

**Regional Center of Orange County
Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee Meeting
July 14th, 2025
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

Gihong (Collin) Kwon, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

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

Jennifer Montanez, RCOC Director of Case Management

Kaitlynn Truong, Comfort Connection Family Resource Center

Renu Moon, Parent

Tina Blabagno, RCOC SDP Participant Choice Specialist

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 June 2, 2025 Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the minutes from the June 2, 2025 meeting. Ms. Kaitlynn Truong made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 2, 2025. Ms. Beth Martinko seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of approving the minutes except for Dr. Lopez who abstained due to not attending.

III. SDP Case Studies

Ms. Crystal Chavez reminded the guest speaker not to include personal information, as this is a public forum and will need to ensure that the clients' private information is not disclosed. A community member who is a parent of two individuals served by Regional Center shared her experience in the program. She expressed she felt she had less freedom and control under SDP but carried full responsibility. She highlighted the lack of clear rules and difficulties in switching vendors, even when services are similar in type and cost within her Spending Plan. She stated that the Regional Center should share more of the responsibility with families, while pointing out the inefficiencies and a deviation from the original intent of the program. Despite these challenges, she acknowledged the positives of SDP, such as being able to decide staff pay rates, which helped attract and retain higher-quality staff. In response to the speaker, Ms. Martinko asked if the SDP participant was engaging in any activities. Speaker shared her child was engaged in fitness activities in the community. Speaker's independent facilitator added that under SDP, staff being able to transport persons served is a major benefit compared to the limited transportation options in the traditional system.

A community member echoed similar concerns about the timelines and complex process.

Dr. Lopez inquired if other Regional Centers are experiencing the same concerns. Ms. Martinko confirmed that many other Regional Centers are experiencing similar situations. Ms. Martinko recommended that these community concerns be summarized through key issues and communicated to department of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) and to Mr. Larry Landauer, RCOC Executive Director. Dr. Lopez recommended sending specific details through documentation to DDS and Mr. Landauer, in addition with the SDP LVAC minutes. Ms. Chavez noted Ms. Jennifer Montanez's attends each LVAC meeting and upper Management is informed of all of the concerns expressed by the community from every meeting.

Ms. Tina Blabagno shared the SDP Padlet link in the chat, which includes a Spending Plan checklist. Ms. Chavez encouraged the participants to review the checklist, as it highlights items that are reviewed by RCOC to ensure the Spending Plans meet SDP criteria and assists with avoiding unnecessary delays.

Break at 7:19 PM

Meeting resumed at 7:25 PM

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

a. SDP Resource Fair Summary

Mr. Bill Greenfield, Greenfield & Associates LLC, presented and provided feedback received from the recent SDP Resource Fair that was hosted on July 12, 2025. Mr. Greenfield reported the event had a total of 358 participants and featured 40 vendors. Two breakout sessions were offered at the fair, including an “SDP 101” and a presentation from CogLeap. Interpretation services were available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Mandarin.

Ms. Martinko commented that the fair fostered many valuable connections between participants and vendors. She also noted one family who has been struggling to find the right art class was able to connect with an art class provider during their attendance at the fair. Ms. Martinko acknowledged Ms. Chavez for her efforts in personally engaging with each vendor. Ms. Renu Moon stated that the resource fair was a success overall.

b. ASLA PCP Training for IF update

Ms. Kim Sinclair, Executive Director of Autism Society of Los Angeles (ASLA), presented an update regarding the ASLA PCP Thinking and Training for individuals attempting to become an Independent Facilitator.

A community member requested additional trainings to be requested so that more agencies can provide, resulting in a greater variety of trainings and perspectives for individuals. This community member inquired why many were left out of the

ASLA training, and Ms. Sinclair indicated that this opportunity was offered to individuals who have not yet gone through this type of training. Ms. Sinclair offered to utilize the remaining RFP funds to create a training for individuals attempting to become an independent facilitator related to SDP Individual Budgets and Spending Plans. Ms. Martinko stated a new RFP must be submitted for additional trainings and the use of the remaining SDP LVAC funds.

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

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

1. DVU SDP Conference

Ms. Chavez indicated that there have been changes to the Disability Voices United (DVU) SDP conference, and since there was a previous motion to fund for this conference, this item would need to be re-reviewed. Ms. Kayley Proenza from Disability Voices United (DVU) reviewed the changes occurring with the conference and noted the new DVU Conference date has been changed from 8/23/25 to 11/19/25 and will be held in-person at the California Endowment Center. Ms. Proenza noted there will be two topics covered: SDP and Supported Decision-Making. Ms. Proenza stated that it is a first-come, first-serve ticket reservations process and up to 320 attendees are expected to attend. Ms. Proenza further shared the cost is \$100/ticket

for professionals and \$50/ticket for Persons Served or their family members. Ms. Chavez noted there is \$105,580 available for Fiscal Year 2024/2025. Ms. Chavez inquired if Ms. Proenza is able to guarantee a certain amount of tickets for RCOC persons served. Ms. Proenza noted that it is not an option as the ticket system is first-come, first-serve basis, but would be able to allocate an option during the checkout process to confirm which Regional Center the individual is from to avoid the individual needing to pay. Ms. Martinko made a motion to allocate up to \$10,000 for RCOC families and SDP team members. Dr. Lopez seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of approving the motion.

Ms. Proenza shared that DVU is hosting a private meeting for LVAC committee members each month on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM to allow other LVACs to connect and collaborate. Ms. Proenza shared the meeting link to the Chat.

2. Training on Labor Laws for SDP participants, including Over-Time Rules – Cost Review

Due to time constraints this agenda item was not discussed and will be discussed at the next meeting.

3. Review of Survey Items

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was not discussed and will be discussed at the next meeting.

VI. RCOC Self-Determination Activities:

a. Self-Determination Statistics

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was not discussed and will be discussed at the next meeting.

b. Self- Determination Demographics

Due to time constraints, this agenda item was not discussed and will be discussed at the next meeting.

VII. Community Input and Barriers to Completing the SDP Process

A community member asked to clarify who is representing RCOC at the Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC) meeting. Dr. Lopez and Ms. Martinko informed the community that attendance at the SSDAC meeting is open to the public and anyone is able to attend. Dr. Lopez and Ms. Martinko shared that the future SSDAC meeting information can be found on the SSDAC website.

Dr. Lopez asked if names of speakers can be added to the SDP LVAC agenda to clarify when public comment is allowed.

A community member stated that RCOC is not approving services that have been approved by other Regional Centers.

VIII. Agenda Items and Date of the Next Meeting

Ms. Moon inquired if a Financial Management Service (FMS) agency could join the next LVAC meeting and provide education regarding the difference between the three FMS models. Mr. Tony Venzor from SequoiaSD FMS offered to provide the training.

A community member asked if HCBS Final Rule training could be added to the next agenda.

IX. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.