

Regional Center of Orange County
Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee Meeting
Date: January 26, 2026
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present:

April Lopez, Parent/Committee Chair

Beth Martinko, Parent

Crystal Chavez, Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Self Determination Program (SDP)
Coordinator

Evelyn Pinto, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

Gihong (Collin) Kwon, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

Hannah Pickett, Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy (OCRA)

Jennifer Montanez, RCOC Director of Case Management

Karen Pagano, Parent

Renu Moon, Parent

Santos Cline, Person Served

Tina Stang, Parent

I. Welcome and Introductions:

Dr. April Lopez, committee member, called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Dr. Lopez welcomed all attendees of the Self-Determination Program Local Volunteer Advisory Committee (SDP LVAC) Meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of November 17th, 2025 Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the summary from the November 17, 2025 meeting. Ms. Beth Martinko made a motion to approve the November 17, 2025 meeting summary, which was seconded by Ms. Hannah Pickett. Ms. Martinko, Ms. Pickett, and Mr. Santos Cline voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Lopez and Mrs. Karen Panago abstained from the vote. Quorum was not reached, and the motion could not pass. Dr. Lopez stated the motion to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2025 meeting should have passed since three out of the five committee members who are present voted in favor. Ms. Crystal Chavez stated she will look into the Bagley Keene rule and provide an update to the Committee.

Later in the meeting, Ms. Chavez confirmed there is quorum for the voting of the meeting summary and the motion passed. Ms. Chavez apologized for the confusion.

III. Upcoming RCOC Trainings Related to Person-Centered Thinking

Ms. Leah Saitz, Regional Center of Orange County (RCOC) Person-Centered Thinking Coordinator, reported that upcoming Person-Centered Planning (PCP) training will include both in-person and virtual options. One in-person training will be offered in English and another in Spanish. All other training will be conducted via Zoom. Ms. Saitz provided her contact information as lsaitz@rcocdd.com and invited community members to share ideas on how to improve the training and support within the community. The in person English training is scheduled for June 12–13th and will include an in-person interpreter to provide language accessibility to the attendees. The training will be a two full day session with a capacity of 200 participants per day.

A community member asked whether individuals who complete the training would be able to assist families in the Self-Determination Program (SDP) with PCP reports and receive payment through the Purchase of Services (POS) contract. Ms. Chavez noted that the training would need to be specifically tailored to Independent Facilitator (IF)

support services and stated she would follow up to determine whether this training would suffice to meet the training needs by an IF.

Ms. Saitz shared information about trainings available to review PCP concepts and to create one-page descriptions. Additional virtual trainings are scheduled for April 16th, 2026 in Spanish and in May 6th, 2026 in English.

A question was raised regarding where community members could find information about future trainings. Ms. Saitz indicated that details are available on the RCOC Events Calendar, and Ms. Jennifer Montañez added that information is also published in the RCOC Dialogue Highlights.

A community member asked whether the training could be recorded. Ms. Saitz stated the April and May 2026 virtual trainings may be recorded; however, the in-person training will not be recorded due to the sharing of personal and sensitive information.

IV. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Ms. Chavez noted that during the previous LVAC meeting, the committee requested the development of four Requests for Proposals (RFPs) which were the following: PCP Training, Employee and Labor Law Training, an SDP Parent Support Group, and Advanced Training for Independent Facilitators (excluding PCP support). Ms. Chavez further reported that Ms. Beth Martinko drafted the RFPs and that for today's meeting the committee would review the draft RFPs. Ms. Martinko noted that these funds may represent the final allocation of LVAC funding, as there is a possibility that LVAC funds may not be available in the upcoming fiscal year.

a. Review Draft RFP for PCP Training

Ms. Martinko reported the first draft proposal pertained to Person-Centered Planning (PCP) Training, however, she noted that the proposal may need to be reconsidered, as

RCOC presenter Ms. Saitz indicated that RCOC could provide this training at no cost. Ms. Chavez asked whether the RFP was intended for participants, or independent facilitators or both. Ms. Saitz noted that the RCOC PCP training is not designed to support training for IFs. Ms. Chavez also commented that the proposed training may not meet the requirements needed to become an IF.

Dr. Lopez requested information regarding the budget for each RFP. Ms. Martinko stated each RFP was drafted with a proposed budget of \$20,000 and that the total allocation for any individual RFP would not exceed \$20,000. Dr. Lopez requested confirmation about the total funds available in Fiscal Year 2024-2025. Ms. Chavez reported that the current available balance was \$95,580.38. Then, Ms. Chavez shared the cost of previous PCP trainings and suggested that the committee confirm the intended audience for the training, where the committee may want to adjust the total funding amount available for this RFP.

A community member commented they would like to see more trainings tailored to the Spanish speaking community and that there should not be limits on who can attend those trainings. Ms. Martinko responded that the draft RFP noted there is not to be a capacity limit and should include interpreters for attendees that requested the language support.

Ms. Pickett requested clarification on the scope of the RFP and asked whether the free training offered by RCOC could adequately meet the needs of families. Ms. Pickett then questioned whether the RFP should be specifically geared toward independent facilitators.

A community member suggested that the current RFP be tailored to meet the needs of the families and that PCP elements be included in the RFP for Advanced Training for Independent Facilitators.

Ms. Pickett asked whether the committee had considered the proposed funding amounts for the RFPs, noting that PCP training tailored for Independent Facilitators is typically more costly than training designed for families. Ms. Martinko explained that each RFP was written with a “not to exceed” amount of \$20,000 to allow proposals to be reviewed and enable the committee to determine which options are the most cost-effective.

Ms. Martinko made the motion to approve the RFP for PCP Training for Families.

Dr. Lopez seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

b. Review Draft RFP for Employee and Labor Law Training

Ms. Martinko reviewed the draft summary for the Employee and Labor Law Training RFP, noting that the training is intended to assist participants and their families understand their responsibilities as employers within the Self-Determination Program (SDP). She further reported that she has spoken with Disability Voices United (DVU), specifically Judy Mark, and that DVU has been able to develop a similar training.

Ms. Pickett recommended adding a requirement that all legal information be reviewed by a qualified attorney to ensure accuracy. Ms. Martinko noted that the current draft specifies that the training would be for educational purposes only and would not constitute legal advice, however, she agreed with Ms. Pickett’s recommendation. Ms. Pickett stated that she would make a motion to include this additional requirement in the RFP. Ms. Chavez informed the committee that she will confirm whether LVAC funds are allowable for use toward legal services. Ms. Karen Pagano noted that if the training includes legal content, it should be reviewed by an attorney.

A community member emphasized that while the topic is important, the information should also be reviewed with each Financial Management Services (FMS) agency, as interpretations and applications of the law may vary among FMS providers.

Dr. Lopez requested clarification on Ms. Pickett's earlier motion. Ms. Pickett stated that her motion was to approve the RFP with an addendum requiring that the Employer Labor Law training be reviewed by a licensed attorney to ensure legal accuracy. Ms. Chavez noted that if an attorney is paid to provide this support, it must first be confirmed whether LVAC funds can be used for legal services. Ms. Martinko suggested exploring pro bono support or utilizing a legal representative from Disability Voices United (DVU).

A community member asked if the RFP would be open to all vendors. Ms. Martinko clarified that each RFP will be awarded to one vendor.

Ms. Pickett made the motion to approve the RFP for Employee and Labor Law Training with the addendum specifying that all legal contents must be reviewed by a California-licensed attorney prior to delivering the training to the community. Ms. Martinko seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

c. Review Draft RFP for SDP Parent Support Group

Ms. Martinko provided a summary of the RFP for the SDP Parent Support Group, noting that it is intended for parents to meet with other parents who have individuals participating in SDP.

Ms. Pickett noted that the RFP currently specifies a fixed date and time for the support group and recommended adding language to the RFP to allow flexibility in scheduling. Ms. Pickett made a motion to approve the RFP for the Parent Support Group, with an addendum providing that the time and date for the support group will

be determined in the future. Ms. Martinko seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

Break 7:58pm – 8:03pm.

d. Review Draft RFP for Advanced Training for Independent Facilitators

Ms. Martinko noted that the proposal was to review advanced training for IFs serving SDP participants within the RCOC catchment area. As discussed earlier in the meeting, the advanced training would include PCP elements. Dr. Lopez made the motion to approve the RFP for Advanced Training for Independent Facilitators. Ms. Martinko seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

e. Review of Alternative Options for Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program

Ms. Martinko expressed interest in making a motion to use up the remaining 2023-2024 LVAC funds to purchase Disability Voices United (DVU) Think Outside the Box books. Ms. Martinko informed the committee that a community member had informed her that RCOC no longer had English "Think Outside the Box" book. Dr. Lopez inquired about the remaining LVAC funds in Fiscal Year 2023-2024 and suggested distributing the books to families who are interested in services, rather than requiring them to complete the orientation. Ms. Chavez noted that the previous RFP approved for the DVU books were passed with the notion that the books be provided to individuals who completed the SDP orientation first.

A community member suggested waiting to purchase the DVU books as they would need to be updated to reflect the recent SDP changes made. Judy Mark, a representative from DVU, suggested retaining the current materials due to the upcoming deadline for spending 2023-2024 LVAC funds.

Ms. Martinko noted that the request would be for English-language books only. Ms. Chavez stated that the physical books would need to be received by RCOC and properly counted before processing payment. Dr. Lopez suggested not requiring the books to be counted to ensure timely distribution of the books. Ms. Mark explained that the books would be purchased through Amazon and that Amazon tracks the number of books. If there were any missing books then follow-up would be made with Amazon. Dr. Lopez requested information on the remaining funds available to purchase additional copies of the DVU Think Outside the Box book.

Ms. Chavez confirmed there is approximately \$29,000 available in the 2023 – 2024 funds. Dr. Lopez requested an estimate of how many books could be purchased with remaining funds. Ms. Chavez reported that approximately 1,165 books could be purchased. Ms. Montanez inquired if the books could be bought at a discounted rate. Ms. Marks noted that the discounted rate could also apply to the new request of DVU books.

A community member requested that Spanish books also be provided to the Spanish speaking community. Ms. Chavez noted that RCOC only had one more box of Spanish books to hand out.

Ms. Martinko made the motion to use up remaining 2023-2024 LVAC funds to purchase Disability Voices United (DVU) Think Outside the Box books. The committee discussed the allocation of books by language and agreed to purchase 500 Spanish-language books and 500 English-language books. Ms. Lopez seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the motion.

V. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

a. SDP Resource Fair Follow-up Update

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

VI. RCOC Self-Determination Activities

a. Self-Determination Statistics

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

b. Self-Determination Demographics

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed

VII. Community Input and Barriers to Completing the SDP Process

Due to time constraints, this item was not reviewed.

VIII. Agenda Items and Date of the Next Meeting

Committee Members requested that a special meeting be held on February 9th 2026, to approve Minutes from today's meeting and any other pending items.

IX. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:33pm.