
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Becker, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: AB 308
Author: Ramos
Version: June 8, 2025
Urgency: No
Consultant: Diana Dominguez

Hearing Date: June 15, 2026
Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Developmental services: safety training

SUMMARY

This bill would require the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to conduct a statewide evaluation of safety training services provided by regional centers.

ABSTRACT

Existing Law:

- 1) Requires the Commission on Peace Office Standards and Training to adopt rules establishing minimum standards relating to the recruitment, training, and fitness of state and local law enforcement officers. (*Penal Code [PEN] 13510(a-b)*)
- 2) Requires that the course of basic training for law enforcement officers include adequate instruction in specified procedures and techniques relating to the handling of persons with developmental disabilities or mental illness. (*PEN 13519.2 (a)*)
- 3) Establishes the Advisory Council on Improving Interactions between People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice. (*PEN 13016*)
- 4) Establishes the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (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.*)
- 5) 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*)

- 6) Authorizes a regional center to purchase services or supports for a consumer from an individual or agency that the regional center and consumer or, if appropriate, the consumer's parents, legal guardian, or conservator, or authorized representative, determines will best accomplish all or part of that consumer's program plan. (*WIC 4648(a)(3)(A)*)

This Bill:

- 1) Makes the following findings and declarations:
 - a. The California Department of Justice convened an advisory council to examine interactions between law enforcement and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
 - b. The report, issued to the Legislature in 2026, identified significant systemic gaps in the training of peace officers and in cross-system coordination, highlighted that law enforcement frequently serves as the primary responder to behavioral and mental health crises involving individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and identified the need for improved preventative supports and alternatives to law enforcement response.
- 2) Requires DDS to conduct a statewide evaluation of safety training services provided by regional centers.
- 3) Requires the evaluation to include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 - a. Identification of which regional centers currently offer or fund safety training services, including service models, service codes, delivery methods, and populations served.
 - b. Identification of gaps in access to safety training services across regional centers and geographic regions of the state.
 - c. An analysis of the staffing, training, and community partnerships required to implement safety training services, including partnerships with law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and emergency medical service providers.
 - d. An estimate of the costs associated with developing, implementing, and sustaining safety training services in regional centers that do not currently offer such services.
 - e. Recommendations for standardizing safety training services statewide, including service definitions, delivery models, staffing requirements, and measurable outcome indicators.
- 4) Requires DDS to submit a report to the Legislature on or before July 1, 2028, summarizing the findings and recommendations.
- 5) Requires the report to include recommendations for all of the following:

- a. Reducing unnecessary law enforcement involvement and hospitalizations through preventative services, including safety training services delivered through regional centers.
 - b. Establishing standardized, statewide protocols for responding to crises involving individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.
 - c. Integrating safety training services into the Individualized Program Planning process to reduce crisis incidence and improve outcomes.
- 6) Requires DDS, in developing recommendations to be included in the report, to prioritize culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and neurodiversity-affirming approaches, and to ensure accessibility for individuals with limited verbal communication or complex support needs.
- 7) Makes the requirement for submitting a report imposed under this bill inoperative on January 1, 2031, pursuant to Section 10231.5 of the Government Code. Requires a report to be submitted pursuant to this bill to be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.
- 8) Provides that DDS may consult with stakeholders in conducting the evaluation and developing recommendations, including, but not limited to, individuals with disabilities, family members, advocacy organizations, service providers, regional centers, and representatives of law enforcement and emergency response agencies.
- 9) Defines “safety training services” as a structured service or program designed to increase an individual’s ability to safely navigate community settings and emergency situations, including, but not limited to, all of the following:
 - a. Safe interaction with peace officers, first responders, and emergency personnel.
 - b. Wandering and elopement prevention strategies.
 - c. Emergency preparedness and response, including recognizing and responding to fire, medical, and public safety emergencies.
 - d. Strategies for seeking help, including identifying safe individuals and locations.
 - e. Use of communication tools and techniques to effectively convey needs and information in high-stress or crisis situations, including augmentative and alternative communication, as appropriate.
 - f. Development of individualized safety plans based on the needs and preferences of the individual.
- 10) States it is the intent of the Legislature, upon receipt and review of the report required by this bill, to consider a one-time appropriation, and any necessary ongoing funding, to DDS for the purpose of developing, implementing, and sustaining safety training services

statewide, including the provision of technical assistance to regional centers and service providers.

FISCAL IMPACT

This bill has been gutted and amended. The version in print has not yet been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Purpose of the Bill:

According to the author, “Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) deserve to feel safe and supported in every situation, including emergencies and interactions with first responders. AB 308 takes an important step by directing a statewide assessment of Regional Centers to better understand existing safety programs, identify opportunities to strengthen them, and establish consistent standards across California. By advancing a prevention-focused safety plan, we can build a stronger, more coordinated system that supports individuals with IDD, their families, Regional Center staff, and first responders.”

Lanterman Act

In 1969, the Lanterman Act established that individuals with 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 developmental disabilities, as well as the rights of their families, what services and supports are 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.

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. The Department of Finance estimates that approximately 487,114 individuals will receive developmental services in 2025–26, increasing to 526,848 in 2026–27.¹

SB 882 Advisory Council

SB 882 (*Eggman, Chapter 899, Statutes of 2022*) established the Advisory Council on Improving Interactions between People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Law Enforcement (Advisory Council) to evaluate existing training and identify gaps in training for peace officers specific to interactions with the intellectually and developmentally disabled

¹ https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/DDS_MayRevisionsHighlights_202605.pdf

community and with individuals with mental health disorders. The Advisory Council was comprised of nine members appointed by the Governor, the Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly. The Advisory Council met 13 times over the course of two years and published its culminating report in April 2026.²

According to the report, law enforcement is the default responder in most California jurisdictions when a person is experiencing a mental health crisis or when caregivers or others are unable to manage behaviors related to intellectual or developmental disability. Several historical factors, including the de-institutionalization of mental health services and insufficient investment in community-based services to meet community needs, have resulted in greater policing in the mental health care system. The report additionally stated, “Existing research demonstrates that people with mental health conditions or intellectual and developmental disabilities are more likely to have encounters with law enforcement and are more likely to experience uses of force in these encounters.” The report included several recommendations related to data collection and research, crisis response models and other systems interventions, and training. This bill seeks to adopt one of the recommendations in the report, which would require DDS to determine which regional centers have a safety training service, assess the cost of developing such a service at the regional centers that do not yet have one, and report back to the Legislature.

Related/Prior Legislation:

SB 882 (Eggman, Chapter 899, Statutes of 2022) created an advisory council within the Department of Justice responsible for evaluating and reporting on existing training for peace officers related to interactions between law enforcement and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This bill required use of force incident reports sent to the Department of Justice by local law enforcement agencies to include information on whether the officer perceived that someone involved had an intellectual or developmental disability, among other information.

COMMENTS

As individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities increasingly live, work, and participate in their communities, interactions with law enforcement and other first responders have become more frequent. The Legislature passed SB 882 in 2022 to establish an Advisory Council to evaluate existing training for peace officers and recommend how to improve interactions between law enforcement and people with intellectual and disabilities. This bill seeks to continue this work by requiring a statewide evaluation of safety training services available through regional centers. This bill stems directly from one of the recommendations in the SB 882 report.

PRIOR VOTES

This bill was gutted and amended on June 8, 2026, while pending in this committee. All prior votes are based on the bill before it was gutted and amended.

² <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/sb-882-report-2026.pdf>

POSITIONS

Support:

Autism Society Inland Empire (Sponsor)

Autism Heroes (Sponsor)

Autism Speaks

California Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

SCDD

Oppose:

None received

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