
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

SB 422 (Grayson) - California Workforce Development Board: developmental services

Version: February 18, 2025

Policy Vote: L., P.E. & R. 5 - 0, HUMAN
S. 5 - 0

Urgency: No

Mandate: No

Hearing Date: May 5, 2025

Consultant: Robert Ingenito

Bill Summary: SB 422 would require the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) to research and provide a report to the Governor and the Legislature including recommendations to address the workforce shortage in California's developmental services system.

Fiscal Impact:

- CWDB indicates that it would incur minimum annual costs of \$504,000 in 2026-07 and 2027-28 to produce the requisite report (General Fund).
- The Department of Development Services (DDS) would incur costs of \$129,000 in 2025-26, \$258,000 in 2026-27, and \$129,000 in 2027-28. The corresponding General Fund amounts would be \$103,000 in 2025-26, \$206,000 in 2026-27, and \$103,000 in 2028. DDS would require 1.5 limited-term positions as a result of the bill.

Background: Current law defines "developmental disability" to be one that originates before an individual reaches 18 years of age, continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial disability for that individual. As defined by DDS, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the term includes intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, and other closely related disabling conditions.

The workforce needs for this constituency comprise an array of critical supports to permit people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to live, work, and thrive in their communities. The care needs include teachers, nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, counselors, dieticians to chauffeurs, personal trainers, and others. As noted by a recent study that evaluated the IDD workforce trends post COVID-19, "there is no Bureau of Labor Statistics occupational classification for direct support professionals and they are often categorized with home health aides, personal care assistants, certified nurse assistants, and others. Providing home and community-based supports for people with IDD, however, requires specialized skills and competencies; unfortunately, this is not reflected in their low wages, limited access to benefits, and lack of respect afforded to this essential workforce."

Under the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, DDS is responsible for overseeing the coordination and delivery of services and supports to more than 400,000

Californians with developmental disabilities. According to the Senate Human Services Committee, “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. Regional center contracts include specific and measurable performance objectives. Every year, DDS reviews each regional center’s performance data for compliance with their contracts and posts them on their website. Regional center services are not consistent across the state. One often-cited strength of the regional center system is each regional center’s local control and flexibility, while one challenge is the system’s lack of uniformity.”

Much like other industries, staff shortages exist with respect to meeting the needs of the IDD community. A survey conducted by the Institute on Community Integration and the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) to evaluate the impacts of COVID-19 on the direct support workforce, found that 43 percent of DSPs left their positions in 2019 with one-third leaving in the first six months of employment (National Core Indicators, 2020). Vacancy rates were 8.5% for full-time and 11% for part-time positions. Consequently, (1) many DSPs, supervisors, and other staff consistently have to work overtime to provide supports, and (2) sometimes people with IDD go without supports that they need and that have been authorized. Family members often end up providing these supports themselves, which affects their availability to maintain their own employment.

In response to the challenges facing the IDD population and opportunities for improving consumer experiences in the provision of developmental services, the Legislature enacted AB 162 (Committee on Budget, 2024) to, among other things, direct the development of a Master Plan for Developmental Services. This Master Plan is intended to strengthen accessibility, quality, and equity of the developmental services system for all system consumers and their families. Additionally, the Master Plan also seeks to create and strengthen bridges that connect the developmental services system to other critical systems, including education, housing, employment, transportation, and safety. Five workgroups were established as part of the Master Plan development, including one on workforce. The final Master Plan was released in March, 2025.

Proposed Law: This bill, among other things, would do the following:

- Require CWDB, by January 1, 2027, to research and review recommendations from the current body of work in national and state-level developmental services policy reports and provide a report to the Governor and the Legislature including recommendations on the most compelling strategies for addressing the workforce shortage in California's developmental services system.
- Require the report to identify the state entities best suited for, and that have the jurisdiction and authority aligned with, implementing the identified workforce strategies.
- Require CWDB, before submitting the required report, to solicit input from all relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to, people with developmental disabilities and their family members, direct support professionals, developmental

services providers, the Association of Regional Center Agencies, local workforce development boards, and subject matter experts in workforce development.

- Require DDS to (1) provide staff support and expertise necessary to complete the review and report, and (2) identify subject matter experts regarding the workforce issues impacting children and adults served through the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act and the California Early Intervention Services Act, as specified.

Related Legislation: AB 162 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 47, Statutes of 2024), among other things, directed the development of a Master Plan for Developmental Services.

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