

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Consumer Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes (Via Zoom)
January 8, 2026

Present: Juan Hernandez, George Alvarado, Pam Aiona, Elena Tiffany, Bill Abrahamson, Destry Walker– **Committee Members**

Lesly Galvan – Support Staff - **Guests**

Santos Rodriguez, Jose Rodriguez, Angela Pao-Johnson, Chris Whitlock,
Lindsay Granger – **Staff**

Absent: Jennifer Koster

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Committee Chair and Board of Trustees Vice President, Juan Hernandez called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

Juan Hernandez read the NLACRC Civility Code and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Agenda

M/S/C (George Alvarado/Bill Abrahamson) On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Bill Abrahamson, it was resolved to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

3. Public Input

There was no public input.

4. Consent Items

A. Approval of Minutes from November 6, 2025 Meeting

M/S/C (George Alvarado/Destry Walker) On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Destry Walker, it was resolved to approve the meeting minutes from the November 6, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

5. Action Items

A. Approval of 2026 CAC Meeting Schedule

Juan Hernandez introduced the Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting schedule for the year, noting the dates were listed through November and that meeting times had been moved to 5:00 p.m. Discussion included that most meetings would continue to be held on Zoom, with informal in-person gatherings typically occurring in July/August and December (holiday party), though these gatherings would not require a formal meeting format.

Jose Rodriguez asked about the June meeting date, which was listed as “tentative,” and requested clarification on whether the group would meet in June. Juan Hernandez and committee members confirmed the group had met in June previously for a budget update, and Jose Rodriguez recommended continuing that practice. The group agreed to meet in June, and the schedule would be updated to reflect the June meeting date.

Bill Abramson also raised a suggestion that July and December should reflect informal in-person or hybrid gatherings for social connection, noting details could be clarified on the meeting flyer rather than the schedule itself.

M/S/C (George Alvarado/Destry Walker) On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Destry Walker, it was resolved to approve the CAC meeting schedule for 2026 with the addition of a June meeting date.

B. Approval of Updated CAC Flyers

Juan Hernandez introduced the updated CAC flyers and invited Chris Whitlock to present the revisions. Chris confirmed the schedule update would include the addition of the June meeting date and noted a new photo from the potluck had been added to the flyer. The Committee also reviewed the Spanish version and confirmed it included the same photo.

Committee members provided feedback on the draft flyer. Jose Rodriguez asked whether all three phone numbers were necessary, noting that most participants join by Zoom link rather than by phone. Lindsay Granger explained the multiple phone numbers were included as backup options in case one line had technical issues, but members agreed that reducing the flyer to one phone number would make it cleaner and allow the meeting dates to be displayed in a larger font. Chris also clarified that an apparent formatting issue was caused by the packet page number overlapping the flyer text, not an export error.

Angela Pao-Johnson suggested enhancing CAC outreach on social media by moving away from posting flyers alone and instead pairing the flyer with a short video or personal message from CAC members sharing the benefits of joining and what participation means to them. Chris Whitlock confirmed staff could coordinate with interested CAC members to record brief statements,

which could be posted with the flyer at the end of the video to support CAC membership growth.

Jose Rodriguez also recommended revising the wording at the bottom of the flyer, explaining it sounded like consumers must contact Board Support in order to attend, even though meetings are open to the public. Members agreed to update the language to indicate Board Support should be contacted if assistance is needed to attend or for more information, and to include the Board Support email on both the English and Spanish versions.

M/S/C (George Alvarado/Destry Walker) On a motion made by George Alvarado, seconded by Destry Walker, it was resolved to approve the updated CAC flyer with the agreed-upon edits.

C. Approval of Open Topic of Conversation for February

Juan Hernandez introduce the next agenda item approval of open topic of conversation for February. It was confirmed that transportation was the topic for the current meeting. Lindsay Granger shared that potential topics discussed for February included healthcare and identity security and protection, noting that identity security/online protection had received the most support.

The Committee agreed that the February open topic would be identity security and online protection/online safety, with members emphasizing the importance of learning how to protect against scams. Bill Abramson recommended including information on AI-related scams and how artificial intelligence can be used fraudulently.

M/S/C (Destry Walker/Bill Abrahamson) On a motion made by Destry Walker, seconded by Bill Abrahamson, it was resolved that the open topic for February would be Identity Security and Online Protection. Motion carried.

6. **Committee Business**

A. Open Conversation: Transportation

Chris Whitlock reviewed prior CAC planning and confirmed that the January CAC meeting will feature an open discussion on transportation rather than a formal training. Chris Whitlock asked the Committee to begin identifying potential topics for the February meeting and whether the group would like to

vote on future discussion topics.

Juan Hernandez opened the scheduled open-topic discussion on transportation and reviewed the guiding questions for members to respond to. George Alvarado requested support from a job coach, and Lesly Galvan joined the meeting to help share George's responses. Lesly explained that George relies on Access services and rides from a parent to get to work/programs. George noted transportation is sometimes early or late, routes can be impacted by traffic, and delays make it difficult to rely on service. Suggested improvements included better Access availability/service, and increased safety on public transportation, including more security presence on trains and buses.

Bill Abramson shared that driving, biking, and using the bus (including a bike-and-ride option) helps provide flexibility, particularly during extreme heat or when unable to ride home safely. Bill also discussed ongoing transit development along Van Nuys Boulevard, raising concerns about lane reductions, parking impacts, pedestrian access, and the importance of balancing transit expansion with safety and access. Safety on public transit was emphasized as a major concern.

Jose Rodriguez shared feedback from attending a Metro Service Council meeting (held at 6:30 p.m.) and encouraged members to participate and raise transportation concerns. Jose noted submitting a request for an additional bus stop on Ventura Boulevard (Route 761) and offered to share information about upcoming meetings with the Committee. Members also discussed barriers to participation in evening transit meetings due to safety concerns, limited eligibility for Access services, and the cost of Uber/Lyft. The group briefly discussed the former taxi voucher program, noting funding ended and the program stopped.

Juan Hernandez raised concerns about homeless encampments blocking sidewalks in the neighborhood and asked what resources or reporting pathways are available. Jose recommended contacting the City Council office first, and using law enforcement if there is an immediate safety concern. Angela Pao-Johnson shared that encampment concerns may also be reported through the City of Los Angeles MyLA311 website, including anonymous requests, though Jose noted challenges with the 311 system and reiterated that City Council outreach is often more effective.

Lindsay Granger asked members for feedback on the open-topic format, noting it was planned for 10 minutes but generated significant engagement. Members expressed support for continuing the format and suggested extending the time to 15 minutes for future meetings. Juan Hernandez and other

members noted the value of real-time discussion and problem-solving. The Committee agreed transportation could be revisited in future meetings with more specific focus areas if desired.

ACTION: Lindsay Granger will update the time for the next open topic of conversation would be extended from 10 to 15 minutes on the next meeting agenda.

B. Discuss Potential CAC Training Topics: SCDD Trainings

Jose Rodriguez introduced a list of potential CAC training topics available through the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), noting the topics and presentation options were included in the meeting packet. Jose reviewed a range of available trainings, including Regional Center services and IPP strategies, fair hearings and complaint processes, disparities in services, roles of Regional Center leadership and boards, Self-Determination Program (including independent facilitation and budgeting/spending plans), special education/Early Start and IEPs, health and safety/emergency preparedness, supported decision-making as an alternative to conservatorship, anti-bullying for adults, advocacy and self-advocacy, giving public testimony, leadership and group development, healthy relationships, budget process, ABLE Act, and work and benefits.

Bill Abramson asked whether the topics were suggestions and requested clarification on the provider. Jose confirmed these were trainings SCDD offers and explained the information was available in the packet. Juan Hernandez noted the Committee has previously received presentations from SCDD.

Jose Rodriguez encouraged members to review the list and share which topics they were most interested in to contact SCDD to schedule a training. Juan Hernandez indicated interest in emergency preparedness, and Jose Rodriguez noted NLACRC staff may also be able to provide an emergency preparedness presentation. Members also expressed interest in community safety (“street smart”/awareness of surroundings), budgeting, healthy eating/nutrition, and giving public testimony, particularly to support CAC outreach efforts and speaking with legislators.

Angela Pao-Johnson suggested that members enter their top three training preferences in the chat so common priorities could be identified and scheduled first. Jose Rodriguez agreed to use the feedback to begin outreach and scheduling based on availability.

Following discussion, the Committee identified several training topics as priorities for future CAC presentations. Juan Hernandez highlighted Emergency Preparedness as an important topic for the group. George Alvarado emphasized the need for Safety in the Community (“Street Smart”), including being aware of surroundings and staying safe while out in the community, and also recommended Budgeting as a helpful training area. Jose Rodriguez suggested Giving Public Testimony as a valuable topic to support CAC members in sharing their experiences publicly, including in outreach efforts and when speaking with legislators. Bill Abramson agreed that training on Giving Public Testimony would be beneficial.

ACTION: Jose Rodriguez will reach out to SCDD to follow up, coordinate, and schedule future CAC trainings based on the topics identified by the committee.

C. Upcoming Events and Flyers

Jose Rodriguez and Santos Rodriguez presented several announcements, flyers, and resource materials included in the meeting packet to support CAC members with safety, benefits, and community engagement opportunities.

Santos Rodriguez shared a fraud and scam prevention resource guide provided by an NLACRC aging specialist. Although the information was developed for the elder community, Santos Rodriguez explained the guide contained helpful guidance for all community members, including practical “do’s and don’ts” for staying safe when interacting with unfamiliar individuals or situations. Santos Rodriguez highlighted that the guide included a comprehensive list of phone numbers and resources related to health insurance support (including Medi-Cal and Medicare questions), internet safety, Social Security contacts, credit card fraud reporting, and other county-based resources, and recommended members keep it available for reference. Santos Rodriguez noted the guide aligned with recent CAC discussions on personal safety and online safety.

During discussion, Bill Abramson requested a copy of the flyer/resource, and George Alvarado confirmed the resource was available by email. Jose Rodriguez also stated the materials would be sent to members for easier access.

Jose Rodriguez then shared additional upcoming workshops and opportunities, including a Social Security-related event with an upcoming session scheduled for January 23. Jose Rodriguez noted that registration/RSVP was required and stated the information would be forwarded to CAC members so interested members could register.

Jose Rodriguez also highlighted an upcoming Emergency Preparedness Workshop, noting it connected directly to training topics identified earlier in the meeting. Jose Rodriguez announced the workshop would be held in person on Tuesday, January 20, at the NLACRC Chatsworth office. Members discussed that the workshop occurred during the same time as another scheduled activity, and Jose Rodriguez encouraged the group to consider attending the training since members would already be onsite. George Alvarado commented that it could be a “two-in-one” opportunity. Destry Walker suggested a flexible approach where members attending in person could participate in the workshop onsite, while other members could join virtually if an online option was available. Jose Rodriguez stated options would be explored to support participation for both in-person and virtual attendees, and also noted a similar emergency preparedness opportunity was available in the Antelope Valley area. Jose Rodriguez confirmed the workshop details would be sent to the group so members could RSVP.

Santos Rodriguez also announced a Public Hearings Notice related to the County Area Agencies on Aging, explaining the county was seeking feedback from the community—particularly adults with disabilities—regarding county plans, funding priorities, and program services. Santos Rodriguez noted there were multiple ways to participate, including attending in-person public hearings, joining a virtual hearing scheduled for January 21, or submitting feedback in writing. Santos Rodriguez emphasized that individuals who could not attend a hearing could still participate by sending written statements/comments using the email addresses provided on the notice, and encouraged members to share input on community needs and supports.

Santos Rodriguez also shared a community event announcement for the City of San Fernando Homeless Connect Day, describing the event as a resource-focused opportunity with multiple agencies available to provide information and assistance. Santos Rodriguez stated the event would take place on Thursday, January 15, at Las Palmas Park, and would include county resources and nonprofit agencies. Santos Rodriguez noted attendees could access information on government assistance programs, legal support, housing assistance, and other community services, and encouraged CAC members to attend if interested.

Lastly, Santos Rodriguez announced a Native American Wellness Event in the Antelope Valley area and shared that NLACRC staff would be attending and tabling to provide resources and connect with the community. Santos Rodriguez stated the event would be held on January 31 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Palmdale, and was hosted by DMH and United American Indian

Involvement. Santos Rodriguez explained the event would offer opportunities to learn more about the Native American community and access local resources. Santos Rodriguez noted NLACRC would be partnering at the event with DMH and additional programs, including All For Kids grant programs and Best Start, and the Antelope Valley team would be present.

7. Review Actions

Juan Hernandez asked if there were any action items. Lindsay Granger summarized the action items from the meeting, including updating the CAC meeting schedule to reflect the newly approved June meeting date prior to distributing it to CAC members and confirming whether the schedule should also be posted online. Lindsay Granger confirmed the February open topic would be Identity and Online Security/Protection and noted the CAC flyer would be revised to include the June date and other agreed-upon edits.

Lindsay Granger also stated that Public Information staff and Lindsay Granger would coordinate to schedule the interviews discussed earlier in the meeting. Lindsay Granger added that Jose Rodriguez would follow up on future SCDD training presentations, including Emergency Preparedness (with consideration of involving Roy from NLACRC Emergency Management), Safety in the Community, and Giving Public Testimony.

No additional action items were identified. Juan Hernandez then asked for announcements and confirmed the next CAC meeting would be held on February 5 at 5:00 p.m., reminding members to review attendance and ensure participation.

- Lindsay Granger will update the CAC meeting schedule to include the June meeting date before distributing it to the CAC members and confirm that all the dates are updated before it is posted online.
- Chris Whitlock and the Public Information Team will update the CAC flyer to include the June meeting date, update the Spanish version to match the English version of the flyer, correct the flyer formatting issue caused by the packet page number overlapping the text.
 - The flyer will be revised to reduce the number of dial-in phone numbers, and the board support email will be included at the bottom of both the English and Spanish version of the flyer.
 - The flyer wording will be revised to clarify CAC meetings are open to the public and that Board Support should be contacted only if assistance is needed to attend or for more information.
- Chris Whitlock and the Public Information Team will coordinate follow-up to identify CAC members interested in recording short messages about the

benefits of joining the CAC, and the flyer would be used at the end of the video.

- Jose Rodriguez will follow up and reach out to schedule trainings based on CAC member interest including: Emergency Preparedness, Safety in the Community, Budgeting, and Giving Public Testimony.
- Jose Rodriguez will send CAC members the workshop/event flyers and RSVP information shared during the meeting, including the Social Security event and Emergency Preparedness Workshop.
- Jose Rodriguez will explore logistics for members who want to attend virtually and will coordinate with members in the Antelope Valley areas as well – to attend the in-person Emergency Preparedness Workshop at NLACRC.

8. Announcements/Information/Public Input

There were no announcements or public input.

8. Adjournment

Juan Hernandez adjourned the meeting at 6:14 pm

Submitted by:
Lindsay Granger
Executive Administrative Assistant