North Los Angeles County Regional Center

Executive Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2026

Present: Board President Sharmila Brunjes, Vice President Juan Hernandez, ARCA Delegate Jeremy Sunderland, VAC Chair Tal Segalovitch, Laura Monge – Committee Members

Executive Director Angela Pao-Johnson, Deputy Director Evelyn McOmie, Chief Financial Officer Vini Montague, Director of Clinical Services Dr. Carlo DeAntonio, Executive Administrative Assistant Lindsay Granger, Controller Justice Agonoy, Sheila King, Community Services' Director Arshalous Garlanian, Venus Rodriguez-Khorasani Community Services Manager – Staff Members

Guests: Lety Garcia – Board Member, Puja Trivedi – Board Member, Hortencia Garcia, Aracely Robles, Rosalba Fregoso, Yolanda, Manuela Herrera, and Celia Z., Oli Espinoza,

Absent: Board Secretary Curtis Wang, Board Treasurer Anna Hurst, Jacquie Colton, Jason Taketa

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1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, and adequate and proper notice of the meeting having been given, the meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m. Sharmila Brunjes, Board President, reminded members to identify themselves prior to making a motion and reviewed the NLACRC Board of Trustees Civility Code.

2. COMMITTEE MEMBER ATTENDANCE

3. AGENDA

Absent objection the September 24, 2026, meeting agenda was approved. Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC INPUT – AGENDA ITEMS

Clarification was provided regarding public comment. Public input at the beginning of the meeting is limited to agenda items, with an additional opportunity for general public comment scheduled at the end of the meeting.

There was no public input regarding the agenda.

5. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Approval of Minutes of the August 27, 2026, Executive Finance Committee Meeting

Absent objection the minutes of the August 27, 2026, Executive Finance Committee Meeting were approved. Motion carried.

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1 Approval to Authorize an Officer to Secure Worker's Compensation for Calendar Year 2027

Vini Montague explained that NLACRC's workers' compensation insurance operates on a calendar-year basis, unlike its other insurance policies. The insurance broker is currently obtaining quotes for 2027 and anticipates no significant changes in insurance costs, with a preliminary estimated increase of approximately 5%. Vini Montague requested that the Executive Finance Committee recommend that the Board authorize an officer to secure workers' compensation insurance for calendar year 2027.

On a motion made by Tal Segalovitch and seconded by Laura Monge, it was resolved to recommend that the Board authorize an officer to secure workers' compensation insurance for calendar year 2027. Motion carried.

6.2 Approval of Operations Contracts

A. Sheridan Group

Vini Montague presented a contract with Sheridan Group for furniture associated with Phase One of the San Fernando Valley office expansion project. The Board previously approved the expansion, which includes adding the 6th and 10th floors and reconfiguring existing office space. The proposed contract covers September 2026 through December 2027, allowing sufficient time for project completion, with a maximum contract amount of $2,492,553.10.

Vini Montague explained that three competitive bids were obtained, and Sheridan Group, NLACRC's existing furniture vendor, was selected based on several factors, including competitive pricing and furniture quality. Under the San Fernando Valley lease agreement, the landlord will provide a tenant improvement allowance of up to $4.8 million, which includes eligible furniture, fixtures, and equipment expenses. These expenses will be submitted to the landlord for reimbursement, with NLACRC responsible for any costs exceeding the available allowance.

Due to project timelines, Vini Montague requested that the Executive Finance Committee approve the contract on behalf of the Board to allow the project to proceed without delay. The contract will subsequently be presented to the full Board for formal ratification.

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez and seconded by Tal Segalovitch, it was resolved to approve the Sheridan Group contract for an amount not to exceed $2,492,553.10, subject to ratification by the Board. Motion carried.

B. Semetra

Vini Montague presented three contracts with Semetra for the design, purchase, installation, and integration of audio-visual equipment and IT structured cabling associated with Phase One of the San Fernando Valley office expansion project. The proposed contracts include $43,821 for design services, $636,025.65 for audio-visual integration, and $203,527.42 for IT structured cabling, totaling $883,374.07.

Vini Montague also requested an additional contingency of up to $150,000 to accommodate potential change orders during construction, bringing the total maximum authorization to $1,033,374.07. The contingency would address modifications such as adding equipment or relocating components from the original design. Vini Montague clarified that the three contracts would initially be executed for their respective amounts, with any necessary changes handled through contract amendments within the approved contingency. This approach would help prevent project delays by allowing necessary adjustments without seeking additional approval for each change order within the authorized amount.

Due to project timelines, approval was requested from the Executive Finance Committee on behalf of the Board, with the contracts to be presented for formal ratification at the November Board meeting.

On a motion made by Jeremy Sunderland and seconded by Juan Hernandez, it was resolved to approve the three Semetra contracts, including a contingency of up to $150,000, for a total amount not to exceed $1,033,374.07, subject to ratification by the Board. Motion carried.

C. Photo Scan of Los Angeles

Vini Montague presented a contract with Photo-Scan of Los Angeles (PSLA) for access control and video surveillance equipment associated with the San Fernando Valley office expansion project. PSLA provides NLACRC's access control and video surveillance equipment, and the proposed contract would support these systems as part of the expansion.

The initial contract amount is $551,566.88, with an additional contingency of up to $50,000 for potential change orders, bringing the total maximum authorization to $601,566.88. Vini Montague explained that, similar to the Semetra contracts, any necessary modifications would be addressed through contract amendments within the approved contingency amount.

Vini Montague requested that the Executive Finance Committee approve the contract on behalf of the Board to allow the project to proceed within the required timeline. The contract will be presented to the full Board for formal ratification at its November 4, 2026, meeting.

On a motion made by Jeremy Sunderland and seconded by Juan Hernandez, it was resolved to approve the Photo-Scan of Los Angeles (PSLA) contract, including a contingency of up to $50,000, for a total amount not to exceed $601,566.88, subject to ratification by the Board. Motion carried.

ACTION: All three contracts will be added to the November Board meeting to be ratified by the full Board of Trustees.

6.3 Approval of Strategic Plan

Angela Pao-Johnson presented an update on NLACRC’s Five-Year Strategic Plan, reviewing the proposed strategic priorities, goals, objectives, implementation timelines, and anticipated outcomes. The plan is currently in the Board review, discussion, and revision phase, with final approval anticipated at the November 4, 2026, Board meeting and implementation scheduled to begin in January 2027. Additional work is underway to establish measurable performance metrics and identify internal staff responsible for each priority, goal, and objective. These metrics are expected to be available by November and will help evaluate progress toward achieving the plan’s objectives. NLACRC also intends to share the strategic plan with the public in the coming months to communicate its priorities and direction over the next five years.

Angela Pao-Johnson reviewed the plan’s four strategic priorities, which encompass 11 goals and approximately 87 sub-objectives. Operational Excellence and Innovation focuses on improving transparency, communication, organizational performance, and information accessibility through technology, automation, and data-driven decision-making. Goals include establishing communication governance and standards, strengthening two-way communication, developing secure data infrastructure, modernizing systems, and improving organizational performance. Initial efforts in 2027 will prioritize establishing communication standards and data governance, while broader modernization and performance management initiatives will continue in subsequent years.

Workforce and Culture emphasizes leadership development, workforce effectiveness, employee well-being, and organizational engagement. Planned efforts include strengthening leadership and succession capacity, fostering trust and collaboration, and promoting workforce sustainability. Certain initiatives will begin in 2027, while others will require additional foundational work before implementation. Angela Pao-

Johnson emphasized that workforce development and organizational culture require continuous improvement rather than one-time completion.

Vendor Excellence and Service Delivery focuses on strengthening vendor readiness, capacity, diversity, geographic accessibility, quality, and accountability. Planned improvements include supporting vendor engagement, expanding service availability, and improving service delivery processes. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that funding and resource limitations may affect the pace of certain initiatives. Improvements to service delivery processes are among the objectives anticipated for completion in 2027.

Consumer, Family, and Community Impact focuses on empowering individuals served and their families, improving equitable access to services, strengthening community engagement, and developing strategic partnerships. Priorities include expanding access to information and resources, incorporating family feedback into continuous improvement efforts, identifying and addressing service access gaps, and strengthening coordination with community partners. Family and consumer empowerment objectives are anticipated for completion in 2027, while broader outreach and cross-system coordination efforts will continue throughout the five-year plan.

Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the implementation roadmap distinguishes between objectives expected to be completed in 2027, those that will be partially implemented, and those scheduled for subsequent years. The first year will focus on establishing foundational systems and advancing initiatives already underway. Although most objectives will receive some attention during the five-year period, not all 87 sub-objectives can be completed in the first year. The implementation schedule was developed with consideration for organizational capacity, available resources, and dependencies between initiatives. Angela Pao-Johnson emphasized the importance of establishing realistic but aspirational expectations for the plan.

Lety Garcia requested clarification regarding objectives identified as achievable in 2027, particularly since performance metrics and measurable outcomes have not yet been finalized. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the projected timelines were developed through discussions with internal teams to assess existing work, organizational readiness, and what could reasonably be accomplished. Several objectives reflect activities already underway that can be strengthened or expanded rather than developed entirely from the beginning. While the final metrics may result in adjustments, the current roadmap reflects management's assessment of achievable priorities.

As an example, Angela Pao-Johnson discussed Goal 8, Effective and Accountable Service Delivery, specifically the objective to improve service delivery processes. The associated sub-objectives include developing, documenting, and implementing written policies and procedures for core NLACRC processes; reducing administrative burdens through simplified forms and workflows; eliminating redundant steps; and implementing service coordination standards that promote timely referrals, clear accountability, effective communication, and reliable follow-through. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that service coordination standards have already been implemented, although additional auditing is needed to evaluate compliance and effectiveness. Work is also underway to review, update, and develop policies and procedures, including those related to case management. While these improvements are expected to be substantially completed in 2027, policies and procedures will require ongoing review and revision as organizational needs and regulatory requirements change.

Lety Garcia expressed particular interest in Goal 9, Family and Consumer Empowerment, and requested additional information about how NLACRC intends to achieve the objectives of educating, empowering, and partnering with consumers and families while establishing family voice and continuous improvement. Lety Garcia also raised concerns about service availability in areas such as the Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita Valley.

Angela Pao-Johnson explained that NLACRC already provides extensive outreach, training, and educational resources, but improvements are needed to ensure these resources effectively reach individuals and families. Existing resources include parent support groups, Parent University videos,

podcasts, and Individual Program Plan (IPP) guides. Angela Pao-Johnson emphasized that the focus is not solely on creating additional materials but also on improving how information is distributed, increasing accessibility, and using different communication platforms to reach more families. Feedback from community listening sessions indicated that some families were unaware of available programs and support groups, highlighting the need for more effective outreach and communication.

Lety Garcia raised concerns regarding the availability of Latino parent support groups in the San Fernando Valley and the need to address gaps experienced by families previously served through ICC. Lety Garcia emphasized the importance of establishing opportunities for families to connect, share experiences, and participate in ongoing discussions, particularly if ICC is no longer serving as a partner with NLACRC.

Angela Pao-Johnson explained that NLACRC contracts with Family Focus Resource Center to provide support groups and also hosts additional groups directly. To improve awareness and accessibility, NLACRC has developed a draft consolidated support group resource guide that brings together available groups offered by NLACRC and its community partners. The guide includes options for Spanish-speaking and other Hispanic families, as well as virtual and in-person groups in locations such as Panorama City and the Antelope Valley. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the guide is intended to help families identify groups that accommodate their schedules, preferred participation formats, and geographic locations. The resource has not yet been publicly released, but it is being developed to improve access to information and strengthen connections among families. Angela Pao-Johnson acknowledged that NLACRC needs to do a better job communicating and promoting the support groups and resources already available.

Sharmila Brunjes requested clarification regarding the meaning of objectives designated as completed within the strategic plan. Sharmila Brunjes noted that completion should indicate that the necessary infrastructure or foundational systems have been established and are ready for implementation and performance evaluation, rather than suggesting that no further work is required. The discussion reinforced that completed objectives will continue to be monitored, evaluated, and improved to ensure they achieve the intended outcomes.

Following the discussion, Sharmila Brunjes clarified that visiting Board members who are not members of the Executive Finance Committee may participate in discussions before a motion is made, but formal deliberation and voting following a motion are limited to committee members. Angela Pao-Johnson requested that the committee recommend the strategic plan's overall framework to the full Board for formal adoption.

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez and seconded by Jeremy Sunderland, it was resolved to recommend approval of NLACRC's Five-Year Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees for formal adoption. Motion carried.

6.4 Approval of Executive Finance Committee Reflection Guidelines

Lindsay Granger presented the proposed Executive Finance Committee (EFC) Reflection Guidelines, developed following the committee's discussion at the previous meeting. The document combines the former Administrative Affairs Committee and Executive Committee audit questions into a single set of guidelines reflecting the responsibilities of the newly combined Executive Finance Committee. As previously discussed, the document was renamed from "Audit Questions" to "Reflection Guidelines" to better reflect its purpose as an informal reference for committee members rather than a formal self-audit. The original documents were also included in the meeting packet for reference.

Sharmila Brunjes requested clarification regarding any deadlines, timelines, or expectations associated with the guidelines. Lindsay Granger explained that the document primarily reinforces existing committee responsibilities and procedures, including annual reviews and the preparation and approval of planning calendars by May. These activities are already incorporated into the committee's planning calendar, and the guidelines do not establish additional deadlines or reporting requirements.

Sharmila Brunjes also asked whether the guidelines included a requirement for periodic review. Lindsay Granger explained that the frequency of review would be determined by the committee. Sharmila Brunjes recommended reviewing the guidelines at the beginning of each year to ensure they remain relevant, accurate, and appropriate for the committee's responsibilities. Given the length of the document and potential redundancies, Sharmila Brunjes suggested that committee members review the guidelines in advance and consider any necessary revisions before annual approval. The guidelines could also be referred to the Policy and Procedure Committee for additional review.

Following discussion, the committee agreed to approve the consolidated Reflection Guidelines with an amendment establishing an annual review at the beginning of each year. Sharmila Brunjes confirmed that the approved guidelines would be available in the committee's folder on OnBoard for members to reference throughout the year, in addition to being included in the meeting packet.

On a motion made by Tal Segalovitch and seconded by Juan Hernandez, and subsequently amended with a second by Jeremy Sunderland, it was resolved to approve the Executive Finance Committee Reflection Guidelines, with the additional requirement that the guidelines be reviewed annually at the beginning of each year to ensure their continued relevance and appropriateness. Motion carried.

7. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

7.1 Review Center's Contract Changes with DDS

This item will be deferred to the next meeting, since the contract changes have not been received yet.

7.2 Financial Reports

Vini Montague presented the FY 2026–2027 financial statement for the July 2026 service month, providing an overview of NLACRC's funding allocations, expenditures, and supporting financial reports. Vini Montague reported that NLACRC received its C2 allocation, bringing the total fiscal year allocation to approximately $1.5 billion. Expenditures for July totaled $101.8 million, with year-to-date expenditures of $104.1 million. Projected annual expenditures currently equal the total allocation because the first surplus and deficit projection for Purchase of Services (POS) expenditures has not yet been completed. Until that projection is prepared, the financial statement reflects anticipated expenditures equal to the available allocation.

Vini Montague reviewed the allocation summary included in the meeting packet, which provides a breakdown of funding designated for regular operations, Purchase of Services, and special projects funded separately from regular operations. The supporting financial schedules include a consolidated report detailing expenditures by category, allowing the committee to review how funding is distributed across the various service and operational areas. Additional schedules provide a more detailed breakdown of regular operating expenditures, including projected annual salary costs and other operating expenses by category.

Vini Montague also reviewed the Community Placement Plan (CPP), which receives specialized funding separate from NLACRC's regular operating allocation. The financial packet includes a separate schedule identifying funding and expenditures associated with this program. Vini Montague emphasized that CPP funds are designated for specific purposes and cannot be commingled with regular operating funds.
Vini Montague discussed another specialized funding allocation for the LDC project, which supports individuals at risk of placement in a developmental center. Similar to CPP funding, these funds are restricted to their designated purpose and must remain separate from regular operating funds. Vini Montague explained that these specialized allocations are reported separately to distinguish them from NLACRC's general operating expenses.

Additional special project allocations reviewed included funding for the Family Resource Center and Language Access and Cultural Competency initiatives. These projects are also identified separately within the supporting financial schedules. Vini Montague concluded the financial overview by noting that NLACRC had not yet received its Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) funding allocation for FY 2026–2027.

Sharmila Brunjes requested clarification regarding the “Other Services” expenditure category listed on page 29 of the meeting packet, noting that it represented a substantial expenditure line item. Vini Montague explained that the category encompasses a broad range of services that do not fall within the other specifically identified expenditure classifications. Examples included personal assistance, behavioral services, respite, and other specialized supports. During the discussion, Sharmila Brunjes also referenced services such as social recreation, occupational therapy, and daycare as examples of the types of services that may be included. Vini Montague clarified that out-of-home residential services, day programs, and habilitation are separately identified categories, while “Other Services” captures expenditures that do not fit within those classifications.

Lety Garcia requested information regarding the reporting of remaining operating funds or savings from FY 2025–2026, which ended in June 2026. Lety Garcia asked whether NLACRC had determined the amount of operating funds remaining from the prior fiscal year and when that information would be presented to the Board. Vini Montague explained that NLACRC has three fiscal years to expend its operating funds and continues to incur expenditures against those allocations after the fiscal year has ended. Consequently, the amount of remaining available operating funds is still being determined as expenditures continue to be recorded.

Vini Montague initially indicated that information regarding available operating funds might be provided toward the latter part of the calendar year but subsequently clarified that an update was anticipated during the first quarter of calendar year 2027, specifically January through March. Lety Garcia confirmed that the anticipated reporting period referred to the calendar year rather than the fiscal year. Sharmila Brunjes also confirmed that the information regarding available operating funds would be incorporated into the financial presentation at that time.

Following the discussion, no additional questions were raised, and the committee proceeded to the next financial report.

Action: V Vini Montague to provide an update on remaining available FY 2025–2026 operating funds as part of a financial presentation during the first quarter of calendar year 2027 (January–March).

7.3 Admin vs. Direct Allocation Report

Vini Montague presented the Administrative vs. Direct Expenditures Report for FY 2026–2027, explaining that the report monitors NLACRC’s administrative expenditures in relation to direct expenditures to ensure compliance with the 15% administrative cost limit. As of the July 2026 service month, year-to-date administrative expenditures represented 12.3% of total expenditures, remaining below the allowable 15% cap.

Following the presentation, Laura Monge returned to the “Other Services” expenditure category discussed during the preceding financial report. Laura Monge expressed concern regarding the significant amount reported under this category, which represented nearly $1 billion in expenditures, and requested a more detailed breakdown of the services included. Vini Montague explained that the expenditure classifications were established with the Board several years ago and could be revisited to provide additional clarity. Examples of services included in the category were non-medical services, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, respite, and other specialized supports.
Laura Monge suggested organizing the expenditures into more specific groupings, such as therapeutic, recreational, and medical services. Lety Garcia suggested identifying the ten largest categories by expenditures, with remaining services grouped separately. Sharmila Brunjes supported providing

additional information as a separate attachment rather than expanding the existing financial statement, allowing Board members to better understand the services included without making the financial reports unnecessarily lengthy.

Vini Montague offered to prepare a separate breakdown of the services included under “Other Services” and requested clarification regarding the desired level of detail and timeline. Sharmila Brunjes initially suggested providing the information before the upcoming Board meeting if time permitted, or otherwise at the next Executive Finance Committee meeting.

Angela Pao-Johnson asked whether the committee wanted corresponding expenditure allocations included and whether the additional information would be needed monthly or as a one-time reference. Sharmila Brunjes clarified that the primary objective was to understand which services were included in the category rather than request an extensive new financial report. Lety Garcia agreed that providing this information at the beginning of the fiscal year would be helpful, including an overview of the categories and estimated expenditures. Sharmila Brunjes also suggested that the information could serve as a reference document, similar to the glossary included in Board meeting packets.

Vini Montague further explained that the existing financial report categories are already summarized and may contain numerous individual services. For example, the “Out-of-Home” category includes specialized residential facilities, supplemental residential program support, Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs), and family home agencies. Similarly, “Other Services” encompasses multiple service groupings, including in-home respite and non-medical programs, which may include community integration training, parenting support services, crisis evaluation, and behavioral intervention.

Following further discussion, Sharmila Brunjes recommended providing a summary of the broad service categories rather than an exhaustive listing of individual services. This approach would give Board members a better understanding of the expenditures while minimizing additional reporting requirements. Vini Montague agreed to prepare the broad categories included under “Other Services” for the committee’s review.

Action: Vini Montague to prepare a summary of the broad service categories included under “Other Services” as a separate attachment or reference document. The information may be provided before the next Board meeting if time permits; otherwise, it will be presented at the next Executive Finance Committee meeting.

7.4 Outstanding Authorizations Report

Vini Montague presented the Outstanding Authorizations Report as of August 31, 2026, reporting that, for the first time, all outstanding escalated authorization issues from prior fiscal years had been resolved. The remaining outstanding issues were limited to the current fiscal year, involving 80 vendors and 86 authorizations.

Vini Montague explained that the report will change as NLACRC implements its new Accounts Payable ticketing system, which is currently in the pilot phase. The system will centralize all Accounts Payable inquiries and issues into a single database, providing greater visibility and accountability. Previously, service providers contacted individual Accounts Payable staff members directly, making it difficult to track the total number of inquiries and outstanding issues across the department.

Vini Montague noted that the number of reported issues is expected to increase significantly once the ticketing system is fully implemented. This increase will reflect the expanded tracking of all Accounts Payable inquiries rather than only escalated authorization issues. The centralized system will allow NLACRC to monitor inquiries, improve responsiveness, establish performance metrics, and measure progress in resolving issues.

Vini Montague reported that the ticketing system remained on track for an October 1, 2026, launch. Sharmila Brunjes acknowledged the anticipated increase in reported issues while recognizing the benefits of improved tracking, transparency, and accountability.

No additional questions were raised, and the committee proceeded to the Audits Update.

7.5 Audits Update

a. DDS Audit FY2025

b. Lindquist, Von Husen & Joyce Audit FY2026

Vini Montague provided an update on the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) audit for FY 2024–2025 and the Lindquist independent audit for FY 2025–2026.

Vini Montague reported that the DDS audit remains in progress, with DDS continuing its review of FY 2024–2025. There were no new developments to report at this time.

Regarding the Lindquist independent audit for FY 2025–2026, Vini Montague reported that the audit is progressing on schedule. NLACRC has submitted its preliminary responses, and Lindquist has provided its audit selections. The Accounting team is actively gathering and submitting the requested documentation and information to support the audit process. Vini Montague confirmed that the audit remains on track.

7.6 Annual Reporting of FY25-26 Whistleblower Complaints

Sheila King presented the annual Whistleblower Complaints Report for FY 2025–2026, noting that the meeting packet included the individual reports previously presented and submitted throughout the fiscal year. A total of 71 whistleblower complaints were reported during FY 2025–2026, of which 55 were closed and 16 remained open.

Lety Garcia asked whether any trends or patterns had been identified, particularly regarding increases or decreases in whistleblower complaints compared to the previous fiscal year. Sheila King reported a slight increase in the total number of complaints compared to FY 2024–2025. Sheila King explained that most complaints are handled through Community Services and primarily involve vendors and related investigations.

No additional questions were raised following the discussion.

7.7 Monthly Whistleblower Logs

a. August 16, 2026 – September 15, 2026

Sheila King presented the monthly Whistleblower Complaints Report for the reporting period of August 16 through September 15, 2026. A total of 35 complaints were reported, of which 19 were closed and 16 remained open.

No questions were raised following the presentation.

7.8 Monthly Human Resources Report

Sheila King presented the Human Resources Report for August 2026, providing an overview of NLACRC's staffing levels, vacancies, hiring activity, and employee separations. As of August 31, 2026, NLACRC had 982 filled positions, 88 open positions, and eight positions on hold. Sheila King noted that NLACRC was approaching the milestone of 1,000 employees and anticipated reaching that staffing level in the near future.

Sheila King reviewed the staffing information included in the meeting packet, which provided a detailed listing of open positions and positions currently on hold. For August 2026, NLACRC reported 13 new hires and 11 employee separations. The report also included a breakdown of the reasons for employee separations.

No questions were raised following the presentation.

8. CENTER OPERATIONS

Angela Pao-Johnson presented the Center Operations Report, providing updates on recent changes to the federal public charge rule, the upcoming implementation of a new grievance process, and potential changes to the content and format of future Center Operations reports. Angela Pao-Johnson noted that the committee had previously discussed dedicating time to identifying the types of operational information members would find most meaningful and useful.

Angela Pao-Johnson discussed changes to the federal public charge rule, which took effect on September 18, 2026. The changes affect how the federal government evaluates the use of certain public benefits when making public charge determinations in immigration proceedings. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that public charge is an immigration consideration that may affect the approval of certain immigration applications. However, the rule does not apply to everyone, and many individuals are exempt from the public charge test. Receiving public benefits or services does not automatically result in an individual being considered a public charge.

Angela Pao-Johnson emphasized the importance of providing accurate information to individuals and families who may be concerned about how receiving regional center services or other public benefits could affect their immigration status. NLACRC wants to ensure that eligible individuals and families do not unnecessarily avoid accessing services because of these concerns. Angela Pao-Johnson encouraged the use of trusted informational resources, including those available through the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) website, and recommended that individuals with specific immigration concerns seek guidance from qualified immigration legal service providers.

Angela Pao-Johnson also provided an overview of a new grievance process scheduled for implementation in February 2027. The process stems from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) 2024 Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services final rule, which establishes requirements for a 90-day grievance process and an additional level of state review. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the new process will replace certain existing complaint procedures, including Welfare and Institutions Code Section 4731 complaints, and will change how regional centers respond to and resolve grievances. Angela Pao-Johnson and NLACRC's Appeals and Rights Compliance Manager recently attended a DDS workshop to obtain additional information and clarification regarding the requirements.

Under the new procedure, individuals will submit grievances directly to DDS rather than initially submitting them to the regional center. DDS will have five calendar days to review each submission and determine whether it qualifies as a grievance, is an inquiry requiring a different response, or duplicates an existing complaint. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that this initial screening will help prevent duplicate submissions from being unnecessarily referred to regional centers when the matter is already being addressed.

Following the initial DDS review, regional centers will have 60 days, covering days five through 65 of the grievance process, to investigate the complaint and develop a resolution plan. Within the first three business days after receiving a grievance, the regional center must compile the documentation relevant to the matter. During the review period, the regional center must also contact the individual who submitted the grievance to gather additional information, obtain a statement of facts, and better understand the concerns being raised. This communication may occur in writing, virtually, or in person. Angela Pao-

Johnson emphasized that although regional centers are allotted 60 days, NLACRC intends to make every effort to resolve grievances sooner whenever possible.

Angela Pao-Johnson explained that the new resolution process will differ from existing complaint procedures, particularly Section 4731 complaints, which generally involve determining whether specific rights or statutory requirements were violated. Under the current process, resolution letters may reference particular provisions of law, and corrective actions often focus on preventing similar problems in the future through staff training, changes in procedures, or corrective measures involving service providers. While these actions may address broader compliance concerns, they do not always provide the specific resolution sought by the individual who submitted the complaint.

The new grievance process will place greater emphasis on resolving the individual's concerns rather than primarily identifying statutory violations. Resolution plans will focus on addressing the grievance itself without necessarily citing the specific statutes involved. If an individual remains dissatisfied with the proposed resolution, the individual may request an additional state-level review through DDS. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that DDS will have 15 days to provide its report following that review, consistent with the requirements of the federal rule.

Angela Pao-Johnson noted that implementing the new process may require NLACRC to develop additional internal procedures, workflows, and infrastructure to ensure compliance with the required timelines and appropriately address grievances. The team will continue evaluating the operational changes needed to implement the process effectively, with an emphasis on ensuring that individuals receive meaningful resolutions to their concerns. Angela Pao-Johnson indicated that additional information will be provided once more concrete implementation plans have been developed.

Following these updates, Angela Pao-Johnson invited committee members to provide feedback regarding the information they would like included in future Center Operations reports. Angela Pao-Johnson explained that previous reports presented to the Executive Finance Committee (EFC) and the full Board often contained similar information and asked whether members preferred continuing with the existing format or receiving more targeted operational updates. Angela Pao-Johnson also noted that some of the information presented during this meeting was particularly timely because the Board would not hold a regular meeting during the upcoming dark month.

Sharmila Brunjes acknowledged that determining the appropriate reporting format was challenging because certain information would be valuable to both the EFC and the full Board. Sharmila Brunjes noted that EFC meetings generally provide greater flexibility for discussion, while the Executive Director's report at regular Board meetings is typically limited to approximately ten minutes. Sharmila Brunjes suggested using the additional time available during EFC meetings to provide more detailed information regarding operational matters, including strategic planning, financial obligations, staffing, and other organizational responsibilities. Sharmila Brunjes specifically noted that the grievance process presentation was informative and would also be beneficial for the full Board.

Lety Garcia recommended including additional information about employee training and professional development, particularly opportunities available to senior leadership. Lety Garcia noted that workforce training and development are important components of NLACRC's Strategic Plan and expressed interest in understanding the types of professional development opportunities being provided to strengthen leadership and organizational effectiveness. Lety Garcia suggested including high-level examples of training programs, educational opportunities, and other investments in staff development to help Board members better understand how these efforts contribute to the organization's long-term growth and effectiveness.

Angela Pao-Johnson agreed that information regarding professional development opportunities would be valuable. Sharmila Brunjes encouraged committee members to continue considering additional reporting topics and to submit suggestions directly to Angela Pao-Johnson by email or raise them during a future EFC meeting. No formal changes to the overall reporting format were established during the discussion.

Action: Angela Pao-Johnson to provide further updates on the implementation of the new grievance process as planning progresses and include high-level examples of staff professional development opportunities, particularly for senior leadership, in future Center Operations reporting. Committee members may submit additional suggestions for future reporting topics to Angela Pao-Johnson.

9. CLOSED SESSION

The committee entered Closed Session to discuss personnel.

Sharmila Brunjes reviewed the bylaws regarding participation in closed sessions and clarified that Board members who are not members of the Executive Finance Committee (EFC) are permitted to attend closed sessions but are not eligible to vote. Sharmila Brunjes reminded all attendees that the confidentiality provisions outlined in the bylaws apply to everyone participating in closed session, including Board members who are not committee members. All attendees were expected to maintain the confidentiality of matters discussed.

Following the clarification, Sharmila Brunjes requested a motion to enter closed session.

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Laura Monge, it was resolved to enter closed session at 6:30 p.m.

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Tal Segalovitch, it was resolved to exit closed session at 6:38 p.m.

10. BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEMS/ACTION ITEMS

- Board Support will add the approved action items to the November board meeting agenda for full board approval.
- The approved operations contracts will be added for ratification by the full Board at the November meeting.
- The new reflection guidelines will be made available on OnBoard for the committee members, and the planning calendar will be updated to include checking these guidelines at the start of every year.
- Vini Montague will prepare a summary of approximately 10–12 broad service categories included under “Other Services” for presentation at the next Board meeting, if time permits, or at the next EFC meeting.
- Vini Montague will provide an update on the remaining available FY 2025–2026 operating funds during the first quarter of calendar year 2027.
- Angela Pao-Johnson will provide additional updates on the implementation of the new grievance process scheduled to take effect in February 2027.
- Angela Pao-Johnson will include high-level information regarding staff professional development opportunities, particularly senior leadership training, in future EFC reports.
- EFC members may submit suggestions for future Center Operations reporting topics to Angela Pao-Johnson by email or during a future committee meeting.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS / PUBLIC INPUT / INFORMATION ITEMS

Sharmila Brunjes opened the floor for announcements, public input, and information items. No announcements, public comments, or additional information items were presented.

Sharmila Brunjes asked committee members to review the attendance report and verify its accuracy against their records.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next Executive Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2026 at 6:05 p.m. over Zoom.

13. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Juan Hernandez, seconded by Tal Segalovitch, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. Motion carried.

DISCLAIMER

The above minutes should be used as a summary of the motions passed and issues discussed at the meeting. This document shall not be considered a verbatim copy of every word spoken at the meeting.



Submitted by:
Lindsay Granger
Executive Administrative Assistant—Board Relations Liaison