

---

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

---

### AB 341 (Arambula) - Oral Health for People with Disabilities Technical Assistance Center Program

**Version:** May 1, 2025

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** August 18, 2025

**Policy Vote:** HUMAN S. 5 - 0, ED. 7 - 0

**Mandate:** No

**Consultant:** Agnes Lee

**Bill Summary:** AB 341 would require the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to contract with a public California dental school or college to administer the Oral Health for People with Disabilities Technical Assistance Center Program.

**Fiscal Impact:** The DDS estimates the following:

- State operations costs of \$91,000 (\$73,000 General Fund and \$18,000 federal funds) in 2026-27 and \$176,000 (\$141,000 General Fund and \$35,000 federal funds) in 2027-28 and annually thereafter for staffing resources.
- State operations costs of \$1.7 million (General Fund) on an ongoing basis to contract with a dental school or university beginning in 2027-28. Costs would depend on the scope and duration of the contract.
- Regional center costs of approximately \$139,000 (\$97,000 General Fund and \$42,000 federal funds) per regional center annually, which could total \$1.4 million for 10 participating regional centers.
- General Fund costs pressures, potentially millions of dollars annually, due to increased utilization of regional center services.

**Background:** California's Lanterman Act established that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have a right to receive the necessary supports and services 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 supports and services. 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.

Direct responsibility for implementation of the Lanterman Act's service system is shared by DDS and a statewide network of 21 regional centers, which are private, community-based nonprofit entities that contract with DDS to carry out many of the state's responsibilities. The primary purpose of regional centers is to connect individuals with services in the community. Current law requires the DDS and the regional centers to annually collaborate to compile and report data in a uniform manner relating to

purchase of service authorization, utilization, and expenditure by each regional center, as specified.

As with other developmental services, regional centers coordinate dental services for consumers. Many regional centers employ a dental coordinator responsible for expanding the network of dental providers willing to serve DDS consumers, helping providers with Medi-Cal Dental Program administration, conducting consumer case reviews, helping individual consumers find providers, training consumers and residential care providers on oral hygiene, and coordinating desensitization.

**Proposed Law:** Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require, no later than July 1, 2027, the DDS to contract with a public California dental school or college to administer the Oral Health for People with Disabilities Technical Assistance Center Program; and specify that the purpose of the program is to improve dental care services for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities by reducing or eliminating the need for dental treatment using sedation and general anesthesia.
- Authorize the contracted California dental school or college to partner with a public dental school or college.
- Require the contracted school or resulting partnership to collectively meet both of the following qualifications:
  - All partner public schools must be located in California and be approved by the Dental Board of California or the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association.
  - Lead faculty at one or more schools must demonstrate having developed and implemented at regional centers, community-based dental care programs as specified.
- Impose requirements on the contracted school or partnership, as specified.
- Impose requirements on participating regional centers, as specified.
- Require DDS to do all of the following:
  - Establish procedures for regional center directors, or their designees, to participate in the program.
  - Provide guidance and establish protocols to support the program, including detailed clarification of payment for the various components of the program, workflow, and purchase-of-service authorizations and payments.
  - Provide guidance for regional centers regarding the use of specialized therapeutic services payments.

- Provide guidance and technical assistance for regional centers to streamline the vendorization process for dental professionals.
- Allow regional centers to aggregate and publish anonymized results data.
- Submit to the Legislature an annual report of data, as specified.

**-- END --**