

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date

2026-06-04

2. Department

Department of Developmental Services

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Program Services

4. CEA Position Title

Deputy Director, Community Services Division

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose. (2-3 sentences)

The Department of Developmental Services (Department) requests to establish a CEA titled Deputy Director, Community Services Division (CSD) in Program Services. This CEA is responsible for policy direction, management, oversight, and accountability for the 21 regional centers (RCs) that the Department contracts with for delivery of services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) under the provisions of the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act (Lanterman Act) and Early Start services Part C under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The functions under this CEA are directly related to the Department mission to ensure Californians with IDD have the opportunity to make choices and lead independent, productive lives as members of their communities in the least restrictive setting possible.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

Chief Deputy Director, Program Services/2nd organizational level

7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain):

8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

The Deputy Director, CSD, is responsible for policy direction, management, oversight, and accountability for the 21 RCs that the Department contracts with for delivery of services for persons with IDD under the provisions of the Lanterman Act and Early Start Part C under the federal IDEA. The Deputy Director is responsible for management of a program budget of over \$18 billion in State General and Federal Funds and functions as part of the Department's executive management team on matters affecting the Department and its workforce.

Develop and implement policies affecting multiple and varied programs for the State's community-based system of services and funding for persons with IDD, including RC operations and purchase of service policies. Provide overall leadership, strategic planning and execution, integration, and direction for the CSD. Within the Division's areas of responsibility manage the compliance review and monitoring processes designed for the appropriate implementation of state and federal policy requirements. Plan, direct, and oversee the activities of the CSD and provide direction to staff. Develop and maintain long term goals and objectives for the CSD and allocate resources to address these priorities. Oversee the development of all necessary policy, regulations, standards, legislation, and procedures required to accomplish the goals of the Division. Integrate Department priorities and initiatives into the work of the Division.

In the program areas of responsibility provide strategic planning, coordination, and oversight to implement transformational initiatives and investments in annual budgets to meet the goals of service access and equity, continuous quality improvement, accountability, transparency and improved experiences and outcomes for individuals and families supported by the Department's programs. This position will work in collaboration with other divisions and offices to integrate initiatives in CSD programs and to track and measure outcomes at the RC, service provider, and individual/family level to support all efforts to deliver on the promise of quality services, person-centered outcomes and superior experience for individuals and their families. Oversee the development of data-driven systems and analytics to enhance the oversight and monitoring of RCs. Work in collaboration on joint initiatives with the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS), Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), Department of Social Services (DSS), Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), and other state departments that partner with the Department to provide services and supports to individuals with IDD.

Develop cooperative working relationships with key legislators and their staff, disability and individual advocates, RC representatives, high-level federal and state officials, committees, and others to formulate and vet state policies and implementation strategies. Provide leadership for initiatives in community services by constructing conceptual frameworks, negotiating support from the Administration, the Legislature, and other state departments that support individuals with IDD, federal agencies, and constituencies. Oversee strategic planning and implementation of initiatives, policies, and practices in the Division.

Participate as a member of the Department's executive management team. Identify and inform the Directorate and executive management on issues, trends, and opportunities for systemic change identified from the Division's programs and functions. Make policy recommendations to the Directorate and executive management team on changes to relevant laws, regulations, policies, practices, and other actions to improve Department and RC programs and services. Functions as part of the Department's executive management team on matters affecting the Department and its workforce.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The Department administers the Lanterman Act, which establishes California's unique statutory entitlement to services and supports for individuals with IDD. The Act ensures individuals have access to services that enable them to live independently and participate fully in their communities in the least restrictive setting possible. The Lanterman Act requires coordination of services to persons with IDD and that such services are planned, provided, and sufficiently complete to meet the needs and choices of these individuals at each stage of their lives, and, to the extent possible, accomplishes these goals in the individual's home community. The population served has many specialized needs and need support in many facets of daily life.

The Department oversees the coordination and delivery of services for Californians with IDD through a statewide network of 21 community-based, non-profit agencies known as RCs. RCs provide assessments, determine eligibility for services, and offer case management services and develop, purchase, and coordinate the services in each person's Individual Program Plan (IPP). A wide range of services and supports are available including residential, independent and supported living, transportation, day programs, work services, respite, and a variety of clinical services. Some services require significant coordination and partnerships with other state departments on new and changing program initiatives such as DHCS (Medicaid), DSS (In-Home Supportive Services), and DOR (employment and work services).

The Deputy Director, CSD, will develop and implement policies, provide leadership, strategic planning and execution, integration, and direction for the CSD. The CSD is directly related to the Department's primary mission and critical to achieving the Department's goals. CSD is responsible for proactively engaging in comprehensive oversight and monitoring, contract and performance reviews, technical assistance and remediation, and data analysis of all 21 RCs and over 20,000 community service providers across the state that provide services in the individual's home community of choice that are reflective of lifestyle, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The CSD is the central point of contact on RC performance and issues, working in collaboration with other divisions/offices in the Department and, at times, with other state departments. Further, the CSD has various monitoring functions over RCs and their governing boards and provides guidance on the actions and efforts of the RCs to meet statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations and uphold the values of the Lanterman Act.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

The Department has experienced unprecedented growth and operational complexity over the past several years, driven by significant budget and program expansion, new initiatives, evolving federal and state policy requirements, and caseload growth. To successfully develop the policies to execute the program growth and new initiatives and to provide the appropriate level of policy and executive management, the Department's organization structure has been in almost continual expansion in recent years. The organizational restructuring has been to rebalance executive level policy and management workload at the chief deputy and deputy director levels resulting in an increase in the number of new CEAs and other senior management staff.

The Deputy Director, CSD, is currently an exempt appointed position and the Department proposes to reallocate this position to the civil service CEA classification due to organizational and program changes impacting CSD. The Deputy Director, CSD, exempt position was initially established in 2013 with a much broader scope of policy and executive level management over several major programs including RC Operations, Federal Programs, Waiver and Rates, Residential Services and Monitoring, Early Start, Community Development, and Clinical Services. At that time the Department's budget was approximately \$5 billion with a caseload of approximately 250,000 individuals with IDD. Since then, the Department's budget has grown over 400 percent to \$21 billion and the caseload has grown over 100 percent with over 500,000 individuals with IDD supported by the Department and RC programs.

The CSD currently includes the Northern and Southern Offices of Community Operations managed by a CEA, Level B, and the Office of Regional Center Governance and Performance managed by a CEA A. The other programs in CSD were moved into new divisions/offices as part of recent organizational restructurings because the level of new policy and management workload on the Deputy Director, CSD, was unsustainable and critical policy issues were not getting addressed on a timely basis. The CSD is now in the broader Program Services under the Chief Deputy Director, Program Services (Exempt).

Further, the Administration and Legislature has identified a need to strengthen the Department's oversight and improve compliance and consistency across the 21 RCs due to continuing concerns by individuals served and their families and various advocate organizations. This CEA will be able to focus on new policy and oversight activities being required to improve RC performance and compliance in response to increased legislative and advocate concerns on the need for more Department oversight of RCs.

Trailer bill language (TBL) to the 2024 Budget Act (Senate Bill (SB) 138) amended the Welfare and Institutions (WIC) 4418.7 to require the Department, among other things, to standardize RC systems to provide consistent statutory interpretation across RCs. The stated intent of the Legislature in passing SB 138 was to provide more statewide uniformity and consistency and promote equity in the operational practices and services of RCs, consistent with the Lanterman Act and Early Start Part C. Further, the Administration has proposed TBL in the 2026/2027 Governor's Budget to strengthen RC governance and oversight including accountability measures that allow the Department to more effectively correct RC performance, and to professionalize and improve support for RC governing boards.

The Master Plan for Developmental Services – A Community Driven Vision was issued in March 2025 (WIC 4580) with the goal to improve how California supports people with IDD and their families into the future. The Master Plan provides recommendations for California to provide services for people with IDD that are equitable, consistent, and accessible. The Master Plan included 167 specific recommendations in broad categories including addressing disparities in service delivery for underserved communities by standardizing services statewide and removing language, cultural, and location barriers, providing tools and resources needed to support individuals in decision-making, and establishing clear metrics to assess whether needs are being met effectively and where improvements are needed, and standardizing processes that all RCs use.

The Little Hoover Commission report issued in 2023 - A System in Distress: Caring for Californians with Developmental Disabilities urged the Legislature and the Department to address ongoing disparities in the availability and quality of services for Californians with IDD with recommendations to strengthen statewide oversight and to increase equity and consistency in experiences across the state's RC system. An implementation update hearing in January 2026 heard testimony from individuals and family members who stated that while some improvements have been made, others are coming slowly or not at all. The Department acknowledged to the Commission that many families continue to face challenges in accessing timely services and inconsistencies between RCs and that much work needs to be done to improve how services are delivered.

The current scope of program policy and management responsibility of the Deputy Director, CSD, is more appropriately aligned with the civil service CEA classification as defined in Government Code Section 18547 in that the position's primary responsibility is the managing of a major program function and the broad responsibility for policy implementation and extensive participation in policy involvement. Further, the Department's other Deputy Director level positions are in the CEA classification.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

The examples below have a direct impact on the responsibility of the Department to oversee and monitor the manner in which the RCs provide person centered, uniform, consistent, and equitable services consistent with the provisions and values of the Lanterman Act.

RC Purchase of Service (POS) Policies – Each individual eligible for Lanterman Act services has an IPP developed based on the needs and preferences of the individual and family to achieve the individual’s personal outcomes, life goals, and inclusion in their community (WIC 4646). The RCs purchase services and supports for individuals with service providers in accordance with the IPP. Service providers deliver direct support through an array of services that include residential, behavioral programs, day programs, employment, transportation, recreation, and respite services under approximately 100 service codes. While the services are generally described in WIC and California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 12, each RC is required to post their specific POS policies on their website (WIC 4629.5). WIC 4434 requires the Department to review and approve new or amended RC POS policies and other policies, guidelines, or assessment tools utilized by RCs when determining the service needs of an individual. Further, WIC 4434 requires the Department to take appropriate and necessary steps to prevent RCs from utilizing a policy or guideline that violates any provision of the Lanterman Act. This CEA is the primary policy maker in the development and implementation of the systems and processes in CSD to review and evaluate each RC’s POS policies for consistency with the Lanterman Act, Early Start Part C under the federal IDEA, and CCR Title 12, and the mission, goals, and objectives of the Department.

RC Board Compliance with Statute – Under the Lanterman Act, the Department is responsible for contracting with, funding, establishing and administering fiscal and programmatic policy, and monitoring and overseeing the 21 RCs. Each RC has a board of directors, responsible for complying with the contract, overseeing the RC’s performance, hiring and evaluating its executive director, and other governance obligations pursuant to state and federal law and regulation. Many of these RCs are responsible for serving their local communities with annual budgets approaching or exceeding \$1 billion and employing hundreds of employees. RC boards often have varied knowledge of California’s developmental services system and may not have the breadth of knowledge applicable for the magnitude of responsibility associated with operating a RC. This CEA is the primary policy maker in the development and implementation of systems and processes to professionalize and improve support for RC governing boards and to strengthen RC board compliance with the Lanterman Act and other applicable laws. Specific policies will include measures to promote board members understanding of their fiduciary responsibility to act solely in the best interest of the individuals supported by RCs and their families, conflict of interest restrictions, the strong role of advocates and need for cultural competence, and strategies, resources, and best practices for a board in reviewing and evaluating the performance of the RC under the performance contract with the Department.

RC Contract Compliance and Performance Measures – The Department has a contract with each RC that includes operational and programmatic terms with provisions requiring RCs to provide services in accordance with applicable provisions of federal and state laws and regulations and Department policies (WIC 4629). The Department also has a performance contract with each RC with established performance measures and standard performance improvement indicators and benchmarks for RCs to report back to the Department on an annual basis (WIC 4620.5). CSD leads the establishment of annual specific and measurable performance measures designed to help individuals with IDD achieve quality of life and meaningful progress in meeting each individual’s lifegoals. CSD also leads the Department’s oversight and monitoring of each RC’s compliance with contract and performance measures in a variety of methods including review of RC reports on contract compliance and performance measures, on-site audits and monitoring reviews, and, as needed, technical assistance to RCs to mitigate issues and improve the RC’s compliance and performance. This CEA will be the primary policy maker in the establishment and updating of contract compliance provisions and performance measures as well as the monitoring and evaluation systems to be used. Further, the CEA will be the primary policy maker in identifying the remediation actions for RCs that are not in compliance with the contract provisions and/or with performance measures with a focus on improving the experience and quality of life for individuals and families.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

The Deputy Director, CSD has broad and high-level decision-making authority in the development and execution of policies in the CSD to ensure full alignment and integration with the Department mission and in support of new initiatives and changes in state law and federal regulations. This position exercises significant independent judgment in interpreting and applying both state and federal laws and regulations, setting policies, and providing expert guidance to RCs and other community partners. This CEA will also work closely with the Directorate and the executive management team to collaborate on policies and implementation strategies that impact other areas of the Department and the service delivery system.

This CEA will have considerable decision-making authority on decisions affecting the RC programs and activities. Depending on the issue, the CEA may independently propose policy direction or collaborate with other executive management, and external partners including DHCS, DSS, and DOR, or to advise the Directorate on the most critical decisions affecting the RC programs and individuals with IDD. The CEA will also work closely with the Directorate and executive management team to collaborate on sensitive policies and implementation strategies that impact broad areas of the Department and the service delivery system.

This CEA will have considerable interactions with CalHHS, other state departments that support individuals with IDD such as DHCS, DSS, DOR, State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA), Disability Rights California (DRC), other individual and disability advocates, community provider organizations, and other community partners to discuss and vet policy considerations in all aspects of RC program areas. The CEA's decision-making has significant statewide impact on the 21 RC's and their 13,000 employees, over 20,000 vendors/providers and most importantly the quality of services, individual outcomes, and well-being of over 500,000 individuals with IDD and their families.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

This CEA will be developing and implementing new policy and also interpreting and implementing existing policies. There are existing policies for CSD's programs and monitoring activities of RCs and their governing boards, and vendors/providers of services to individuals with IDD to enable the RCs and vendors/providers to meet statutory, regulatory and contractual obligations and uphold the values of the Lanterman Act.

This CEA will develop and implement new policy in response to changes in federal and state laws and regulations and from Administration policy shifts. In recent years, the Lanterman Act has been significantly amended to develop and expand programs and services in the RC community based system. Almost on an annual basis the Lanterman Act is amended, and in some years, significantly amended. Changes to the Lanterman Act are expected to continue as the RC programs are sensitive and highly visible to the Administration, Legislature, disability advocates, and other community partners. Other new policy changes could come from the various workgroups and committees that advise the Department on policy issues and recommendations as well as CalHHS's Master Plan for Developmental Services – A Community Driven Vision issued in March 2025 pursuant to WIC Section 4580.

The new policies and implementation strategies will be developed and implemented with input from the Department's executive management team, the Legislature, other state departments, ARCA, RCs, community vendor/provider organizations, SCDD, DRC, other disability and individual advocates, and individuals supported and their families. These varied organizations and associations often have competing or conflicting viewpoints. This CEA must work collaboratively with these varied interests to secure appropriate participation in various public forums for effective policy changes and implementation ultimately for better outcomes for individuals with IDD. The CEA will work closely with the Directorate and executive management team in the development of new policies in support of the successful achievement of the Administration and Department's mission critical activities consistent with the values and principles of the Lanterman Act and Early Start Part C under the federal IDEA.