

THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2414
Author: Nguyen (D)
Amended: 8/21/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/29/26

AYES: Becker, Ochoa Bogh, Laird, Pérez, Weber Pierson

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 5/26/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Developmental services: direct support professionals

SOURCE: California Disability Services Association

DIGEST: This bill defines “Direct Support Professional” for purposes of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Lanterman Act).

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/21/26 strike the requirement for the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to develop billing guidance necessary to facilitate compensation associated with DSP University training.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Lanterman Act, which states that California is responsible for providing a range of services and supports sufficiently complete to meet the needs and choices of each person with developmental disabilities, regardless of age or degree of disability, and at each stage of life, and to support their integration into the mainstream life of the community. (Welfare and Institutions Code [WIC] 4500 et seq.)

- 2) Establishes a system of nonprofit Regional Centers, overseen by DDS, to provide fixed points of contact in the community for all persons with developmental disabilities and their families, to coordinate services and supports best suited to them throughout their lifetime. (WIC § 4620)
- 3) States legislative intent to phase in funding and policies beginning in the 2021–22 fiscal year to implement developmental services rate reform, which shall include a quality incentive program, create an enhanced person-centered, outcomes-based system, and complete this transformation by July 1, 2025. (WIC §4519.10)
- 4) Finds and declares that Direct Support Professionals are critical to the provision of services and support to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and, in recognition of the value of the services provided by Direct Support Professionals, additional training and development will enhance the services they provide and foster a more sustainable workforce. (WIC §4511.5(a))
- 5) Requires DDS to develop or utilize existing curriculum to implement enhanced Direct Support Professional training that promotes services that are person centered and culturally and linguistically sensitive, and that improve outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Provides it is the intent of the Legislature to enhance the quality of services that consumers receive from Direct Support Professionals, including, but not limited to, improving knowledge about general health and safety issues, employing principles of self-determination, and working to improve quality of services and quality of life, including advancing health equity for consumers of regional center services. Requires the enhanced Direct Support Professional training to include, but not be limited to, all of the following elements:
 - a) Competency based.
 - b) Tiered training and certification.
 - c) Continuing education.
 - d) Outcome measures, as defined by DDS, with input with stakeholders, as specified. (WIC §4511.5(b))
- 6) Requires DDS to consult with stakeholders throughout the implementation of enhanced Direct Support Professional training, as specified. (WIC §4511.5(c))

- 7) Requires DDS, commencing on July 1, 2025, and every other year thereafter, to review and update the rate models per the cost inputs available at the time of the review and post the updated rate models on its internet website no later than January 1 of the following year. Provides that an adjustment to a provider rate shall be contingent upon the appropriation of funds by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act and approval of federal funding. (WIC §4519.11)
- 8) Defines “substantial disability” as the existence of significant functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of major life activity, as determined by a regional center, and as appropriate to the age of the person:
 - a) Self-care.
 - b) Receptive and expressive language.
 - c) Learning.
 - d) Mobility.
 - e) Self-direction.
 - f) Capacity for independent living.
 - g) Economic self-sufficiency. (WIC §4512(1)(1))
- 9) Defines, for community care facility licensing, “activities of daily living” as the following six activities: bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, continence, and eating. (22 California Code of Regulations [CCR] §80001(a)(1))

This bill:

- 1) Requires DDS, on or before April 1, 2027, to develop the billing guidance necessary to facilitate compensation associated with the enhanced Direct Support Professional training described in (5) above.
- 2) Defines “Direct Support Professional” as an individual who receives compensation to provide direct support to children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, is employed by a service provider receiving regional center funding, and spends at least 50% of their working time completing direct support tasks, including, but not limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Services that enhance independence and community inclusion.

- b) Assisting with skill development, including personal and vocational coaching.
 - c) Providing assistance with activities of daily living.
- 3) Renames “direct service professional” to “Direct Support Professional” throughout the Lanterman Act.

Background

Purpose of the Bill. According to the author, “Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are on the front lines, providing direct and essential support to California's community of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs). This workforce ensures that folks with IDD maintain their dignity, independence, and access to social opportunities by providing a wide range of supports, including job coaching and employment support, mobility assistance, wound care, and the administration of medication. Unfortunately, California is currently facing a DSP workforce shortage, which severely reduces supports and services for the IDD community. Low wages in exchange for this highly skilled labor are forcing workers to seek employment in other industries to make ends meet.

“AB 2414 addresses this issue by standardizing references to DSPs throughout state law, strengthening workforce recognition, enabling consistent data collection, and supporting more effective policy development. By ensuring DSPs are formally recognized in state law, this bill also increases access to supports and services for individuals with IDD.”

Lanterman Act. In 1969, the Lanterman Act established that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have a right to receive the necessary services and supports required to live independently in the community. The Lanterman Act enumerates the rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as the rights of their families, the services and supports available to these individuals, and how regional centers and service providers work together to provide these services and supports. The term “developmental disability” is defined as a disability that originates before a person reaches 18 years of age, is expected to continue indefinitely, and is a significant disability for the individual. Such disabilities include, among others: epilepsy, autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, and cerebral palsy. There are no income-related eligibility criteria to access developmental services. The Department of Finance estimates that approximately 487,114 individuals will receive developmental services in 2025–26, increasing to 526,848 in 2026–27.

Regional Centers and Provider Vendorization. In addition to establishing the rights of individuals, the Lanterman Act also created California's regional center system, comprised of 21 nonprofit regional centers throughout the state whose primary purpose is to connect individuals with services in the community. Regional centers contract with service providers, or vendors, to provide services to consumers. DDS and regional centers use the term "vendorization" to describe the approval process involved in preparing to provide services to regional center consumers, which typically involves obtaining additional licenses or approvals from other state and local agencies prior to becoming a vendor. Service providers must be vendored by a regional center before they can provide and be reimbursed for services.

Direct Support Professional Workforce. Service providers employ Direct Support Professionals, referred to in statute as direct *service* professionals, to work directly with consumers. Services and supports available to consumers may include independent and supported living, day programs, and employment services, among others. According to the Administration for Community Living:

[Direct Support Professionals] support people with disabilities in a wide variety of ways, based upon the unique needs of the person receiving support. Many provide assistance with activities of daily living, but their role is much broader than that. [Direct Support Professionals] may also provide job coaching and employment support, independent living skills training, assistance with accessing resources and opportunities in the community, and more. Without [Direct Support Professionals], many people with disabilities would not be able to live independently.

According to the Association of Regional Center Agencies, the number of Direct Support Professionals in California's developmental services system is estimated at around 100,000.

DSP University. DSP University was established through the 2021 Budget Act to improve service quality, promote equity and culturally responsive services, strengthen the Direct Support Professional workforce, and support retention through career pathways. DSP University is a free, voluntary, statewide, competency-based training and certification program for Direct Support Professionals. It provides structured training through three tiers of training content, including foundational understanding of the developmental services system, the individuals they support, and core knowledge and skills to encourage health, safety, and well-being; quality of life outcomes beyond safety and physical well-

being; mandatory reporting training; and advanced specialization in specific areas of practice.

Participation in DSP University is voluntary. To be eligible, a Direct Support Professional must meet all of the following criteria:

- Primarily providing direct support to children and/or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Providing support and supervision.
- Support individuals to learn new skills or continue to perform tasks independently.
- Ensuring optimal health and safety and assisting with household upkeep to maintain a clean, safe, and hazard-free environment.
- Assisting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with skills development, guidance, and personal assistance.
- Spending at least 50% of their work hours performing direct support tasks.
- Being funded by a regional center.

This bill defines a Direct Support Professional as an individual who receives compensation to provide direct support to children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, is employed by a service provider receiving regional center funding, and spends at least 50% of their working time completing direct support tasks, as specified.

Comments

This bill defines Direct Support Professional and cleans up inconsistent references in statute. The definition of Direct Support Professional in this bill aligns with eligibility criteria for DSP University, which was established to enhance the quality of services and improve outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 1575 (Arambula) would change the word “consumer” to “person eligible for regional center services” throughout the Lanterman Act. AB 1575 is pending on the Senate Floor.

AB 2423 (Mathis, Chapter 904, Statutes of 2024) required DDS, commencing July 1, 2025, and every other year thereafter, to review and update the rate models included in the rate study for developmental services providers. AB 2423 required DDS to post the updated rate models on its internet website no later than January 1 of the following year and provided that adjustments to provider rates shall be contingent upon an appropriation.

AB 136 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 76, Statutes of 2021), a budget trailer bill, required DDS to develop and implement a Direct Support Professional training curriculum (DSP University) that promotes person-centered services that are culturally and linguistically sensitive and improves consumer outcomes.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- Unknown General Fund cost pressures, potentially hundreds of thousands annually, to provide compensation associated with the training for direct support professionals.
- The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) indicates no fiscal impact for state operations since the department already utilizes the term “direct support professional” and is developing billing guidance to support enhanced, training-based compensation using existing funds.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/21/26)

California Disability Services Association (source)

Association of Regional Center Agencies

California Respite Association

Manos

The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy California Collaboration

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/21/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0, 5/26/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Muratsuchi, Celeste Rodriguez

Prepared by: Diana Dominguez / HUMAN S. / (916) 651-1524
8/24/26 12:10:53

**** END ****