with (a) Board Ends priorities, (b) fiscal responsibility, and (c) strategic planning;

    b. Results in a budget which is an appropriate and accurate expression of the mission and policies of RCOC. If the process results in a deficit projection, a clear explanation of the circumstances shall be presented to the Board by the Executive Director; and

    c. Maintains an adequate cash and cash equivalents reserve.

2. Financial Condition. With respect to monitoring the actual financial condition of RCOC, the Executive Director shall ensure that:

    a. Audited financial statements are prepared by an independent, Certified Public Accountant and presented to the Board of Directors on an annual basis;

    b. Monthly summary reports are prepared comparing year-to-date budget versus actual figures and a report is given by the Treasurer at Board of Directors' meetings;

    c. All financial obligations, including tax payments, are paid in a timely manner;

    d. Adequate insurance is maintained to safeguard RCOC's assets including hazard, comprehensive, workers compensation, liability and Directors and Officers Liability.

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V. POLICY ON EXECUTIVE PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Board of Directors will track executive performance by monitoring in such a way as to have systematic assurance of policy compliance, yet leave the Board free to concentrate most of its time on creating the future rather than checking the past. To those ends, the Board's approach to monitoring will be based on its governance philosophy and carried out in a relatively automatic way. The Board will monitor those agency characteristics which it has addressed ahead of time in explicit statements of policy. The purpose of such monitoring is simply to determine, in fact, if Board policies are being met. Since the Board speaks to the executive through "ends" policies and "executive limitation" policies, monitoring finds whether ends are being achieved and limitations are being followed.

Monitoring will occur in one or a combination of the following activities:

- **Internal Reports:** Periodic reports from the Executive Director to the Board.
- **External Judges:** Auditors, site inspectors, or other external assessors shall be retained to answer certain monitoring questions.
- **Audits by Governmental Agencies:** Draft and final audits

Each policy of the Board in "ends" and "executive limitations" categories shall be classified by the Board according to the frequency and method of monitoring.

Policy Category	Method	Frequency
Protection of assets	External judge (audit)	Annual
Financial condition	Internal report	Every Board Meeting
	External judge (audit)	Annual
Employee Status Report	Internal report	Every Board Meeting
Compensation and benefits	Internal report	Annual
Sufficiency of Allocation Report	Internal report	Every Board Meeting
Adherence to Guiding Principles		
Operations Report • Community Life • Family Support • Early Intervention/Prevention • Living Options • Work • Service Planning and Coordination • Administration and Governance	Internal report	Every Board Meeting

(Table continued)

Policy Category	Method	Frequency
National Core Indicators Survey Results	Internal Report	Annual
Government Agency Audits		
Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Fiscal Audit		Biennial
DDS/Department of Health Care Services Medicaid Waiver Audit		Annual
DDS/Federal Early Start Audit		Annual
DDS, Family Home Agency/Foster Family Agency Audit		Annual

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VI. PURCHASE OF SERVICE POLICY

It is the intent of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) § 4500 et seq.) (Lanterman Act) that regional centers assist their persons served with developmental disabilities and their families in securing specialized services and supports which maximize opportunities and choices in living, working, learning and recreating in the community.

Services and supports for the person served shall be identified through the Multidisciplinary/ Planning Team process which shall include at a minimum, the person served, the service coordinator and, when appropriate, the person's parents, legal guardian and/or conservator.

For those persons in the Self-Determination Program (SDP), they will have a specific budget to purchase the services and supports necessary to implement their Individual Program Plan (IPP). Within the parameters set forth in the Lanterman Act, SDP participants may choose their services and pick which providers deliver those services. SDP participants are responsible for staying within their annual budget.

In identifying those services and supports to be included in the IPP, the Multidisciplinary/Planning Team shall be guided by:

- The needs and preferences of the person served and family.
- The promotion of community integration which will assist the person served to lead a more independent, productive**,** and normal life in a stable, safe and healthy environment.
- The least restrictive environment.
- Utilization of existing natural supports (e.g., family, friends, coworkers), circles of support, generic resources**,** and private resources when applicable.

In accordance with the Lanterman Act and Early Start program, services and supports may be purchased under the following circumstances:

- Services and supports are provided within the framework of the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Guiding Principles.
- The service and/or support has been identified in the Individual Program Plan/Person Centered Plan (IPP/PCP) or the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), by the Multidisciplinary/Planning Team, as necessary to accomplish all or part of the IPP or IFSP.
- The need for the service and/or support is related to the person's developmental disability as per the Lanterman Act.
- The need for the services and/or supports is related to the person’s developmental delay(s) or established risk conditions as per the California Early Intervention Services

Act (California Government Code, Title 14, California Early Intervention Services Act, Chapter 4, Eligibility, Section 95014(a)(1)-(3)).

- Authorization for the service and/or support has been authorized by RCOC prior to the provision of services.

- All funding sources, both generic and private, when applicable, have been sought and fully utilized.

- Circles of support and natural supports have been considered and utilized, when appropriate.

- The provider of the service and/or support is vendored with RCOC or another regional center, and funding is not otherwise precluded.

- The cost of providing services and supports of comparable quality by different providers, if available, shall be reviewed, and the least costly available provider of comparable cost, including the cost of transportation, who is able to accomplish all or part of the person's individual program plan, consistent with the particular needs of the person served and family as identified in the individual program plan, shall be selected. (WIC §4648 (a)(6)(D))

Previously authorized services and supports may be renewed or continued if the above criteria continue to be met as well as:

- There is agreement among the members of the Multidisciplinary/Planning Team that reasonable progress toward objectives has been made as a result of the service and/or support, and the need for the service/support continues to exist (WIC §4648(a)(7)).

RCOC will not authorize funding for any form of therapy, devices, drugs, or services which are considered by recognized professionals to be experimental or which may be potentially harmful to the person served. (WIC §4648(a)(16); WIC §4502(b)(8); Title 17 §50510 (a)(9)).

In addition to the above, RCOC staff shall refer to RCOC's Purchase of Service Guidelines when authorizing a service request on behalf of a person served. Although specific service and support categories have been identified (e.g., respite, day care and transportation), the individualized service needs of each person served cannot always be anticipated. On a case-by-case basis, exceptions may be made to RCOC's Purchase of Service Guidelines. In these circumstances, the need for the service/support shall be documented and approval for the service/support shall be time limited.

The Multidisciplinary/Planning Team process by which the person's service and support needs are identified is a collaborative process, and every effort will be made by RCOC staff to assist the person served and family to identify alternative resources or other options for those services and supports which cannot be authorized by RCOC. Every effort will be made to resolve any differences. Should a disagreement exist regarding the provision or funding of a particular service or support based on RCOC's criteria, professional opinion, or best practice, then the person served, family, or authorized representative shall be advised by

RCOC's staff of their rights to a local informal meeting, mediation, or due process/fair hearing.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served make decisions about all aspects of their lives.

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Family support services are flexible and innovative in meeting the family's needs as they evolve over time, are tailored to the preferences of the individual family, and are consistent with their cultural norms and customs.

- Services and supports for families recognize, facilitate and build on family strengths, natural supports and existing community resources.

- Service coordinators inform families of their rights and the services and supports available to them.

- Person-centered planning is based upon choices and preferences and the identification of generic resources and natural supports.

- Services and supports are sensitive to the diverse religious, cultural, language, socioeconomic and ethnic characteristics of persons' served and their families' communities.

Last Policy Review Date: July 21, 2025
No Revisions Recommended to Board: September 4, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before September 4, 2027

VII. TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) is responsible for coordinating services for people with developmental disabilities who reside in Orange County. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to assuring that the services and supports provided to those we serve maximize opportunities and choices, utilize all possible sources of funding, including generic resources, and result in the maximum benefit possible.

POLICY

RCOC will serve the mobility needs of the individuals it serves by assuring an effective and efficient mix of accessible and safe transportation services to and from an eligible individual's primary day service/activity. These services shall enhance opportunities for persons served to access supports, services, and other community resources.

In meeting the mobility needs of those we serve, RCOC will:

- Use generic resources before expending regional center funds.
- Advocate for the maximum access to and utilization of public transit services for people with developmental disabilities.
- Encourage measurable improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of transportation services by gathering feedback from persons served who use public and specialized transportation services.
- Improve access to services by improving communication about and coordination of available transportation resources.
- Promote the efficient use of resources by eliminating duplication wherever possible.
- Promote the consideration of transportation issues and costs in all decisions.

SERVICE CRITERIA

The individual transportation needs of the person served will be determined by the Multidisciplinary/Planning Team.

The following criteria will be applied when authorizing transportation service. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

1. Whenever feasible, public transportation will be utilized first.
2. All adults requesting transportation will be assessed for mobility training.

3. Transportation services are typically purchased for one primary day service/activity (e.g., place of employment, day program). However, additional transportation may be purchased on an individual basis, but not as part of the primary program's transportation obligation (e.g., day program and/or college classes).

4. Those served by RCOC, parents of minor children and residential service providers are expected to provide routine transportation to medical, dental, or other appointments or functions. RCOC may fund incidental transportation on an exception basis in the following circumstances:

    - An individual is not financially capable of independently funding their own or their child's transportation.
    - The parent or surrogate has a disability which prevents them from transporting the person served by RCOC.
    - The individual's medical and/or physical condition requires the use of specialized transportation to accommodate transport.

CHILDREN UNDER AGE THREE

To maximize safety and quality assurance, parents and residential service providers are expected to transport infants to the primary day service/activity. Transportation for infants may be funded when there is documented exceptional need and the parent/residential service provider cannot accompany the child.

Authorized infant transportation will be reviewed every six months.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

- Persons served and their families have knowledge of, access to and opportunity for participation in any community activities and resources of their choosing.

- Persons served live, work, learn and socialize in settings that maximize opportunity to be with person not paid to be with them.

- Services and supports for families recognize, facilitate and build on family strengths, natural supports and existing community resources.

- RCOC will maximize all alternative sources of funding for necessary services and supports including federal and generic funding.

Last Policy Review Date: April 20, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: May 7, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before May 7, 2028

VIII. START-UP, GAP AND LAG FUNDING POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) is responsible for coordinating services for the individuals we serve. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to assuring that the services and supports provided to those we serve utilize all possible sources of funding, including generic resources.

POLICY

Start-Up

The contract between RCOC and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) requires regional centers to have a start-up policy approved by the Board of Directors. The RCOC/DDS contract states that the policy must ensure that the use of purchase of service funds is:

1. "Necessary for establishing a new or additional program, project or resource for providing services and support to consumers.

2. Of direct benefit to consumers.*

3. Supported by contracts with sufficient detail and measurable performance expectations and results.

4. Not used for the purchase of a provider's vehicle.

5. Not used for the lease of a provider's vehicle unless approved in advance by the Director or designee.

6. Not used for routine maintenance of a provider's plant or facility unless approved in advance by the Director or designee.

7. Not used for construction, renovation, alteration, improvement, or repair of real property that is not of direct medical or remedial benefit to the consumer."

RCOC recognizes that, under certain circumstances, it may be in the best interest of individuals served by RCOC to provide start-up funds. RCOC is under no obligation to provide start-up funds and the developers of new or additional programs should include these costs as part of their business plans.

If RCOC provides start-up funds, recipients will be selected through the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, as set forth in the Policy on Resource Development and

**RCOC no longer uses the term "consumer" but it is contained in RCOC's contract with DDS.*

Procurement. Start-up funds may be awarded outside the RFP process only if use of the RFP process is not feasible under the specific circumstances and the RCOC Board votes to approve the award. All start-up funding agreements will include a provision for fair and equitable recoupment of start-up funds should the fund recipient cease to provide services before a specified period of time.

Gap and Lag Funding

RCOC recognizes that, under certain circumstances, it may be in the best interest of individuals served by RCOC for RCOC to fund the period between licensing and Medi-Cal certification, which is known as Gap, for Department of Health licensed facilities, e.g., Intermediate Care Facility – Developmentally Disabled, Habilitative (ICF-DD/H). RCOC is under no obligation to fund Gap and the developer of a Health licensed facility should include these costs as part of its business plan.

RCOC does not fund the period between Medi-Cal certification and receipt of Medi-Cal payments which is known as Lag.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Persons served and their families have knowledge of their healthcare needs, access to qualified medical communities, and support necessary to utilize recommended health services that prevent illness, promote wellness, and are sensitive to their unique needs.

- RCOC will maximize all alternative sources of funding for necessary services and supports including federal and generic funding.

- The public funds that support the service system are expended in a fashion that is person served-directed, cost-effective, consistent with good business practices, and that reflect RCOC's Guiding Principles and diligent stewardship.

Last Policy Review Date: July 21, 2025
Date Revisions Approved by Board: September 4, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before September 4, 2027

IX. POLICY ON NOTIFICATION TO PERSONS SERVED AND FAMILIES OF SIGNIFICANT SERVICE DEFICITS

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) is responsible for coordinating services for people with developmental disabilities who reside in Orange County. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to assuring the health, well-being and safety of the individuals it serves.

POLICY

For any vendored service for which there exists either a verified immediate danger to persons served or a verified substantial inadequacy that poses a threat to the health and safety of any person served, RCOC will promptly notify persons served who are directly affected by the verified immediate danger or verified substantial inadequacy. In addition, where appropriate, the individuals' parents, legal guardians, or conservators will be promptly notified.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Persons served and their families have knowledge of their healthcare needs, access to qualified medical communities, and support necessary to utilize recommended health services that prevent illness, promote wellness, and are sensitive to their unique needs.

- Persons served live in homes where they receive quality care and can form relationships.

Last Policy Review Date: February 17, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: March 5, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before March 5, 2028

X. POLICY ON INFORMATION DISSEMINATION TO PERSONS SERVED, FAMILIES, AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

The purpose of this policy is to standardize formal communication of information to persons served, families, authorized representatives, and other interested parties. Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) will disseminate information in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, Welfare and Institutions Code section 4514. Information released will redact identifying person served and family information to protect confidentiality. Criteria to disseminate information and communication systems to facilitate information sharing with any interested party are as follows:

Information	Communication System
National Core Indicators	Link to Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) on the RCOC website and printed copy available upon request. Highlights published in the RCOC *Dialogue* annually.
Summary of external reviews of RCOC services, e.g., DDS financial audit, Home-Community Based Services audit including RCOC's response	RCOC website and printed copy available upon request of summary and audits.
All non-parent vendor information	RCOC website and, if requested prior to an initial planning team meeting, a list of applicable vendors will be provided. Subsequently, resource information will be made available by the Service Coordinator when a change in services is requested or anticipated, and/or upon request.
Vendor accreditation reports, Community Care Licensing reports, Dept. of Social Services reports, and Dept. of Health Services reports.	Links to applicable agency websites (e.g., Community Care Licensing, Department of Social Services) on RCOC website.
RCOC's annual quality assurance evaluations of residential facilities	Printed copy of the complete evaluations available upon request.
Vendor referral moratoriums	RCOC website and printed copy available upon request.

- Persons served and families will be informed of the availability of generic vendor data; this will be confirmed by signature of the person served/family that they have been informed of and/or have received such data at the initial Multidisciplinary/Planning Team meeting and/or the Individual Program Plan/Person Centered Plan (IPP/PCP).

- Persons served and families will be informed of the availability of specific vendor data as outlined above; this will be confirmed by signature of the person served/family that they have been informed of and/or have received such data at the initial Multidisciplinary/Planning Team meeting and/or the IPP/PCP.

- In the area of residential and day services, persons served/families will be provided with information regarding providers for the appropriate level of service, as determined by RCOC (e.g., community care facility, intermediate care facility, persons served to staff ratio).

- Additional information regarding a vendor's service deficiency(ies) and audit(s) will be made available to the person served and family as per RCOC guidelines, "Access to Vendor Records."

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Service coordinators inform families of their rights and the services and supports available to them.

- Services and supports are sensitive to the diverse religious, cultural, language, socioeconomic and ethnic characteristics of persons' served and their families' communities.

Last Policy Review Date: July 20, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: September 3, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before September 3, 2028

XI. POLICY ON INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVIDERS

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) desires to protect the interests of the individuals it serves and their families by making sure that providers will have the financial resources to compensate for damages that persons served may incur as a result of negligence or other wrongful acts by service providers. RCOC also desires to protect the interests of RCOC and the State by making sure that their financial resources are not required to compensate third parties who may be damaged as a result of negligent or wrongful acts by service providers. RCOC is committed to maximizing the health and safety of the individuals it serves.

POLICY

All service providers who are serving RCOC persons served shall maintain general, professional and sexual misconduct liability coverage, in amounts and scope of coverage as determined by RCOC, at all times while providing such services. RCOC shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of insurance. Service providers shall deposit with RCOC the Certificates of Insurance necessary to demonstrate compliance with this insurance requirement as a condition to the right to be paid for their services.

LIMITED EXEMPTION FOR FMS AS FISCAL AGENT

RCOC's Executive Director may, in their sole discretion, exempt service providers who provide Financial Management Services (FMS) solely as fiscal agents pursuant to the Bill Payer Model under the Self-Determination Program (Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4685.8), and who vendored under Service Code 315, from the obligation to provide sexual misconduct liability coverage.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

Last Policy Review Date: July 20, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: September 3, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before September 3, 2028

XII. POLICY ON BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Membership.

The composition of the Board shall comply with the provisions of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Lanterman Act). As set forth in Welfare and Institutions Code § 4622:

a) The governing board shall be composed of individuals with demonstrated interest in, or knowledge of, developmental disabilities.

b) The membership of the governing board shall include persons with legal, management or board governance, financial and developmental disability program skills.

c) The membership of the governing board shall include representatives of the various categories of disability to be served by the regional center.

d) The governing board shall reflect the geographic and ethnic characteristics of the area to be served by the regional center.

e) A minimum of 50 percent of the members of the governing board shall be persons with developmental disabilities or their parents or legal guardians. No less than 25 percent of the members of the governing board shall be persons with developmental disabilities.

f) Members of the governing board shall not be permitted to serve more than seven years within each eight-year period.

g) (1) The regional center shall provide necessary training and support to these board members to facilitate their understanding and participation, including issues relating to linguistic and cultural competency.
(2) As part of its monitoring responsibility, the department shall review and approve the method by which training and support are provided to board members to ensure maximum understanding and participation by board members.
(3) Each regional center shall post on its website information regarding the training and support provided to board members.

h) The governing board may appoint a consumers' advisory committee composed of persons with developmental disabilities representing the various categories of disability served by the regional center.

i) The governing board shall appoint an advisory committee composed of a wide variety of persons representing the various categories of providers from which the regional center purchases client services. The advisory committee shall provide advice, guidance, recommendations, and technical assistance to the regional center board in order to assist the regional center in carrying out its mandated

functions. The advisory committee shall designate one of its members to serve as a member of the regional center board.

In order to achieve balance and diversity, and comply with the mandates of the Lanterman Act (WIC § 4622), the RCOC Bylaws state that the Board shall consist of no more than nineteen (19) members and it is very desirable that the Board consist of no less than eight (8) members. In addition to the provisions of the Lanterman Act, the Board may also consider for membership persons whose skills include education, community service, public health, and others as appropriate to the needs of its constituencies.

By August 15th of each year, Regional Center of Orange County's (RCOC) governing board shall submit to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) detailed documentation, as determined by the department, demonstrating that the composition of the board is in compliance with Section 4622 (WIC § 4622.5).

B. Application Process for New Member.

1. The Chairperson of the Board shall appoint a Board Recruitment and Training Committee and shall appoint the Chairperson of such committee at the beginning of each fiscal year. The immediate past Chairperson, if still serving, shall serve as a member of the committee, as well as other members of the Board as appointed by the Chairperson.

2. Applications shall be available from the Executive Office and on the RCOC website. An application shall be provided to anyone upon request. A copy of this Policy on Board Membership and Application Process shall be given to each person with the application and will be available on the RCOC website.

3. Applications shall be submitted to the Executive Office and within five (5) business days of receipt of an application, a written acknowledgement will be mailed to the applicant stating that the application has been received.

4. The Board Recruitment and Training Committee shall meet at least quarterly to review the applications received for Board membership. As appropriate, one or more of the members of the Board Recruitment and Training Committee will schedule an interview with applicants after reviewing their applications. Other members of the Board as well as Executive Management Staff may be invited to participate in the interview process.

5. If, upon consideration of the application, a majority of the Board Recruitment and Training Committee recommends approval of the application, said recommendation shall be forwarded to the Executive Committee for approval. If the Executive Committee recommends approval of the application, it will be sent to the Board for its consideration and action at an upcoming Board meeting. The applicant shall be sent notice in writing by the Executive Office of the Board Recruitment and Training and Executive Committees' recommendations and invited to attend the next scheduled Board of Directors meeting. If the application is approved by the

Board, the applicant's Board term will begin on the date established by the Board when the member is elected.

6. If, upon consideration of the application, a majority of the Board Recruitment and Training Committee does not recommend approval of the application by the Board, the applicant shall be given notice in writing by the Executive Office of said action within five (5) business days of the decision of the Board Recruitment and Training Committee.

C. Exclusions.

1. As Board vacancies occur, the composition specified above shall be achieved by recruitment and/or consideration of new applications of persons who are not Board members.

2. If the composition of the Board is in jeopardy of being out of compliance with the provisions of Lanterman Act, if Board membership falls below the minimum of eight (8) members, or if the Board has identified a missing, but highly desirable skill set in its composition, the Board Recruitment and Training Committee shall convene immediately and will consider the current applications to fill any vacant positions.

3. This Policy shall not apply to a Board member whose term of office expires. When a Board member is eligible for and desires to be considered for Board approval for a new term of office, the Executive Committee will make a decision regarding whether or not the Board member will be recommended for a new term of office and will discuss its decision with the Board member prior to expiration of his or her term of office.

4. This Policy shall not apply to the Board member representing the Vendor Advisory Committee. As per the Lanterman Act (WIC § 4622), the Vendor Advisory Committee shall designate one of its members to serve as a member of the regional center board.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interest of the Orange County community it serves.

Last Policy Review Date: July 21, 2025
Date Revisions Approved by Board: September 4, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before September 7, 2027

XIII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Background and Purpose

The purpose of this Conflict of Interest Policy is to protect the interests of Regional Center of Orange County, Inc. (RCOC) and ensure that RCOC complies with all applicable laws prohibiting conflicts of interest.

The Lanterman Act provisions regarding conflicts of interest (COI) in regional centers are set forth in Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC), Sections 4626, 4626.5, and 4627. In addition, COI regulations are found at Title 17 California Code of Regulations, Sections 54500 through 54535.

This policy is intended to supplement but not replace applicable laws and regulations governing COI.

General Scope of Conflict Laws

RCOC shall comply with the regulations (Title 17, Sections 54500-54535) that contain COI rules and obligations that apply to regional centers:

(1) executive directors,
(2) governing board members,
(3) advisory committee board members,
(4) employees,
(5) contractors,
(6) agents, and
(7) consultants.

Executive Directors

The provisions for handling COI Statements and Conflicts by an Executive Director are also similar to those for Board Members. The precise provisions are contained in WIC, Sections 4626(a), 4626(g), and Title 17, Sections 54532, 54533, and 54534.

Governing Board Members

The provisions for handling COI Statements and conflicts by Board Members are contained in WIC, Sections 4626(a), 4626(g), and Title 17, Sections 54532, 54533, and 54534.

Advisory Committee Board Members

The regulations also identify possible conflicts for Advisory Committee Board Members. Title 17, Section 54521 states that there is a COI when a regional center advisory committee board member (appointed pursuant to WIC, Sections 4622(i)) is in any of the following positions for a business entity, entity, or provider from which the regional center purchases, obtains, or secures services for persons served:

(a) a member of the governing board, (b) a board committee member; (c) an owner; (d) a partner; (e) a shareholder; (f) an agent; (g) a manager; (h) an employee; (i) a contractor; or (j) a consultant, and that person does any of the following: (a) serves as an officer of the RC board; (b) votes on any fiscal manner affecting purchase of services from any RC provider; or (c) votes on any matters where the member has a financial interest.

An "advisory committee board member," as a board member, is required to complete a COI Reporting Statement just like all other board members (Title 17, Sections 54532, 54533, and 54534).

Employees

The provisions prohibiting conflicts of interest for employees are contained at Title 17, Sections 54526, 54527, 54528, 54529, and 52530. The basic concept is that regional center employees cannot place themselves in a position where their private, personal interests may conflict with their official duties (Title 17, Section 54529). Employees must be guided solely by the interests of the regional center and those we serve. They may not place themselves in a situation that creates a dilemma about advancing their personal interests instead of acting in the best interests of the regional center.

The regulations generally provide that the only employees who will have a conflict are employees with "decision or policy making authority" (Title 17, Section 54526). This is generally defined to include all employees except those with purely secretarial or clerical duties. Service Coordinators are deemed to be employees with "decision or policy making authority."

Contractors, Agents and Consultants

The provisions for handling COI Statements and Conflicts for Contractors, Agents and Consultants are also similar to those for employees. Title 17, Sections 54526, 54527, 54528, 54529, and 54530 identify what will constitute a conflict.

Finally, Title 17, Section 54533 addresses resolution of such conflicts.

Definitions

Decision or Policy Making Authority

The definition of "Decision or Policy-Making Authority" in Title 17, Section 54505(d) states that employees have such authority if they exercise judgment in making decisions that are not solely secretarial or clerical, including employees who make final decisions, compel decisions, make substantive recommendations, vote on obligations, or vote to approve selection of any director, trustee, agent, employee, contractor, or consultant for his or her entity.

The law deems Service Coordinators to have "decision or policy-making authority." This is because they generally participate on planning teams that make decisions, they make decisions about which programs and services to recommend to those we serve

and finally, Service Coordinators are listed in WIC, Section 4626(e), as persons who must complete the COI Reporting Statements.

Family Members

The regulations prohibit both the employee and a family member from holding certain positions and having certain financial interests, so the definition of a "family member" is critical. Most conflicts under these rules occur with family members. Title 17, Section 54505(f) states that the term "Family Member" includes the individual's:

> "spouse, domestic partner, parents, stepparents, grandparents, siblings, step-siblings, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, and parents-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, sons-in-law, and daughters-in-law." Cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews are not considered family members.

This definition includes associations by blood, marriage, and adoption.

RCOC's employees should avoid conflicts before they occur. The best way to do so is to ensure that a family member does not accept a position that will create a conflict. If a family member does take such a position, it may threaten the position of the employee by creating a conflict.

Business Entity, Entity or Provider

Business Entity, Entity or Provider is defined as:

> "…any individual, business venture, or state or local governmental entity from whom or from which the regional center purchases, obtains, or secures goods or services to conduct its operations. These entities or providers include, but are not limited to, residential facilities, intermediate care facilities, skilled nursing facilities, supported and independent living services, hospitals, medical groups, activity centers, housing providers, entities formed in support of the regional center, infant programs, clinics, laboratories, pharmacies, drug stores, ambulance services, furniture stores, equipment and supply stores, physicians, psychologists, nurses, therapists, teachers, social workers, and contract case managers. For purposes of these conflict-of-interest regulations "business entity, entity or provider" does not include a consumer or family member of a consumer who receives vouchers for consumer services."

Prohibited Conflicts

Conflict by Holding Position with Provider

A conflict exists when:

a Board Member,
an Executive Director,
or a family member of such person (Title 17, Section 54520),
an employee with decision making authority,

a Contractor,
an Agent,
a Consultant,
or family member of such person (Title 17, Section 54526), is any of the following for a provider:

(1) a governing board member,
(2) a board committee member,
(3) a director,
(4) an officer,
(5) an owner,
(6) a partner,
(7) a shareholder,
(8) a trustee,
(9) an employee,
(10) an agent,
(11) a contractor,
(12) a consultant,
(13) holds any position of management, or
(14) has decision or policy making authority.

Conflicts by Financial Interest in Provider

A conflict exists if a Board Member, Executive Director, employee, contractor, agent or consultant attempts to make or influence a decision in which the person, or a family member, has an interest.

A financial interest is defined in Title 17, Sections 54522 and 54527 as follows:

Financial interest, as used in this section, includes any current or contingent ownership, equity, or security interest that could result, directly or indirectly, in receiving a pecuniary gain or sustaining a pecuniary loss as a result of the interest in any of the following:

(1) business entity worth two thousand dollars ($2,000) or more.

(2) real or personal property worth two thousand dollars ($2,000) or more in fair market value.

(3) stocks or bonds worth two thousand dollars ($2,000) or more.

(4) intellectual property rights worth five hundred dollars ($500) or more.

(5) sources of gross income aggregating five hundred dollars ($500) or more within the prior 12 months.

(6) future interest for compensation of five hundred dollars ($500) or more.

(7) personal finances of two hundred fifty dollars ($250) or more.

Conflict Making Contract in which Financially Interested

Under Title 17, Sections 54523 and 54528, Board Members, Executive Directors, and employees, contractors, agents, and consultants, shall not be guided by personal interests and shall not have a financial interest in any contract they make in their official capacity. Such persons shall not make any contract which financially benefits a family member, unless benefits associated with the contract are available to regional center individuals we serve or their families generally. In interpreting and applying this section, the common law doctrine against COI and the authorities interpreting the doctrine shall govern.

General Prohibitions Against Conflicts

Board Members, Executive Directors, employees, contractors, agents and consultants must also avoid the general prohibitions against conflicts in Title 17, Sections 54524 and 54529, which are:

General Integrity – Must discharge their responsibilities with integrity and fidelity, and must not place themselves in a position where their private, personal interests conflict with their official duties.

Perform with Diligence – Must exercise powers conferred on the employee with disinterested skill, zeal and diligence for the benefit of regional center individuals.

Conflicts Not Addressed by Regulations - When a person becomes aware of a present or personal COI regarding a particular transaction that the regulations do not address, action must be taken. In that situation, the person must not participate in any discussion and must refrain from making any recommendation or decision regarding the present or potential COI that has not been specifically addressed in the regulations.

Conflicts Working with Family Members

Under Title 17, Section 54530(a), a COI exists where a regional center employee participates in the evaluation of an application for employment or bid for position or contract at the regional center, submitted by a family member. Under Title 17, Section 54530(b) a potential COI also exists when a regional center employee supervises his or her family member.

Obligations for a Regional Center to Identify Conflicts

COI Reporting Statement (Form DS 6016)

As required by WIC, Section 4626(e), DDS also issued a DDS COI Reporting Statement that RCOC uses.

Persons Who Must Submit Conflict Statements

WIC, Section 4626(e), provides that this statement must be completed annually by;

> "...each regional center governing board member and each regional center employee specified in the regulations, including, at a minimum, the executive director, every administrator, every program director, every service coordinator, and every employee who has decisionmaking or policymaking authority or authority to obligate the regional center's resources."

Further, Section 54531(b) of Title 17 provides:

> "Each regional center employee, contractor, agent, and consultant, who has authority to act on behalf of the regional center, or who has decision or policy-making authority.., shall complete and file an annual COI Reporting Statement with his or her respective regional center, whether or not the individual has identified a present or potential COI, by August 1 of each year."

Since some of the conflicts identified do not depend on having "decision making" authority, all employees of RCOC must complete the COI Reporting Statement.

Process for Submission of Statements

Annually: Regional Center Board Members, the Executive Director, and employees, contractors, agents and consultants shall complete and file an annual COI Statement by August 1 of each year (Title 17, Sections 54532(a) and 54531(b)). The statute mandates this for every employee referenced in WIC, Section 4626(e) (WIC, Section 4626(g)).

New Board Members, Executive Directors, Employees, Contractors, Agents and Consultants: Such new persons shall file a COI statement within 30 days of assuming the position (Title 17, Sections 54532(c) and 54531(c); WIC, Section 4626(f)).

Change in Status: Board Members, Executive Directors and regional center employees, contractors, agents and consultants shall complete and file a COI Reporting Statement with the regional center within 30 days of any change in status that creates a COI under Title 17, Sections 54532(d) and 54531(d). "Change in status includes, but is not limited to, a change in financial interests, legal commitment, regional center or board position or duties, or both, or outside position or duties, or both, whether compensated or not" (WIC, Section 4626(h)).

Executive Director Review: The Executive Director shall review each COI Reporting Statement that is submitted and within ten (10) working days of receipt of the statement shall determine whether a COI exists (Title 17, Sections 54531(e); WIC, Section 4626 (k)). Under Title 17, Section 54532, statements submitted by Board Members and the Executive Director must be submitted to DDS within ten (10) working days of receipt.

Obligations When COI Discovered: When a present or potential COI is identified for a Board member, Executive Director, employee, agent or consultant, RCOC must either (1) require the employee or other person to eliminate the conflict, or (2) mitigate and manage the conflict through a Conflict Resolution Plan, or the individual shall resign (Title 17, Section 54533(a)).

RCOC Must Submit Conflict Resolution Plan to DDS: When a present or potential COI has been identified and RCOC decides to mitigate and manage the conflict through a Conflict Resolution Plan, it must submit a copy of the completed COI Reporting Statement and a proposed Conflict Resolution Plan to DDS within 30 calendar days of receipt of the statement (Title 17, Section 54533(a) and (b)).

Submission of COI Policy to DDS and Posting on Website

Each regional center was required to submit a COI policy to DDS by July 1, 2011, and post the policy on its website by August 1, 2011 (WIC, Section 4626.5).

Obligation to Resolve Identified Conflicts

When a conflict is identified either through a COI Reporting Statement or by notification of DDS, the Executive Director then has a specific obligation to resolve the matter, and to take certain action.

Executive Director Reviews Conflict Statements

Under Title 17, Section 54531(e), a regional center Executive Director is required to review the completed COI Reporting Statement of each employee within ten (10) working days of receipt and determine whether a present or potential conflict exists.

Regional Center Must Eliminate Conflict or File Conflict Resolution Plan

Under Title 17, Section 54533(a) a Board member, Executive Director, employee, contractor, agent or consultant with a present or potential COI must eliminate the conflict, or if the regional center permits, manage and mitigate the conflict through a Conflict Resolution Plan, or the individual shall resign. There is no legal obligation to submit a Conflict Resolution Plan, since it is merely an option the regional center may choose to select. The regional center has every right to simply require that the conflict be eliminated.

Submission of Conflict Resolution Plan

When the Executive Director learns of a conflict either through review of submitted COI Reporting Statements, or from DDS, under Title 17, Section 54533(b) the Executive Director shall either require the conflict to be eliminated, or shall submit an employee's COI Reporting Statement and proposed Conflict Resolution Plan to DDS (1) within 30 days of receipt of the COI Reporting Statement or (2) within 30 days of receipt of DDS' notification of a conflict.

Content of Conflict Resolution Plan

Title 17, Section 54533(g) identifies the requirements of a Conflict Resolution Plan. It must describe the precise nature of the conflict, including the type of conflict, the relationship between the individuals involved (when a family member is involved), and the roles and identity of each person, i.e., the employee and the family member (Title 17, Section 54533(g)(1)).

Under Title 17, Section 54533(g)(2) the Conflict Resolution Plan must then identify the actions the regional center will take to eliminate or mitigate and manage the conflict. This can involve either resignation of the family member creating the conflict, refraining from participation in a certain category of matters that create the conflict, a change of position, duties, or assignment, or a divestiture of financial interests.

Further, the Conflict Resolution Plan must "provide a detailed explanation of how each of the proposed actions will eliminate, mitigate or manage the conflict (Title 17, Section 54533(g)(3)). The plan must provide the name, position, and duties of the individuals who will be responsible for monitoring the plan, (Title 17, Section 54533(g)(4)), and the plan must be signed by the individuals subject to the plan under Title 17, Section 54533(g)(4).

Posting of Conflict on Website

Under Title 17, Section 54533(f), the regional center shall post on its website each COI Reporting Statement that identifies a present/potential COI that cannot be resolved within 30 calendar days. This posting shall continue until the conflict has either been eliminated or the individual has resigned.

Prohibitions While Conflict Still Pending

Under Title 17, Section 54525, when a conflict has been identified for a governing board member or executive director, a regional center may not refer any individual to any business entity involved in the conflict, unless the individual has eliminated the conflict of interest or obtained an approved Conflict Resolution Plan.

Further, no regional center governing board member or executive director shall continue to serve in violation of these provisions, unless the individual has eliminated the conflict of interest or obtained an approved Conflict Resolution Plan.

Role of DDS in Monitoring Conflicts

Review of Conflict Resolution Plan by Department

Under Title 17, Section 54534(f), DDS shall issue a modification, approval or denial of the proposed Conflict Resolution Plan in writing to the regional center governing board or regional center designated party within 30 calendar days of receipt of a proposed Conflict Resolution Plan.

Title 17, Section 54534(g) provides that if DDS denies a Conflict Resolution Plan, the individual shall have 30 calendar days to eliminate the conflict or to resign.

If a Conflict Resolution Plan is approved, the employee shall fully comply with all the elements set forth in the approved Conflict Resolution Plan (Title 17, Section 54534(j)).

In addition, under Section 54534(k), a new Conflict Resolution Plan shall be submitted to DDS on an annual basis, and upon any change of status that creates a COI.

Submission of Conflict Resolution Plan Does Not Authorize Continued Activities that Create Conflict

The submission of a Conflict Resolution Plan does not authorize the employee to engage in the activities that created the conflict. In the words of the regulation, "Individuals shall not engage in activities in which there is a present or potential COI except in accordance with the terms of an approved Conflict Resolution Plan" (Title 17, Section 54534(d)).

Sanctions

RCOC will be vigilant to eliminate and resolve conflicts, since if DDS finds a violation of these provisions, it can provide 30 days to eliminate or resolve the violation. If the violation is not so resolved or eliminated, DDS may "take immediate action to commence procedures for termination or nonrenewal of the regional center contract pursuant to W&I Code, Section 4635."

Gift Limit

Pursuant to WIC Section 4626.5(g), RCOC employees are prohibited from accepting any gift or gifts from a service provider, person served by RCOC, or a family member of a person served by RCOC valued over fifteen dollars ($15) per year. "Family member" shall be defined as set forth in the "Definitions" section above, consistent with Title 17, Section 54505.

Hiring

Pursuant to WIC Section 4626.5(h), RCOC Senior Staff are prohibited from hiring any family member as an employee at RCOC or any ancillary foundation or organization. RCOC Senior Staff includes the Executive Director, Associate Executive Director, and all members of the Executive Management Team. "Family member" shall be defined as set forth in the "Definitions" section above, consistent with Title 17, Section 54505.

Last Policy Review Date: October 19, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: November 5, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before November 5, 2027

XIV. WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

POLICY

It is the policy of the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) that employees, Board members, persons served, their families, and the vendor community have notice of and the opportunity to report alleged improper RCOC and alleged improper vendor/contractor activity through a whistleblower complaint process.

RCOC is required to have a Board-approved Whistleblower Policy pursuant to RCOC's contract with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Improper regional center activity and improper vendor/contractor activity is defined in the contract as:

- *An "improper regional center activity" means an activity by a regional center, or an employee, officer, or board member of a regional center, in the conduct of regional center business, that is a violation of a state or federal law or regulation; violation of contract provisions; fraud or fiscal malfeasance; misuse of government property; or constitutes gross misconduct, incompetency, or inefficiency.*

- *An "improper vendor/contractor activity" means an activity by a vendor/contractor, or an employee, officer, or board member of a vendor/contractor, in the provision of State funded services, that is a violation of a state or federal law or regulation; violation of contract provisions; fraud or fiscal malfeasance; misuse of government property; or constitutes gross misconduct, incompetency, or inefficiency.*

RCOC and DDS have a variety of complaint and appeal processes available to vendors/contractors, agencies, facilities, parents, and persons served. These include: Consumer Rights Complaints, Early Start Complaints, Due Process Requests, Mediation Conference Requests, Lanterman Act Appeals Requests, Title 17 Complaints, Citizen Complaints and Comments, and Vendor Appeals. Each of these complaint and appeal processes has separate and distinct procedures for resolution. This separate policy relates only to RCOC and Vendor/Contractor Whistleblower Complaints as described above.

Nothing in this policy shall dissuade or prohibit complaints of alleged improper activity to be made using the foregoing complaint or appeal processes or other less formal means to make such complaints known.

Confidentiality

The investigating party will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of a complainant making a whistleblower complaint if the complainant requests confidentiality. However, in the rare circumstances where the investigating party is unable to maintain confidentiality due to its statutory responsibilities (including ensuring the health and safety of persons served and RCOC contract compliance and legally required disclosures), the investigating party will attempt to inform the complainant of its need to disclose certain information prior to releasing identifying

information. Additionally, the identity of the complainant may be revealed to appropriate law enforcement agencies conducting a criminal investigation.

No Retaliation

This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns about alleged improper RCOC and/or vendor/contractor activities and to permit an investigating party the opportunity to investigate and take appropriate action.

No person who in good faith reports a violation of this policy shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequences from RCOC. RCOC's Executive Committee or its designee will investigate complaints of retaliation following an established process. An RCOC employee who harasses or retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Notification Requirements

RCOC's Whistleblower Policy, along with the DDS Whistleblower Complaint Process are posted on RCOC's website. Notification of both RCOC's policy and DDS' Whistleblower Complaint Process will be provided annually to employees, Board members, persons served, their families and the vendor community.

PROCEDURE

A Whistleblower Complaint about alleged improper RCOC and/or vendor/contractor activity may be filed by contacting any of the following:

- RCOC's Senior Management which includes: Executive Director; Associate Executive Director; Case Management Director; Chief Financial Officer; Clinical Director; Community Services Director; General Counsel; Human Resources Director and Chief Information Officer.

- RCOC's Board of Directors Executive Committee which includes: RCOC Board Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Counsel to the Board may also be contacted.

- Members of RCOC's Board of Directors may be contacted by phone or e-mail through the Clerk to the Board, or attendance at a Board meeting.

- Department of Developmental Services Community Operations Division or the Community Services and Supports Division (for Early Start program services).

However, to ensure proper and timely logging and investigation, it is recommended that whistleblower complaints be submitted to RCOC's Custodian of Records.

RCOC will utilize an established process to investigate and take appropriate action on complaints, including complaints of retaliation. An initial review process will determine the appropriate venue for the complaint which could result in referral to another entity or process as described in the "Policy" section.

A Whistleblower Complaint shall contain a clear and concise statement of the alleged improper activity and any evidence to support the allegation. If a name, or other information (e.g., witness or document), is not provided that clearly identifies the person alleged to have acted improperly, and where that person works, the investigating party may not have sufficient information to investigate. Original documents should be provided when submitting written information. The submitting party should keep copies of all submitted documents for their records.

Although complaints may be filed anonymously, if insufficient information is provided and the investigating party has no means to contact the complainant, it may not be possible to investigate the allegation.

RCOC employees with questions about this policy should contact the Human Resources Director or a member of the Executive Committee.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The public funds that support the service system are expended in a fashion that is cost-effective, consumer-directed, consistent with good business practices, and that reflect careful stewardship.

- The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will be actively involved in the organization (e.g., attendance and participation). The Board will provide appropriate support to maximize effective participation by all its members.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

Last Policy Review Date: May 18, 2026
Date Revisions Approved by Board: June 4, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before June 4, 2027

XV. RECORD RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION POLICY

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the retention, management and destruction of Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) records to ensure legal compliance, efficiency and cost management.

POLICY

A. Definition

a. RCOC Record – Any writing relating to the conduct of RCOC business that is prepared, owned, used, or retained by RCOC, regardless of physical form or characteristics.

b. Writing – Any handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, photocopying, transmitting by electronic mail or facsimile, and every other means of recording upon any tangible thing any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, symbols, or combinations thereof, and any record thereby created, regardless of the manner in which the record has been stored.

B. Maintenance of Records

In compliance with RCOC's contract with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), RCOC shall maintain books, records, documents, case files, and other evidence pertaining to the budget, revenues, expenditures, and persons served under this contract (herein collectively called "records") in accordance with mutually agreed to procedures and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

RCOC shall generally retain all RCOC Records for ten (10) years, unless otherwise specified in Schedule A or an applicable exception to this Policy. If an RCOC Record falls within more than one category in Schedule A, it shall be kept for the longer Retention Period.

This Policy does not apply to preliminary drafts, working notes, inter or intra-agency memoranda, or other records that are not kept in the ordinary course of business and the retention of which is not necessary for the discharge of RCOC's responsibilities. These records are not required to be maintained and may be destroyed at any time, unless there is an applicable exception to this Policy or a pending California Public Records Act request.

C. Storage of Records

RCOC maintains hard-copy records at RCOC's offices in a secure environment. Electronic documents and data are stored in electronic folders, email, on the shared electronic drive, in RCOC's Virtual Chart, and various applications RCOC utilizes (DocuSign, ADP, Webtop, etc.). At the discretion of the Custodian of Records, hard-copy files may be sent to an off-site storage location operated by a provider under contract with RCOC. Files are sent to or retrieved from off-site storage by RCOC using a process developed by the provider. RCOC employees shall not store RCOC Records on a personal device or account.

In compliance with RCOC's contract with DDS, RCOC shall comply with the most current version of DDS' 'Requirements for Electronic Storage of Records' as developed by DDS and the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA).

D. Destruction

RCOC Records may be destroyed after ten (10) years or after the expiration of the retention period identified in Schedule A, subject to any applicable exceptions or pending California Public Records Act requests. All physical documents referred to in this policy which are to be destroyed shall be shredded. All electronic documents referred to in this policy which are to be destroyed shall be permanently deleted using methods which regularly in the course of business verify complete destruction. Employees shall obtain permission prior to the destruction of any RCOC Records. Authority to destroy documents is as follows: for person served and litigation records, General Counsel; for service provider and financial records, the Chief Financial Officer; for employment records, the Human Resources Director; and for all other records, the Executive Director or their designee.

E. Exceptions

a. Pending and Potential Litigation - In the event any RCOC Board member or employee becomes aware of litigation or potential litigation (i.e., a dispute that could result in litigation) involving RCOC, the Board member or employee shall immediately inform the Executive Director or their designee, and any further disposal of RCOC Records shall be suspended until such time as RCOC's General Counsel determines otherwise. Upon receiving notice of litigation or potential litigation, the Executive Director or their designee shall immediately take such steps as necessary to promptly inform staff of the suspension of disposal of records.

b. Audit Documents – Documents relevant to an ongoing external audit, pending audit appeal, or audit findings in need of resolution shall be retained until such time as the audit is final and all audit findings have been resolved.

c. Historical/Reference – RCOC Records that are important for historical/reference value for conducting RCOC business may be retained for a longer retention period as needed. The records may be destroyed in accordance with Section D above when the matters pertaining to such records are completely resolved and the records are no longer needed to conduct RCOC business.

d. State/Federal Law or Regulation – Notwithstanding anything in this Policy or Schedule A, any and all RCOC Records that are required to be retained for a certain period of time under state or federal law or regulation shall be retained in compliance with such law or regulation.

F. Compliance

RCOC expects all Board members and employees to fully comply with this Record Retention and Destruction Policy.

Failure to comply with this Record Retention and Destruction Policy may result in disciplinary action against the employee, including suspension or termination. Questions about this Policy should be referred to RCOC's General Counsel, who is responsible for administering, enforcing and recommending updates to this Policy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The public funds that support the service system are expended in a fashion that is person served-directed, cost-effective, consistent with good business practices, and that reflect RCOC's Guiding Principles and diligent stewardship.

- The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to, its stakeholders and the community it serves.

SCHEDULE A

Item #	Title and Description of Records	Retention Period	Location	Notes
1.	Accounting/Financial Records *Documents concerning expenses and revenues, Books of account, Check registers, Canceled checks, Internal reports, Bank statements, Operations contracts and purchase orders, Invoices, Invoice documentation, Lease agreements, Payment Records, Accounting procedures, Relevant correspondence with DDS*	10 years from end of fiscal year	RCOC Accounting Office and/or Electronic files	Minimum of ten (10) years from the end of the applicable fiscal year.
2.	Accounting/Financial Records – Audit *External audits of RCOC, General ledgers and subsidiary ledgers, Financial statements, Tax filings, Insurance policies*	Permanent	RCOC Accounting Office and/or Electronic files	
3.	Board Meeting Minutes	Permanent	RCOC Executive Office and/or Electronic files	Approved meeting minutes shall be retained permanently. Recordings of Board meetings, if any, will be retained until Board approval of the meeting minutes and then destroyed.
4.	Chemical safety and toxic exposure records	Duration of Employment + 30 years	RCOC Human Resources Office	

			and/or Electronic files	
5.	Corporate Documents *Corporate Articles of Incorporation, IRS Determination Letter, Tax Exempt Application (Form 1023), Bylaws and the like, including amendments*	Permanent	RCOC Executive Office and/or Electronic files	
6.	Development/Intellectual Property and Trade Secrets	Life of the trade secret	RCOC Executive Office, IT Department and/or Electronic files	
7.	Emails	3 years		Emails will be maintained in RCOC's email archive system for three (3) years, after which they will be automatically deleted. Emails that need to be kept longer than 3 years (for example, emails containing information necessary for the performance of job duties) should be either: a. printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file; or b. downloaded to a computer file and kept electronically.
8.	Employee Benefits *Retirement enrollment, Benefits enrollment*	Duration of Employment + 5 years	RCOC Human Resources Office and/or Electronic files	

9.	Employee Policies, Forms, and Handouts	Current + 5 years	RCOC Human Resources Office and/or Electronic files	
10.	Employee Training *Training material including guides, reference sheets, and templates, Resources, Procedures, Training records*	Current + 5 years	RCOC Office and/or Electronic files	
11.	Employment Personnel File and Records *Employment Eligibility Verification Forms (I-9), Applications, Leave of Absences, Personnel Action Forms (PAF), Performance reviews, Job descriptions, Retirement*	Duration of Employment + 10 years (see notes for further guidance)	RCOC Human Resources Office and/or Electronic files	Employment and personnel records shall be retained for the duration of employment plus ten (10) years Retain Employment Eligibility Verification Forms (I-9), until the later of five (5) years from hire date, or one (1) year after termination.
12.	Litigation Files *This excludes Fair Hearing and Due Process Hearing files, unless a hearing resulted in an appeal to the Superior Court. Fair Hearing and Due Process documents (excluding exhibits which are not specific to a person served) are maintained as part of persons served records.*	10 years (see notes for further guidance)	RCOC Office and/or Electronic files	Legal counsel should be consulted to determine the retention period of particular documents, but litigation documents should generally be maintained for a period of ten (10) years. General Counsel shall be consulted prior to the destruction of any files related to legal proceedings to which RCOC is a party.
13.	Payroll Records	7 years from end of fiscal	RCOC Office	

	Timesheets, W-2 forms, CalPERS retirement contribution reports	year	and/or Electronic files	
14.	Persons Served Records All Intake Referral and Regional Center Intake Assessment Records; birth records; birth, death and marriage certificates; coroner's reports; documentation of identification and/or legal status; documents memorializing generic resources that the regional center is required to examine for possible funding of services; life insurance policies and burial plans; wills; documents designating a legal agent; Advanced Health Care Directives and Physician's Orders on Life-Sustaining Treatment; Adoption Agreements and Orders; psychological records, including developmental evaluations or screenings; EDAC/Bridges for Newborns Assessments; all multi-disciplinary team evaluations; DS 3770 (Medicaid Waiver) forms; admission/placement agreements; and relevant records for forensically involved persons.	Life of person served + 10 years	Electronic files in Virtual Chart	Person Served Records are retained for ten (10) years unless specifically identified here to be retained longer. For inactive cases, persons served may be presumed deceased if 100 years of age or older.
15.	Privileged records/information *Related to mandated reporting, Communication with counsel*	5 years (See notes for guidance)		Privileged records/information related to mandated reporting shall not be entered into or maintained as part of the chart for any person served. These privileged records shall be maintained in

				separate electronic storage for five (5) years, then destroyed. No other privileged records/information, such as communication with counsel, shall be entered into or maintained as part of the person served chart. These other privileged records/information shall be destroyed only after consultation with RCOC's General Counsel.
16.	Records Management Disposition/Destruction Certification	Permanent	RCOC Office and/or Electronic files	
17.	Resource Development *Community Resource Development Plans (CRDP) and approvals, Language Access and Cultural Competency (LACC) plans and approvals, Requests for Proposals (RFP's), RFP responses and scoring sheets, property development records*	15 years (See notes for further guidance)	RCOC Office and/or Electronic files	Records related to start-up funding for development of housing shall be retained permanently.
18.	Resource and Informational Materials for Persons Served and the Community	Current	Comfort Connection Family Resource Center and/or Electronic files	
19.	Vendor Records *Including (but not limited*	Closed + 5 years	RCOC Office and/or	Shall be destroyed five (5) years from the date a vendor is deleted from RCOC's

	to) applications, correspondence, Vendor Status Notifications, W-9 Forms, certificates of insurance, license, monitoring reports, Corrective Action Plans, and Program Designs		Electronic files	service panel.
20.	Workers' Compensation	Incident + 10 years	RCOC Human Resources Office and/or Electronic files	

Last Policy Review Date: October 20, 2025
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Date of Next Review: on or before March 6, 2027

XVI. POLICY ON RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND PROCUREMENT

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) recognizes that in order to meet the needs of the individuals it serves, it may issue requests for proposals for services. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to assuring the health, well-being and safety of the individuals it serves.

RCOC also recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability to the community it serves. In keeping with the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to reporting information with accuracy and transparency and maintaining compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

The vendorization process is governed by the California Code of Regulations, Title 17. Under Title 17, vendor applicants may qualify and be vendored outside a Request for Proposals (RFP) Process. However, RCOC will continue to use the RFP process for the development of services to meet the needs of those individuals it serves.

POLICY

The contract between the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and RCOC requires RCOC to have a Board policy on resource development that includes all of the following:

- the circumstances under which the regional center will issue requests for proposals (RFPs) to address a service need;
- the applicable dollar thresholds for requiring the utilization of the RFP process;
- the RFP notification process; and
- how submitted proposals will be evaluated and the applicant selected.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS PROCESS

Issuance of Requests and Instructions for Submissions

There is no dollar threshold for requiring use of the RFP process. RCOC will issue RFPs at least once a year for new services, if any new services are needed, excluding parent-vendor services and services paid at the Schedule of Maximum Allowances, also known as Medi-Cal rates. For existing services obtained through the RFP process for which rates are negotiated, such as transportation, RCOC will issue a new RFP at least once every five (5) years for the service. In accordance with the Start-Up, Gap and Lag Funding Policy, RCOC will also issue RFPs for the award of start-up funding, unless use

of the RFP process is not feasible under the specific circumstances and the RCOC Board votes to approve the award. Although the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, section 54322(a) requires regional centers to approve vendorization within 45 days of receipt of all information which specifies that the applicant is in compliance with section 54320(a), RCOC encourages applicants to follow the RFP process.

RFP information is distributed to interested service providers and the general public via RCOC's website. An Information Conference is held after distribution of RFPs in order to answer questions and further clarify the projects.

Electronic documents are required at all stages in the process of becoming a service provider. The proposal must contain the following:

- A completed RFP Response Form,
- An Executive Summary describing the service, staff qualifications and service implementation as described in the RFP, and
- A statement on equality and diversity as required by Welfare and Institutions Code section 4648.11.

Proposal Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by an RFP Review Committee, which shall include RCOC management as well as staff members knowledgeable about the specific services being requested. Supplemental information may be requested. Applicants may be asked to participate in an interview. Any proposal may be rejected if it is incomplete or deviates from the specifications in the RFP. RCOC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to cancel the RFP process at its discretion. If negotiations fail with the selected applicant, RCOC reserves the right to re-open negotiations with the next qualified applicant or to re-post the RFP.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposals

Evaluation of the applicant's proposal will consider the following:

- The proposal provides evidence that the applicant understands the needs of individuals to be served and the issues involved in providing quality services.
- Applicant demonstrates an understanding of current "Best Practices" and has incorporated them into the design.
- Proposal outcomes are realistically attainable and can be expected to produce desired outcomes and a higher quality of life for individuals receiving services.
- The applicant's philosophy and values are consistent with RCOC's mission, vision and guiding principles.

- For services with a negotiated rate, whether the applicant is the least costly available provider who is able to meet individuals' needs.

Acceptance and Selection of Proposals

All proposals from applicants that meet the specifications, and if required, provide supplemental information and participate in an interview, will be ranked according to the criteria stated above. If the RFP is for services with negotiated rates, proposals will be opened publicly. Once awarded, all selected applicants will be required to complete and comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, and RCOC vendor requirements. Information regarding requests for proposals and contract awards, including the organization or entity awarded the contract, and the amount and purpose of the award, will be posted on RCOC's website (WIC § 4629.5 and 4929.5(b)(4)).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Services and supports for families recognize, facilitate and build on family strengths, natural supports and existing community resources.

- Service planning and coordination is a collaborative effort between RCOC, persons served and their families to identify needed services and supports.

- RCOC will maximize all alternative sources of funding for necessary services and supports including federal and generic funding.

- The public funds that support the service system are expended in a fashion that is person served-directed, cost-effective, consistent with good business practices, and that reflect RCOC's Guiding Principles and diligent stewardship.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

Last Policy Review Date: October 19, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: November 5, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before September 4, 2027

XVII. CONTRACT POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability to the community it serves. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to reporting information with accuracy and transparency and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

POLICY

The Board shall comply with the provisions of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (and any revisions or amendments thereto).

All contracts requiring payment of two hundred fifty thousand dollars ($250,000) or more shall be reviewed and approved by the RCOC Board of Directors prior to entering into the contract (WIC 4625.5 (a)).

No RCOC contract of $250,000 or more will be valid unless approved by the RCOC Board of Directors in compliance with this written policy (WIC 4625.5(b)).

The RCOC Board of Directors shall be notified in writing of any proposed material change to a contract that has been previously approved by the RCOC Board of Directors. The RCOC Board may elect to call a special meeting to vote to approve or deny the proposed material change if it so desires, which meeting shall occur no more than ten (10) days from the date notice is given. If the RCOC Board does not give notice of a special meeting within three (3) days of receiving notice of the proposed material change, such material change shall be deemed approved. For the purposes of this policy, a material change is equivalent to ten percent (10%) or more of the original contract value.

For purposes of this policy, contracts shall not include vendor approval letters issued by RCOC pursuant to Section 54322 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations (WIC 4625.5(c)).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The public funds that support the service system are expended in a fashion that is cost-effective, consumer-directed, consistent with good business practices, and that reflect RCOC's Guiding Principles and diligent stewardship.

- The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the Orange County community it serves.

Last Policy Review Date: February 17, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: March 5, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before March 5, 2028

XVIII. TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability to the community it serves. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to reporting information with accuracy and transparency and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business. This includes Board composition and other public information posting requirements.

POLICY

Reporting on RCOC Board Composition

By August 15th of each year, RCOC will provide the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) detailed documentation, as determined by DDS, demonstrating that the composition of the RCOC Board of Directors is in compliance or not in compliance with the statutory requirements identified in Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 4622 (WIC §4622.5).

Posting of Public Information

RCOC shall comply with the provisions of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act and RCOC's contract with DDS regarding transparency and access to public information.

Information regarding requests for proposals and contract awards, service provider rates, documentation related to establishment of negotiated rates, audits, and IRS Form 990 will be posted to RCOC's website and available upon request from RCOC's Custodian of Records.

In accordance with RCOC's contract with DDS, RCOC will also post to its website all of the following:

(1) Regional center annual independent audits.
(2) Biennial fiscal audits conducted by DDS.
(3) Regional center annual reports pursuant to WIC Section 4639.5.
(4) Contract awards, including the organization or entity awarded the contract, and the amount and purpose of the award.
(5) Purchase of service policies.
(6) The names, types of service, and contact information of all vendors, except persons served or family members of persons served.
(7) Board meeting agendas and approved minutes of open meetings of the board and all committees of the board.
(8) Bylaws of the regional center governing board.
(9) The annual performance contract and year–end performance contract entered into with DDS.

(10) The biennial Home and Community–based Services Waiver program review conducted by DDS and the State Department of Health Care Services.
(11) The board–approved transparency and public information policy.
(12) The board–approved conflict–of–interest policy.
(13) The board-approved Zero Tolerance Policy.
(14) Regional center data relating to purchase of service authorization, utilization, and expenditure in accordance with WIC Section 4519.5 and RCOC's contract with DDS.
(15) A link to the DDS website.
(16) The salaries, wages and employee benefits for all managerial positions for which the primary purpose is the administrative management of the regional center, including, but not limited to, directors and chief executive officers.
(17) Regional center-specific reports generated pursuant to WIC Section 4571(h).

Under no circumstances shall this policy be construed to require production of confidential information regarding persons served which is protected by law from disclosure.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The governing Board of the Regional Center of Orange County is representative of and accountable to the community served by RCOC.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the Orange County community it serves.

Last Policy Review Date: May 27, 2025
No Revisions Recommended to Board: June 5, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before June 5, 2027

XIX. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY REGARDING ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF THOSE WE SERVE

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) recognizes the importance of transparency and accountability to the community it serves. RCOC is committed to reporting information with accuracy and transparency and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business, as well as RCOC's contract with the California Department of Developmental Services. This includes annually notifying all its employees, its vendors and licensees of long-term health care facilities* that are serving RCOC persons served that RCOC has a Zero Tolerance Policy regarding abuse and neglect of those we serve.

POLICY

Abuse of individuals we serve committed by RCOC employees, employees of RCOC vendors, or employees of licensees who operate long-term health care facilities will not be tolerated. All such abuse or allegations of such abuse will be thoroughly investigated. Any RCOC employee found to have abused a person served will be subject to severe discipline, up to and including discharge, and will be referred to appropriate authorities. All employees of RCOC vendors and of licensees who operate long-term health care facilities found to have abused a person served will be referred to the appropriate authorities, and the vendor may also be subject to sanctions, up to and including, removal from the list of those authorized to provide services for regional center.

All employees of RCOC, employees of RCOC vendors, and employees of licensees who operate long-term health care facilities who are mandated reporters pursuant to the California Penal Code shall strictly comply with the reporting laws at all times, including, but not limited to, Welfare and Institutions Code Section 15630. A mandated reporter must report all abuse of individuals we serve to the applicable governmental authorities immediately or as soon as practicable after his or her discovery or reasonable belief that abuse has occurred.

RCOC, all RCOC vendors, and all licensees who operate long-term health care facilities serving RCOC persons served shall ensure their employees are fully informed upon hire and annually thereafter regarding RCOC's Zero Tolerance Policy Regarding Abuse and Neglect of Those We Serve and the mandatory abuse and neglect reporting laws. Each employee must be knowledgeable of their responsibility to protect our population from abuse and neglect, the signs of abuse and neglect, the process for reporting suspected abuse or neglect, and the consequences of failing to follow the law and enforcing this policy.

RCOC's Zero Tolerance Policy Regarding Abuse and Neglect of Those We Serve will be incorporated into any new or revised contract, vendorization or other agreement for services.

If RCOC, a RCOC vendor, or a licensee who operates a long-term health care facility becomes aware of abuse of a person served, it shall take immediate action, to the extent

permitted by law, to ensure the health and safety of the affected individual and all other individuals receiving services and supports from RCOC. This obligation is in addition to those obligations required of mandated reporters to report abuse under the reporting laws.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Service coordinators inform families of their rights and the services and supports available to them.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the Orange County community it serves.

* According to the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 1418,

(a) "Long-term health care facility" means any facility licensed pursuant to Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 1250) that is any of the following:
  (1) Skilled nursing facility.
  (2) Intermediate care facility.
  (3) Intermediate care facility/developmentally disabled.
  (4) Intermediate care facility/developmentally disabled habilitative.
  (5) Intermediate care facility/developmentally disabled-nursing.
  (6) Congregate living health facility.
  (7) Nursing facility.
  (8) Intermediate care facility/developmentally disabled-continuous nursing.

(b) "Long-term health care facility" also includes a pediatric day health and respite care facility licensed pursuant to Chapter 8.6 (commencing with Section 1760).

(c) "Long-term health care facility" does not include a general acute care hospital or an acute psychiatric hospital, except for that distinct part of the hospital that provides skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, intermediate care facility/developmentally disabled, or pediatric day health and respite care facility services.

(d) "Licensee" means the holder of a license issued under Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 1250) or Chapter 8.6 (commencing with Section 1760) for a long-term health care facility.

Last Policy Review Date: October 19, 2026
No Revisions Recommended to Board: November 5, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before November 5, 2027

XX. EMPLOYMENT FIRST POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) recognizes the importance of meaningful employment for the working age adults we serve. The Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act provides, "[I]t is the policy of the state that opportunities for integrated, competitive employment shall be given the highest priority for working age individuals with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. This policy shall be known as the Employment First Policy." (Welfare and Institutions Code §4869(a)(1)).

POLICY

Competitive integrated employment will be the first option considered by planning teams for every working age adult we serve.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served have the opportunity and support to work in integrated employment settings that are meaningful, valued by the community, and in which they are appropriately compensated and respected.

- Persons served make decisions about all aspects of their lives.

- Persons served live, work, learn and socialize in settings that maximize opportunity to be with persons not paid to be with them.

Last Policy Review Date: April 20, 2026
Date Revisions Approved by Board: May 7, 2026
Date of Next Review: on or before May 7, 2028

XXI. COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

BACKGROUND

Regional Center of Orange County's (RCOC's) Board of Directors is committed to maintaining integrity and transparency in all its communications. In keeping with RCOC's mission of service to people with developmental disabilities and their families, the Board seeks constructive feedback from all stakeholders and works to create an environment of civility and trust that encourages understanding and an open, mutually respectful dialogue. All communications on behalf of the Board are aligned with the Carver Policy Governance Model under which the Board governs itself. As such, individual Board members recognize that the Board speaks with "one voice" and individual Board members do not have authority to speak on behalf of the Board without the Board's approval.

POLICY

Media Interviews

Though RCOC's Executive Director is the primary spokesperson for RCOC, from time to time, media comment or a media statement from RCOC's Board of Directors may be appropriate. In these situations, the Executive Office will coordinate the interview or other response with the Board Chairperson or their designee, who is the only member authorized to speak on behalf of the Board. In addition, individual Board members may at times be called upon by RCOC to share their personal experiences with RCOC and developmental disabilities. In these situations, Board members are representing and speaking on behalf of themselves as persons/families served, and not the Board. In both cases, the Executive Office will arrange for any designated Board spokespeople to receive assistance, as needed, to prepare for interviews.

Digital Communications & Social Media

RCOC uses social media – such as Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube – to engage with its various audiences, advocate on behalf of those served, and share information about RCOC events and activities. Though only designated individuals are authorized to post comments, imagery or other materials on behalf of RCOC, Board members are encouraged to engage with RCOC via social media and other digital communications, such as blogs, in a personal, non-official capacity.

As with media interviews, the Board Chairperson or their designee is the only member authorized to speak on behalf of the Board in digital communications and social media. Thus, Board members should not reference their Board membership in digital and social media posts.

During their tenure of service, Board members' personal digital and social media communications must also comply with laws and policies involving discrimination, harassment, privacy and confidentiality, proprietary information and copyright, libel, ethics, etc.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

- RCOC maximizes community involvement in decision making.

Last Policy Review Date: April 21, 2025
Date Approved by Board: May 1, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before May 1, 2027

XXII. EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION POLICY

BACKGROUND

A change in executive leadership is inevitable for all organizations and can be a very challenging time. A succession plan policy is a tool to help an organization be prepared for planned or unplanned absences of the Executive Director; clarifying authority and decision-making, and thereby maintaining accountability and ensuring stability.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) to be prepared for a change in leadership – either planned or unplanned – which will ensure the stability and accountability of the organization until such time as new leadership is identified. The RCOC Board of Directors (Board) shall be responsible for implementing this policy and its related procedures.

It is also the policy of the Board to assess the leadership needs of the organization to help ensure the selection of a qualified and capable leader who is representative of the community, a good fit for the organization's mission, vision, values and guiding principles, and who has the necessary skills for the organization. To ensure the organization's operations are not interrupted while the Board assesses the leadership needs and recruits an Executive Director, the Board will appoint interim executive leadership as described below. The interim Executive Director shall ensure that the organization continues to operate without disruption and that all organizational commitments previously made are adequately executed as outlined in other relevant RCOC Board Governance Policies (e.g., Policies on the Board-Executive Relationship, Executive Limitations Policies).

It is also the policy of RCOC to develop a diverse pool of candidates and consider at least three finalists for its Executive Director position. RCOC shall implement an external recruitment and selection process, while at the same time encouraging the professional development and advancement of current employees. The interim Executive Director and other interested internal candidates are encouraged to submit their qualifications for review and consideration by the Board according to the guidelines established for the search and recruitment process.

Procedures for Succession

For a temporary change in executive leadership (e.g., illness or leave of absence), the Executive Director and the Executive Committee will work together to develop a plan that ensures accountability and stability for the organization (e.g., assign specific duties to other key members of the executive leadership team).

In the event the Executive Director of RCOC is no longer able to serve in this position (i.e., position is vacant), the Executive Committee of the Board shall do the following:

1. Within five (5) business days appoint an interim Executive Director.

2. Within fifteen (15) business days appoint an Executive Search Committee. This Committee will be chaired by the Board Chairperson or his/her designee. This Committee shall be comprised of at least one (1) member of the Executive Committee and four (4) members of the Board of Directors, which shall include a person served and the vendor representative. It shall be the responsibility of this Committee to implement the following transition plan:

    a. Communicate with key stakeholders regarding actions taken by the Board in naming an interim Executive Director.

    b. Appoint a Transition Committee.

    c. Consider the need for consulting assistance (e.g., transition management or executive search consultant) based on the circumstances of the transition.

    d. Review RCOC's Strategic Plan and conduct a brief assessment of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to identify priority issues that may need to be addressed during the transition process and to identify attributes and characteristics that are important to consider in the selection of the next Executive Director.

    e. Establish a time frame in the selection of the next Executive Director.

    f. Refer to RCOC's Board Governance Policies for additional procedures.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- RCOC's staffing pattern reflects and is sensitive to the cultural and ethnic characteristics of its service areas.

- The RCOC Board of Directors is representative of, and accountable to its stakeholders and the community it serves.

- RCOC maximizes community input in decision making.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will possess the highest personal and professional ethics, integrity and values, and be committed to representing the long-term interests of the Orange County community it serves.

- The RCOC Board of Directors will be actively involved in the organization (e.g., attendance and participation). The Board will provide appropriate support to maximize effective participation by all its members.

Last Policy Review Date: February 18, 2025
No Revisions Recommended to the Board: March 6, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before March 6, 2027

XXIII. POLICY ON BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENT FOR PROVIDERS

BACKGROUND

The Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) is responsible for coordinating services for people with developmental disabilities who reside in Orange County. As established in the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, RCOC is committed to assuring the health, well-being and safety of the individuals it serves.

POLICY

All RCOC vendors shall obtain criminal background checks prior to hire for all employees who provide direct services to RCOC persons served. The background checks shall include, at a minimum, a nationwide criminal history search covering felonies and misdemeanors, as well a sex offender registry search. Background checks mandated by California Code of Regulations Title 17 or Title 22 and conducted through the California Department of Justice shall satisfy this requirement. Vendors shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding background checks and the use of information obtained through background checks.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives and that respect the inherit risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- Persons served live in homes where they receive quality care and can form relationships.

Last Policy Review Date: February 18, 2025
No Revisions Recommended to the Board: March 6, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before March 6, 2027

XXIV. POLICY TO MITIGATE CONFLICTS FOR DELEGATED CONSERVATORSHIPS

BACKGROUND

California Health and Safety (H&S) Code Section 416.19 authorizes delegated conservatorships, which occur when the Director of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is appointed as an individual's conservator and the day-to-day conservatorship authority is delegated to the regional center serving the conservatee. Consistent with H&S Code Section 416.19, DDS issued guidelines to mitigate conflicts that may arise when a regional center is the delegated conservator (Guidelines). The Guidelines require that each regional center adopt a board-approved policy specifying how the regional center will carry out its delegated conservatorship responsibilities consistent with the Guidelines.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) that delegated conservatorship functions shall be separated from regional center service coordination functions in order to mitigate potential conflicts of interest. For every individual for whom DDS has been appointed conservator and RCOC has day-to-day conservatorship authority, a Conservatorship Monitor shall be assigned to carry out the delegated conservatorship responsibilities.

Qualifications

RCOC employees serving as Conservatorship Monitors shall meet the following minimum qualifications:

1. A Master's degree from an accredited school in Social Work, Human Services, Drug and Alcohol, Education, Counseling, Psychology, or Criminal Justice, or a Bachelor's degree from an accredited school in Human Behavioral Science; and
2. At least 2 years of experience in case management at RCOC.

An RCOC employee shall not be assigned to serve as Conservatorship Monitor for a conservatorship where any of the following is true:

1. The employee serves as the conservatee's service coordinator;
2. The employee shares a supervisor with the conservatee's service coordinator; or
3. The employee is the supervisor to the conservatee's service coordinator.

Responsibilities

The Conservatorship Monitor shall:

1. Meet with the conservatee in person at least quarterly.
2. Timely inform the conservatee about all decisions made by RCOC on their behalf.

3. Work with the appropriate RCOC staff or external consultants to timely address any concerns about the conservatee's health, safety and well-being, violations of their rights, their satisfaction with their current services and living arrangement, and the need for additional or different services, and support the conservatee in raising any concerns they may have.
4. Contribute to the comprehensive person-centered biennial assessment by providing information about the conservatee's preferences and needs and making recommendations about the need for conservatorship, alternatives to conservatorship, changes to the conservator's powers, and the availability of others who may be able to serve as conservator.
5. Support the conservatee's participation in the Individual Program Plan (IPP) meeting and other meetings, as requested by the conservatee.
6. Assist the conservatee in resolving any concerns they may have about the conservatorship or their regional center services by informing them of the process to request assistance from DDS and/or referring them to other resources to assist them. The conservatee may be referred to the DDS Department Ombudsperson at Ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov or (877) 658-9731, and the DDS Conservatorship Liaison Office at ddsconservatorship@dds.ca.gov or (833) 421-0061.

Training

All RCOC staff serving as Conservatorship Monitors shall receive training on conservatorships and their responsibilities pursuant to this policy prior to being assigned to a delegated conservatorship and annually thereafter.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Persons served are in safe and supportive settings that promote a life of independence, acknowledge diverse cultural perspectives, and that respect the inherent risks and valuable learning experiences that come from living in the community.

- RCOC aspires to the highest standards of ethical conduct: doing what we say; reporting information with accuracy and transparency; and maintaining full compliance with the laws, rules, and regulations that govern RCOC's business.

Last Policy Review Date: April 21, 2025
Date Approved by Board: May 1, 2025
Date of Next Review: on or before November 7, 2026