

## **2021-107 AUDIT SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Department of Developmental Services– Oversight of Regional Centers**

The audit by the California State Auditor will provide independently developed and verified information related to the Department of Developmental Services' (Developmental Services) oversight of regional centers for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The audit's scope will include, but not be limited to, the following activities:

1. Review and evaluate the laws, rules, and regulations significant to the audit objectives.
2. Examine Developmental Services' oversight responsibilities for the regional centers and determine the extent to which Developmental Services performs oversight at a selection of regional centers.
3. Determine whether Developmental Services has established caseload ratios for regional centers to follow and whether it conducts reviews to ensure they meet these ratios. In doing so, determine whether Developmental Services does the following:
  - (a) Evaluates vacancy rates in case manager positions and the length of time these positions remain vacant.
  - (b) Reviews case management data and determines whether regional centers' staffing is appropriate.
  - (c) Reports to the Legislature on regional centers' compliance with established caseload ratios, including whether any staffing shortages exist and whether they have identified solutions to address such shortages.
4. Evaluate whether Developmental Services provides training to regional centers and, if so, assess whether the training includes steps the regional centers can take to ensure consumers receive quality services in a timely manner.
5. Identify the efforts Developmental Services and a selection of regional centers make to educate parents and guardians about the services available to their dependents and assess the adequacy of their efforts to promote those services.
6. Determine whether Developmental Services and a selection of regional centers monitor vendors to ensure their services are adequate, cost effective, and meet applicable requirements.
7. Determine, for a selection of regional centers, the oversight of the services they provide to consumers. In particular, for a selection of consumers' Individual Performance Plans (IPP) at each of the selected regional centers, identify the following:
  - (a) The extent to which consumers received the services and achieved the goals specified in their IPPs. If the goals were not met, assess the steps the regional center took to help the consumer achieve the goals.

- (b) The frequency with which regional centers followed up with consumers or caseworkers to determine whether consumers were receiving quality services and that their needs were being met.
  - (c) To the extent services specified in an IPP were not available in the regional center's service area, whether the regional center or Developmental Services took action to seek out these services and provide them to the consumer.
8. Identify the oversight responsibilities and key functions of regional centers' boards of directors and determine whether any are duplicative of those performed by Developmental Services. In particular, assess the following:
- (a) Whether the regional centers' administrative costs are appropriate, including whether board of directors' salaries are reasonable.
  - (b) The extent to which board of directors' meeting minutes and agendas, including each director's contact information, are available for public review on regional centers' websites.
  - (c) Whether policies and procedures exist requiring the board directors to approve contracts in excess of specified thresholds. For a selection of contracts, determine whether these policies were followed.
9. Determine the extent to which consumers do not have services available to them or have not received services. To the extent possible, do the following:
- (a) Assess the lack of existing services.
  - (b) Evaluate the reasons provided for not offering a specific service.
  - (c) Identify other reasons for consumers not receiving services.
10. Determine whether regional centers have established data collection policies and procedures for customer service metrics. In particular, examine whether Developmental Services and regional centers collect data to determine performance in the following areas:
- (a) Average wait times for services at each regional center according to service category.
  - (b) The convenience of access to regional centers and service providers for a selection of regional centers serving rural communities.
11. Identify the professional qualification requirements of staff and managers established by Developmental Services and regional centers for a selection of direct services. For a selection of service providers, evaluate compliance with these requirements.

12. Determine how Developmental Services identifies service provider organizations that are found to be negligent or in violation of the law and how it provides this information to consumers.
13. Evaluate, for a selection of regional centers, consistency in the following areas and determine whether Developmental Services has responded to any inconsistencies it was aware of, including whether it provided any training or technical assistance:
  - (a) Timeliness of intake, service provision, and response to consumer or family requests for modification in services or providers.
  - (b) Notification to Developmental Services, other regional centers, and consumers, about actions taken against a vendor.
  - (c) Provision of information to consumers regarding how to file a complaint about services denied, or dispute the nature, scope, or amount of services received. Further, determine whether the complaint or dispute process seems reasonable and appropriate.
  - (d) Public posting of regional centers' board of directors meeting minutes and agendas in accordance with state law.
  - (e) Regional center compliance with contracting requirements in Welfare and Institutions Code sections 4622 and 4625.5.
14. Review and assess any other issues that are significant to the audit.