

Regional Center of Orange County
Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee Meeting
April 29, 2024
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Virtual Public Meeting

Present

Dr. April Lopez, Parent

Beth Martinko, Parent

Chad Escallier, Client's Rights Advocate Disability Rights California

Crystal Chavez, RCOC Participant Choice Specialist

Jennifer Montanez, Director of Case Management

Kaitlyn Truong, Comfort Connection Family Resource Center

Karen Pagano, Parent

Marlene Morales, RCOC Participant Choice Specialist

Scarlett Von Thenen, Orange County Office on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities
(SCDD)

Tierney Cameron, Self-Advocate

Tim Jin, Self-Advocate

Tina Stang, Parent

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Dr. April Lopez, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. She welcomed all attendees of the Self-Determination Program Local Advisory Committee (SDPLAC) Meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

Ms. Scarlett VonThenen noted a new member appointed by SCDD, Ms. Beth Martinko. Ms. VonThenen noted Ms. Martinko has not received the formal notice, but wanted to introduce the new member to the committee. Ms. Martinko introduced herself as a new member of SDPLAC.

II. Approval of December 5, 2023 and February 5, 2024 Meeting Summary

The committee reviewed the minutes from the December 5, 2023 and February 24, 2024 meeting. Mr. Chad Escallier made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from December 5, 2023 and February 24, 2024. Ms. Kaitlyn Truong seconded the motion. All committee members voted in favor of approving the minutes.

III. Review distribution of DVU Books

Ms. Marlene Morales noted RCOC received the Disability Voices United SDP Books. Ms. Lopez and Ms. Martinko noted the books should be distributed to individuals who were able to successfully complete the Orientation. Ms. VonThenen added that it should also include individuals who have been able to attend a Resource Fair or someone who is struggling with being able to enter Self-Determination Program (SDP). Mr. Chad Escallier noted agreement and the ability to review previous meeting notes to note the distribution of the books. Ms. Morales and Ms. Jennifer Montanez confirmed the number of books received was 250 books in English and 250 books in Spanish.

Ms. Lopez inquired if there was sufficient funding in order to purchase additional books. Ms. VonThenen inquired as to when the additional funds from the Implementation Funds would need to be encumbered by. Ms. Crystal Chavez noted the funding for 2021 to 2022 would need to be utilized by March 2024, the funding for 2022 – 2023 would need to be utilized by March 2025, and the funding for 2023 – 2024 would need to be utilized by March 2026. Mr. Escallier inquired as to how much funding is available for 2022 – 2023 implementation funds. Ms. Chavez noted the funding available is \$46,251.39. Mr. Escallier stated the possibility to make a purchase of additional books in order to utilize the funding available.

Ms. Chavez noted a previous discussion about the DVU books, was to aid in the purchase of translation services of the book, as it is currently only available in English and Spanish. Ms. Lopez inquired if DVU was currently accessing this support. Ms. Kristianna Morales from DVU noted that DVU has not been able to access translation for the DVU book as it is a costly service.

Mr. Tim Jin noted wanting to think about this more, as the greater need is to address the reasons as to why individuals are not transitioning into SDP.

Ms. Lopez inquired as to how the committee would like to ensure the DVU Books are distributed, as a motion is needed. Ms. Morales noted about 10 books have been distributed. Ms. Beth Martinko inquired if Comfort Connection would be able to send out an e-mail inquiring if individuals interested in SDP are interested in receiving a DVU Book, when families respond Ms. Morales is able to provide the book to the assigned Service Coordinator for distribution. Ms. VonThenen noted the Orientation is provided by multiple agencies, where she does not believe SCDD has the ability to inform Regional Center of the completion of the Orientation.

Ms. Pagano made a motion to request the members of the public to stay within the agenda item and ask their Service Coordinator for the request of the DVU Book. Ms. Martinko second the motion. Ms. Martinko inquired if it would be okay to ask if members of the public can e-mail their Service Coordinator to request the DVU book. Ms. Morales noted there are about 500 individuals who have received an Individual Budget, where 300 of those individuals have transitioned into SDP.

Mr. Escallier made a motion to utilize the DVU Books that were purchased with Implementation Funds to be distributed to the individuals who completed the SDP Orientation, as well as to those that have already received an Individual Budget. Ms. Lopez second the motion. All committee members voted in favor of the distribution of the DVU books to individuals who have already completed the SDP Orientation, including individuals who have already received an Individual Budget.

IV. Review of the December 2023 FMS Townhall report

Ms. VonThenen noted the committee reconvened on 4/15/24 to review the recommendations made from the December 2023 meeting. Ms. VonThenen provided the link <https://scdd.ca.gov/ssdac/> for individuals to be able to review the meeting minutes.

V. Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

a. Update on Status of PCP Training for Participants and families

Ms. Kristianna Moralls stated being to be able to complete the first training this month with 80 individuals in attendance, where the training was provided in Spanish and recorded. Ms. Moralls provided the link for the next training session occurring on 5/18/24 [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwpduirrTgsHdYD0qCzJezC-otSOdNw8TO1#registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9121111111?pwd=OTSOdNw8TO1#registration)

Ms. Truong inquired if out of the 80 participants, how many were from Orange County. Ms. Moralls noted not having that information at the time of the meeting.

b. Review Draft RFP for PCP Training to develop more Independent Facilitators (IF) - IF training

Mr. Escallier noted the pending item on the RFP was to modify the benchmark dates, as time had ran out to continue discussion at the previous meeting. Mr. Escallier noted the dates of submission and project completion date would need to be modified. Ms. VonThenen made a motion to change the submission date of 5/30/2024 for the budget amount being up to \$46,000.00. Ms. Lopez inquired if the amount could be left open, as the project may cost less and with the remaining funds they are able to purchase additional DVU books or other items. Mr. Escallier inquired about the date of the proposed project completion date the committee members would vote to update

the RFP with. Ms. Morales noted it may take providers some time to be able to wrap up projects and submit the needed documentation in order to provide final payment for services. Mr. Escallier proposed a January 1, 2025 completion date. Ms. Lopez and Ms. VonThenen confirmed the January 1, 2025 appeared being feasible.

A member of the community noted the committee should take into consideration the removal of the funding of the SDP Specialist and that DDS will be acquiring an outside agency to provide a statewide training to Independent Facilitators, making it a state requirement for certification.

Ms. VonThenen made a motion to approve the changes made to the document, as it stands. Ms. Tierney Cameron second the motion. Ms. Martinko noted that the comment made by the community member be taken into consideration. Ms. VonThenen noted the RFP training would be more generalized in regards to the PCP. Ms. Lopez inquired if the Regional Center would be able to add information in regards to the availability of the funding and trainings available from DDS. Ms. Martinko inquired if Mr. Escallier would be the individual responsible for inputting the information. Mr. Escallier noted he would be able to add the information requested.

Ms. Jennifer Montanez noted the RFP notes the funding to be \$0 and may need to be changed to “To Be Determined”, dependent on what the committee agreed to. Mr. Escallier and changed the total funding available to “To Be Determined”.

Mr. Escallier noted the ability to add information into the RFP stating this training should take into consideration any and all DDS changes to SDP.

All members voted in favor of making the changes to the submitted time frame for 5/30/2024, project completion by 1/1/25 and the total funding available “To Be Determined”.

c. Follow up on RFP submissions for SDP Resource Fair Follow-Up

Ms. Morales noted there were no submissions made for the RFP. Ms. VonThenen noted the need to change the deadlines in order to allow additional time for individuals to submit the RFP. Ms. Martinko inquired if the RFP needed to be modified due to language in the RFP. Ms. VonThenen noted she knew of three entities interested in submitting for the RFP, but did not have enough time to submit.

Ms. VonThenen inquired about the ability to change the deadline dates to the same of that for the previous RFP discussed: May 30, 2024 deadline to submit the RFP and the project deadline of January 1, 2025. Ms. Lopez and Mr. Escallier noted agreement with the change requested.

Ms. VonThenen made a motion to change the dates of the RFP and repost with the dates May 30, 2024 deadline to submit the RFP and the project deadline of January 1,

2025. Ms. Truong second the motion. There were no discussion. All committee members voted in favor of changing the dates on the RFP and resubmitting.

d. Review of Alternative Options for Funding to Support Implementation of the Self-Determination Program

Due to time-constraints, this agenda item was not discussed and will be discussed at the next meeting.

VI. RCOC Self-Determination Activities:

a. Current listing of all the Regional Center's Self-Determination Participation Status

There are currently 300 people actively receiving services through SDP. Out of the 300 people active in SDP, 108 people received Person Centered Planning (PCP) and/or Independent Facilitator (IF) services. In regards to the demographics of the 300 people active in SDP, the ethnic/race breakdown is: Asian (72), Black/African-American (9), Hispanic (60), Native-American (3), Other or Unknown (44), and White (111). Of the 300 people who are active in SDP, 102 people are from the West Area Office while 198 are from the Central Area Office.

RCOC has certified 528 individual budgets. In regards to the demographics of the 528 people who received a certified budget, the ethnic/race breakdown is: Asian (128), Black/African-America (17), Hispanic (113), Native-American (4), Other or Unknown (78), and White (187). Of the 528 people who received a budget, 201 people are from the West Area Office while 327 are from the Central Area Office

VII. Community Input and Barriers to Completing the SDP Process

A member of the community noted the concern of the reduction of the funding for Participant Choice Specialist position at RCOC. In addition, the member of the community noted it has been taking 3-4 weeks to review a Spending Plan and the increased attention to detail to corrections needed on the Spending Plan.

A member of the community noted the examples of corrections needed such as noting the request to utilize funding for Uber versus Uber gift cards in the Spending Plan. The same member noted the Spending Plan states .67 a mile and the updated Spending Plan would need to note the IRS Mileage Reimbursement rate.

Ms. Montanez noted RCOC will be keeping on the SDP Participant Choice Specialist positions and that the SDP Coordinator was scheduled to return later this week.

A member of the community noted a resource for an Independent Facilitator Training Academy that was funded by SDLAC from Alta Regional Center.

Mr. Jin inquired as to how many Independent Facilitators are vendored with the Regional Center and how many are taking on new participants to assist with the transition into SDP. Ms. Morales noted there are five vendored Independent Facilitators. Ms. Chavez noted working with various IF's to become curtosy vendored from other Regional Center's as well as directly vendored with RCOC.

A member of the community inquired about the ability to assist with the training of the Service Coordinators to add parents and Independent Facilitators in the communication in regards to the Spending Plan and POS being sent to the FMS agency, as sometimes there is additional corrections needed.

VIII. Agenda Items and Date of the Next Meeting

Ms. Lopez requested to add new DDS directive, such as DDS Directive about the 1% non-payroll burden to the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Jin inquired about the ability to fund for coaching for individuals to transition into SDP. Ms. Lopez agreed with Mr. Jin about the discussion for this type of funding at the next meeting.

IX. Adjourn

Adjourned at 8:32pm.