



What are Regional Centers?

Regional Centers are nonprofit, private corporations that contract with the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to provide and/or coordinate services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. Established in 1977 by the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, there are [21](#) Regional Centers in California with offices throughout the state to help find and access the many services available to individuals and their families. Regional Centers are monitored and regulated by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Regional Center authority is described in the California Code of Regulations, [Title 17](#).

Individual eligibility for Regional Center services is determined through an assessment process. After the age of three, the candidate must prove they have a disability that began before the age of 18, is expected to continue indefinitely, and is substantially handicapping. Eligible diagnoses are Intellectual Disability (formerly Mental Retardation), Autism, Epilepsy, or Cerebral Palsy. There is a fifth, “other” category, that is defined as one who functions in the intellectually disabled range and is substantially handicapped, though the IQ may be somewhat higher. Once a person is found eligible for services, they are referred to collectively as “consumers,” though many people that have been in the field for a long time continue to use the older term, “client.”

Services provided by Regional Centers include:

- Information and referral.
- Assessment and diagnosis.
- Counseling.
- Lifelong individualized planning and service coordination.
- Purchase of necessary services included in the individual program plan.
- Resource development.
- Outreach.
- Assistance in finding and using community and other resources.
- Advocacy for the protection of legal, civil and service rights.
- Early intervention services for at risk infants and their families.
- Genetic counseling.
- Family support.
- Planning, placement, and monitoring for 24-hour out-of-home care.

- Training and educational opportunities for individuals and families.
- Community education about developmental disabilities.

Some consumers of the Regional Center require 24-hour care and supervision from a Community Care Facility. CCF's of all age categories can admit consumers of a Regional Center through a process called "vendorization." A facility must first obtain a license before applying for vendorization, and there are additional experience and training requirements. Regional Center CCF's are designated as providing services at different levels:

- SERVICE LEVEL 1: Limited care and supervision for persons with self-care skills and no behavior problems. These facilities are sometimes referred to as providing "board and care" only. They are not inspected or monitored by the Regional Center and do not receive a supplemental funding beyond SSI/SSA.
- SERVICE LEVEL 2: Care, supervision, and incidental training for persons with some self-care skills and no major behavior problems.
- SERVICE LEVEL 3: Care, supervision, and ongoing training for persons with significant deficits in self-help skills, and/or some limitations in physical coordination and mobility, and/or disruptive or self-injurious behavior.
- SERVICE LEVEL 4: Care, supervision, and professionally supervised training for persons with deficits in self-help skills, and/or severe impairment in physical coordination and mobility, and/or severely disruptive or self-injurious behavior. Service Level 4 is subdivided into Levels 4A through 4I, in which staffing levels are increased to correspond to the escalating severity of disability levels.

Each Regional Center will determine, through their Purchase Of Service (POS) criteria, what makes a consumer eligible for a particular level. Higher levels receive greater supplemental payment, but also have increased staffing, training, paperwork, and other requirements. Level 4A – 4I facilities must also provide appropriate consulting services.

See the current facility rates [here](#).

RA Mears Consulting has expertise and can provide the following services for level 2 – 4 Regional Center facilities:

- Level 2 - 4 Program Designs.
- Program Design Sections and Components.
- Individual Service Plans (ISP's).
- Quarterly and Semi-Annual Reports.
- Face Sheets.

Note: See our [Complete Products & Services Price List](#) and [Policies](#) for full details.

The above information is based on knowledge gained during more than 40 years experience with CCF's, daily interaction with new CCF applicants and existing CCF's, and expertise in California Code of Regulations, Titles 17 and 22.

THIS SUMMARY IS PROVIDED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ONLY. IT IS NOT INTENDED TO PROVIDE LEGAL ADVICE, LEGAL CONSULTATION, NOR INFORMATION TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC MATTERS YOU MAY CURRENTLY BE ADDRESSING. DO NOT TAKE ACTION IN SPECIFIC CASES WITHOUT FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS. PLEASE VISIT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES [WEBSITE](#) FOR COMPLETE DETAILS.