

SDLAC Meeting

Thursday, March 19th 2026

Quick recap

The Self-Determination Program (SDP) committee meeting focused on addressing ongoing challenges with the program's implementation at North Los Angeles Regional Center. Committee members discussed delays in processing spending plans and budgets, with several families reporting significant delays in receiving approvals and services. The group reviewed rate reform updates and discussed how to allocate \$133,000 in implementation funds, considering support groups, participant coaching, IF mentoring, and training initiatives. Silvia and Robin explained that while most vendors meet the 100% compliance rate requirement, some services still receive 90% rates depending on service and if it's a new service for the participant. The committee also reviewed the February meeting summary and discussed the need for improved communication between regional centers and families, with several members sharing experiences about misinformation from service coordinators.

Next steps

- [Silvia: Ask DDS to provide written clarification regarding whether a new spending plan is required when onboarding new providers, and share the response with the committee.](#)
- [Silvia: Look into the specific cases of spending plan and budget delays raised during public comment \(e.g., Moira Giammatteo, Raina\) and ensure these are addressed to prevent further delays.](#)
- [Rita: Send Lori more detailed information about proposed Service Level Agreements \(SLAs\) for North LA SDP processes.](#)
- [Lori/Miriam: Collect and send out the SurveyMonkey/feedback data \(with summary and raw data\) to appropriate contacts at North LA, DDS, State Council, Ombuds Office, and SDAC, and BCC committee members.](#)
- [Kristianna: Provide the correct email addresses for sending the SurveyMonkey/feedback reports to North LA, DDS, State Council, Ombuds Office, and SDAC.](#)
- [Lori: Invite Beth Martinko \(DAN program lead\) to present at the next meeting about the Disability Access Navigator program.](#)
- [Erica and John: Prepare and present reports at next month's meeting on relevant meetings/events attended \(e.g., SDAC, DRC, FFRC, Autism Society, State Council, etc.\).](#)
- [Silvia/Robin: Update all North LA publications, website, and communications to reflect the transition of SDP orientation to State Council and remove references to North LA hosting orientations.](#)

- [Silvia: Email the board report to committee members for review.](#)
- [Miriam: Email the DDS webinar presentation on LVAC funds/conflict of interest to interested committee members.](#)
- [Miriam: Add Michael \(committee member\) to the SurveyMonkey feedback collection for March to ensure his input is included.](#)
- [Committee members: Escalate instances of incorrect information from service coordinators or supervisors to Silvia or appropriate managers for training and correction.](#)
- [Silvia/Robin: Investigate the possibility of using the SDP team email for triage/escalation of delays and communicate any process changes to the committee.](#)
- [Silvia/Robin: Review the feasibility of funding or supporting a participant choice specialist or administrative support position to expedite SDP processes, and report back to the committee.](#)

Summary

Meeting Preparation and Logistics

Lori outlined the meeting's housekeeping rules, including the use of interpretation features and guidelines for participation. The committee members were reminded to update their names to include "SDLAC" for identification, and the meeting agenda and contact information were shared. The session then moved to introductions, though not all members were present due to illness.

SDP Provider Onboarding Process Concerns

The meeting began with committee members introducing themselves, including their roles and relationships to the Self Determination Program (SDP). Jekora raised concerns about inconsistencies in the process for onboarding new providers under the TBD in the SDP, noting that some consumers are being uniquely required to create new spending plans, which causes unnecessary delays. Robin clarified that DDS recently confirmed the requirement for a new spending plan when adding providers, and the team will work to ensure consistent implementation of this process across all consumers.

Spending Plan Requirements Clarification

The meeting focused on challenges with spending plan requirements for onboarding new providers and staff. Jekora raised concerns about delays caused by requiring new spending plans for every provider change, which the team agreed needed further clarification. The group discussed the need for faster processing times and questioned whether the current

requirements were appropriate for routine staff changes, with Lori committing to addressing these concerns with leadership.

North LA Budget Processing Delays

Participants discussed significant delays in processing spending plans and budgets at North LA Regional Center. Multiple attendees, including Miriam, Raina, and Jasmine, reported experiencing lengthy delays, with some waiting over a month for responses and signed spending plans. Silvia acknowledged the issues and explained that while some delays are due to fraud concerns and the need for proper documentation, the center is working to reduce processing times. She noted that North LA currently has over 900 staff members and is experiencing growing challenges with budget reviews, though they are implementing new timelines and working to address the delays.

SDP Onboarding Process Challenges

The meeting focused on challenges with the onboarding process for self-determination (SDP) services and service coordinator training. Jon shared his experience with delays in the onboarding process, while Silvia explained efforts to educate service coordinators about SDP, including required training and office hours for supervisors. Rita suggested creating service level agreements (SLAs) to clarify timelines and expectations for different stages of the process, and Silvia confirmed that internal policies already establish a 3-business-day contact timeline. The group discussed the need to better address inaccurate information provided by service coordinators and agreed to escalate such instances for training and correction.

Self-Determination Program Challenges

The team discussed challenges with misinformation and delays in the self-determination program, particularly regarding service coordinators and supervisors not following proper procedures. Silvia confirmed that staff can email her directly to address incorrect information from supervisors, and she will respond and attempt to resolve issues. The group also discussed the high volume of emails received by SDP, with Robin mentioning they are exploring ways to improve the email triage process. Claudia highlighted that families are often intimidated to escalate issues due to concerns about retaliation and expressed frustration with new regulations that may create more delays than benefits for clients.

SDP Program Fraud Discussion

The meeting focused on fraud issues in the SDP program, where Silvia clarified that the fraud was committed by individuals taking advantage of consumers and families, not by families or consumers themselves. Ricardo expressed concerns about how fraud affects vulnerable populations but agreed with Claudia's point that publicizing the issues could harm the

program's reputation. Lori announced two upcoming public meetings on March 24th regarding North LA County Regional Centers' purchase of service data, and she also promoted the Disability Voices United's LVAC Collaborative monthly meetings as resources for committee members to discuss issues affecting regional centers. The conversation ended with a discussion about rate reform progress, which was carried over from the previous meeting.

Rate Reform Discussion Meeting

The team discussed rate reform and median rates for services not included in the reform, such as tailored day services and the Creative Arts Program. Silvia clarified that while some 2026 rates are available on the DDS website, they are not all listed in the rate reform Excel document. The group also addressed which services are outside of the SDP, including co-pays, SSP checks, and the Coordinated Family Support Service. Silvia agreed to share her rate reform presentation and look into providing the updated median rates in the chat.

Rate Reform and Implementation Plans

The meeting focused on rate reform discussions, where Silvia clarified that new adaptive skills implementations would be at 90% rate unless specified otherwise in the individual program plan. The group discussed plans for \$133,000 in DDS implementation funds, with proposed uses including support group continuation, participant coaching, and IF mentoring. Lori and Miriam proposed additional training opportunities on SDP statute and waiver processes, and explored the possibility of creating a temporary position to expedite the SDP process at North LA.

Program Delays and Resource Challenges

The team discussed challenges with program delays and administrative bottlenecks, particularly with North LA regional center. Jordan suggested temporarily closing the program for six months if resources are insufficient to handle current caseloads while adding new clients. The group explored potential solutions including hiring an administrator, though concerns were raised about legality and effectiveness. The discussion concluded with agreement that communication with North LA needs improvement and more discussions will happen at the next Best Practices meeting.

Board Meeting Feedback Review

The meeting focused on reviewing the Board of Trustees meeting from March 11th and best practices updates. Key discussions included the presentation of a SurveyMonkey feedback tool developed by Miriam and Lori, which collected data from 9 out of 10 committee members about positive aspects and challenges in the SDP process. The group decided to use ChatGPT to summarize the feedback before submitting it to regional centers, DDS, and statewide organizations, with plans to obtain proper email addresses through Kristiana for distribution.

The meeting also covered updates on website improvements, the IF insurance requirements review by Eden Rosales, and the Self Determination Institute's updating of the IF guidebook.

LVAC Fund and DAN Program

The meeting covered two main topics: LVAC fund allocation and the new Disability Access Navigator (DAN) program. Miriam reported on a DDS webinar regarding LVAC funds, expressing concerns about DDS giving Regional Centers final decision-making power without collaboration, which she believed did not follow the law. Lori presented information about the DAN program, a free navigation tool to help individuals navigate the regional center system and suggested inviting Beth Martinko to the next meeting to discuss it further. The group also learned that Regional Center NLA-CRC would no longer conduct orientations as of March 31st, with all orientations moving to the State Council.