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WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE - WIC

DIVISION 4.5. SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED [4500 - 4885] (*Division 4.5 added by Stats. 1977, Ch. 1252.*)

CHAPTER 4.1. Master Plan for Developmental Services in California [4580 - 4581] (*Chapter 4.1 added by Stats. 2024, Ch. 47, Sec. 5.*)

4580. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (1) More than 460,000 Californians who have intellectual and developmental disabilities are currently served at the State Department of Developmental Services' 21 regional centers. Since 2019, the number of Californians served by the state's developmental services system has grown by 31 percent, with significant growth among young people of color under 22 years of age who have an autism diagnosis.
- (2) The experiences and outcomes of Californians served by the state's developmental services system impact not only people with disabilities, but also their families and local communities.
- (3) California is the only state in the nation that provides developmental services and supports as an entitlement, with an intentional focus on home- and community-based services.
- (4) Over the last decade, California and the federal government have prioritized the inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in their communities, while avoiding institutional settings.
- (5) Individuals receiving services through California's developmental services system are often deeply connected to other health and social systems. Across the state, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families rely on services provided through multiple state and local entities, including, but not limited to, the State Department of Developmental Services, the State Department of Health Care Services, the California Department of Aging, the State Department of Social Services, the Department of Rehabilitation, and the State Department of Education.
- (6) Multiple entities have issued reports identifying opportunities for improving consumer experiences and the provision of developmental services, including the California State Auditor's Office in 2021 and the Little Hoover Commission in 2023.
- (7) These reports and other research studies have identified the following:
 - (A) There are wide racial, ethnic, and geographic disparities in the access to services provided in the developmental services system, as measured by purchase of service spending.
 - (B) Consumer experiences vary significantly across the 21 regional centers, reflecting variation in policies and processes across the regional centers.
 - (C) There are challenges faced by individuals and families navigating programs or systems that provide "generic" services and that are required to be accessed by consumers before receiving funded services through a regional center.
 - (D) For several years, staffing models have led to many regional centers assigning more consumers to each service coordinator than authorized by statutory staffing requirements, which has limited the abilities of service coordinators to assist individuals and families in accessing services.

(8) The Secretary of California Health and Human Services appointed members of the Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee for a one-year term, with the intent that they collectively deliver a master plan by March of 2025.

(9) In 2024, the California Health and Human Services Agency will engage in outreach activities such as roundtable discussions and focus groups in communities across the state to learn about the lived experiences of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and system partners.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this chapter that a Master Plan for Developmental Services is developed that strengthens accessibility, quality, and equity of the developmental services system for all system consumers and their families, regardless of their language spoken, demographic group, geographic region, or socioeconomic status, and improves the accountability and transparency of the systems supporting them.

(Added by Stats. 2024, Ch. 47, Sec. 5. (AB 162) Effective July 2, 2024.)

4580.5. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) Pursuant to Chapter 47 of the Statutes of 2024 (Assembly Bill No. 162), the Legislature established its intent that the Master Plan for Developmental Services be developed with the intent to strengthen accessibility, quality, and equity for all consumers of the developmental services system and their families, no matter their demographic groups, geographic region, or socioeconomic status.

(2) In 2024, the California Health and Human Services Agency appointed members of the Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee and held roundtable discussions in communities across the state to learn about the lived experiences of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, and system partners.

(3) The California Health and Human Services Agency published the Master Plan for Developmental Services on March 28, 2025. As stated by the California Health and Human Services Agency, the Master Plan for Developmental Services is a community-driven vision with recommendations intended to improve the ways that California supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families into the future. These recommendations will inform California's ongoing work to provide better developmental services and supports, improve coordination across systems, and increase the attainment of desired life outcomes among individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

(4) The Master Plan for Developmental Services states that the community's recommendations will inform several State Department of Developmental Services workgroups, including, but not limited to, the Lived Experience Advisory Group, an expanded and renamed group formerly known as the Consumer Advisory Committee, the Quality Incentive Program workgroup, the Regional Center Performance Measures workgroup, and the Quality Assurance Advisory Group.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the California Health and Human Services Agency, in consultation with relevant departments and agencies across state government, provide the Legislature with information on next steps and a structure for implementation of Master Plan for Developmental Services recommendations with ongoing updates on implementation progress.

(Added by Stats. 2025, Ch. 12, Sec. 3. (AB 143) Effective June 27, 2025.)

4581. (a) The Secretary of California Health and Human Services, in coordination with the State Department of Developmental Services, shall lead the development and implementation of the Master Plan for Developmental Services referenced in Governor Gavin Newsom's January 2024 Budget proposal and in the subsequent proclamation by the Governor that declared March 2024 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

(b) Other state entities that interact with the State Department of Developmental Services shall be included in discussions with the Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee, as applicable. These entities shall include, but not be limited to, the State Department of Health Care Services, the State Department of Social Services, the Department of Rehabilitation, the California Department of Aging, the State Department of Education, and the agencies listed in subdivision (g).

(c) The Secretary of California Health and Human Services shall solicit input through the committee, or through other means, from individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families, professionals in the developmental services field, and a broad range of subject matter experts on topics that may include, but are not limited to, regional center board accountability and transparency and the evaluation of regional centers, including performance, equity, and diversity.

(d) When the California Health and Human Services Agency convenes meetings of the master plan committee, the information and materials about the work of the master plan committee shall be posted on the California Health and Human Services Agency's internet website in a timely manner.

(e) By March 15, 2025, the Secretary of California Health and Human Services shall submit an initial report to the Governor and the Legislature that summarizes the recommended components of the master plan resulting from the master plan committee advisory

process, the community roundtable discussions, and the public comment received.

(f) The Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee shall meet at least two times each year, commencing in 2025 and ending on March 15, 2036, or when the final master plan implementation update is submitted, whichever date is later.

(g) The secretary and the director shall work with other state agencies and departments, as necessary, to identify policies, efficiencies, and strategies necessary to implement the master plan, which may include any of the following:

- (1) The California Health and Human Services Agency.
- (2) The Government Operations Agency.
- (3) The State Department of Education.
- (4) The Labor and Workforce Development Agency.
- (5) The Transportation Agency.
- (6) The Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency.
- (7) The Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission.
- (8) The office of the Treasurer.

(h) The workgroup shall solicit input from stakeholders and gather information on the experiences of Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in the implementation process of the master plan.

(i) (1) By March 15, 2026, the California Health and Human Services Agency and the department shall provide an initial report on implementation of any master plan recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature that includes all of the following information:

(A) The administration's high-level priorities for the developmental services system through the 2027–28 fiscal year in light of the broad themes identified in the master plan's recommendations.

(B) A listing of the specific master plan recommendations that the administration considers to be feasible and likely to advance as near-term priorities. For each recommendation, all of the following shall be noted:

- (i) Whether the recommendation may require an appropriation of additional funding.
- (ii) Whether statutory changes may be required.
- (iii) The extent to which the recommendation relates to existing efforts already underway.

(C) The existing or newly created workgroups to which each of the master plan's recommendations is related. It is the intent of the Legislature to provide information for individuals served, their families, stakeholders, and the general public to more clearly track progress on implementing recommendations.

(D) Budget change proposals in the Governor's Budget for the 2026–27 fiscal year that tie to master plan recommendations.

(2) (A) Following the initial report to be submitted by March 15, 2026, the California Health and Human Services Agency and the department shall submit master plan recommendation updates to the Governor and the Legislature annually beginning March 15, 2027, through March 15, 2036, inclusive. The updates shall include, but are not limited to, identification of any statutory changes as well as additional funding requirements considered necessary to effectively implement recommendations from the plan and identification of recommendations that have been implemented.

(B) The updates shall also include a narrative summary of the Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee meetings that will occur at least two times per year pursuant to subdivision (f), including themes identified in public comment provided at these meetings. As part of these summaries, Master Plan for Developmental Services Committee members shall have the option to submit written commentary on the degree to which progress is made on the master plan's recommendations, as well as any suggestions for ongoing implementation of master plan recommendations.

(j) For any State Department of Developmental Services budget change proposal submitted through 2035, the department shall include a narrative description of how the proposal addresses any recommendations included in the Master Plan for Developmental Services, if applicable.

(k) Any funding needed to support program enhancements proposed in the master plan is subject to an appropriation by the Legislature for those purposes.

(l) A report to be submitted pursuant to this section shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

