



WESTSIDE REGIONAL CENTER

August 2, 2021

Dear Westside Regional Center Community:

In a letter dated July 2, 2021, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) found Westside Regional Center to be out of compliance with the requirements in Section 4640.6 (c) of the Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code. Based on the caseload ratio data submitted to DDS on March 1, 2021, Westside Regional Center did not meet the required service coordinator caseload ratios for the reporting period in two areas. This section in the law requires that regional centers maintain service coordinators-to-client caseload ratio at or below specified averages. A copy of the letter from DDS is enclosed for reference.

For individuals served enrolled on the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver, the caseload ratio in the WRC March 2021 caseload ratio data report was 1:75 (the required caseload ratio is 1:62); and, for individuals served who are older than the age of three years and are not on the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver, the caseload ratio was 1:77 (the required caseload ratio is 1:66).

Section 4640.6 (f) of the W&I Code requires that a plan of correction be developed by the regional center that does not comply with the caseload ratio requirement for two consecutive reporting periods. The final plan will be developed, following input from the state council, local organizations representing clients, family members, regional center employees, service providers, and other interested parties.

Please read the attached draft caseload ratio plan of correction that I propose to send to DDS. In accordance with Section 4640.6 (f) of the W&I Code your input is requested. If you would like to provide input please submit it by e-mail to caseloadratiofeedback@westsiderc.org; by fax to 310-649-2033; or through the United States Postal Services addressed to Cesar Garcia, Director of Client Services, Westside Regional Center, 5901 Green Valley Circle, Suite 320, Culver City, California, 90230, ATTN: Caseload Ratio Feedback. In order to be considered your input must be received by WRC no later than August 26, 2020. Thank you in advance for your input in assisting us to address this matter.

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Weise-Stusser, MA
Interim Executive Director
Westside Regional Center

Enclosures: WRC Draft Caseload Ration Plan of Correction
Letter from DDS dated September 16, 2020
Section 4640.6 (c), (d), (e), and (F) of the W&I Code

Committed To Providing Support And Services To People With Developmental Disabilities

5901 Green Valley Circle, Suite 320, Culver City, CA 90230-6953 ■ (310)258-4000 FAX: (310)649-1024
www.westsiderc.org

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

1215 O Street, MS 8-20
 Sacramento, CA 95814
 TTY: 711
 (916) 651-6309



July 2, 2021

Mary Lou Weise-Stusser, Interim Executive Director
 Westside Regional Center
 5901 Green Valley Circle, Suite 320
 Culver City, CA 90230

Dear Ms. Weise-Stusser:

Thank you for your service coordinator caseload survey emailed to the Department of Developmental Services (Department) on March 10, 2021. The data provided indicates that, as of March 1, 2021, Westside Regional Center (WRC) did not meet all the required caseload ratios mandated by Welfare & Institutions (W&I) Code §4640.6(c). Specifically, WRC did not meet required caseload ratios for the highlighted categories. Of the highlighted categories, WRC caseload ratios for individuals enrolled in the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver program, and individuals over three years old, non-waiver, non-mover have been out of compliance for two consecutive reporting periods.

Regional Center	On Waiver*	Under 3 Years	Movers Over 24 Months	Movers Between 12 and 24 Months	Movers Within Last 12 Months	Over 3 Years, Non-Waiver, Non-Mover*	Complex Needs
W&I Code Required Ratios	1:62	1:62	1:62	1:45	1:45	1:66	1:25
WRC Number of Individuals Served	4,659	1,138	66	2	0	3,334	24
WRC Ratios	1:75	1:55	1:40	1:14	N/A	1:77	1:24
CA Average	1:77	1:58	1:59	1:38	1:29	1:81	1:25

*Out of compliance for two consecutive reporting periods

This letter is to notify you that, as specified by W&I Code §4640.6(f), WRC is required to submit a plan of correction for the caseload ratio categories that were not met for two consecutive reporting periods.

“Building Partnerships, Supporting Choices”

Mary Lou Weise-Stusser, Interim Executive Director
July 2, 2021
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The plan of correction must be developed with input from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, local organizations representing the individuals you serve, their family members, regional center employees, including recognized labor organizations, service providers, and other interested parties. Please include in your plan of correction how you incorporated feedback from all required stakeholders.

We encourage you to review your process for determining service coordinator caseload assignments to assist in meeting the required caseload ratios and in developing your plan of correction.

Please email your plan of correction within 60 days from the date of this letter to:

Email: OCO@dds.ca.gov

The Department is available to provide technical assistance with the development of your plan of correction. If you have questions, please contact Danielle Hurley, Research Data Specialist I, Office of Community Operations, at (916) 654-3228, or by email, at danielle.hurley@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

ERNIE CRUZ
Assistant Deputy Director
Office of Community Operations

cc: Betty Pearson-Grimble, Coastal Developmental Services Foundation
Amy Westling, Association of Regional Center Agencies
Brian Winfield, Department of Developmental Services
Erica Reimer Snell, Department of Developmental Services
LeeAnn Christian, Department of Developmental Services
Aaron Christian, Department of Developmental Services
Jacqueline Gaytan, Department of Developmental Services
Danielle Hurley, Department of Developmental Services



WESTSIDE
REGIONAL CENTER

August 2, 2021

Ernie Cruz, Assistant Deputy Director
Office of Community Operations
Department of Developmental Services
1600 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Westside Regional Center – Plan of Correction – Service Coordinator Caseload Ratio, March 2021

Dear Mr. Cruz,

This is in response to your letter dated July 2, 2021, where the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) found Westside Regional Center to be out of compliance with the requirements in Section 4640.6 (c) of the Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code. Based on the caseload ratio data submitted to DDS on March 1, 2020, Westside Regional Center did not meet the required service coordinator caseload ratios for the reporting period in two areas. This is WRC's plan of correction, as required in Section 4640.6 (f) of the Welfare & Institutions Code (W&I).

For individuals served enrolled on the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver, the caseload ratio in the WRC March 2021 caseload ratio data report was 1:75 (the required caseload ratio is 1:62); and, for individuals served who are older than the age of three years and are not on the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver, the caseload ratio was 1:77 (the required caseload ratio is 1:66).

WRC has noted that we have been out of compliance with one or more required caseload ratios since 2012. We continue to attribute this issue in part to the core staffing formula as something that greatly impacts our operations allocations. The formula has not been updated since 1991 and it directly contributes to the struggle that the regional centers experience in meeting the mandated ratios with the amount of funding the system has been receiving.

The pandemic impacted the continued growth of individuals we serve since March 2020 but we have started to see an increase in new cases once again. Likewise, the pandemic also impacted our ability to interview and hire new service coordinators. WRC adapted and explored every possibility to recruit and hire additional service coordinators during this pandemic. Currently, WRC has 5 vacancies for service coordinator positions. We are fully committed to filling those positions in a way that is safe for current staff and for the potential candidates. We have been doing remote interviews and plan to do a combination of remote and socially distanced trainings with new service coordinators.

Every attempt is being made to hire additional service coordinators with the operations allocation provided by the State. For fiscal year 2021-22, WRC is committed and will continue to explore ways to address the current challenges our service coordinators face. WRC was happy to learn that for fiscal year 2022-2023 there will be caseload relief assistance to specifically address caseload ratios and hire new service coordinators.

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In addition to the caseload relief for fiscal year 2022-2023, we ultimately believe that the caseload ratio issue can only be resolved by updating the core staffing formula, maximizing federal dollars to centers that prioritize the Medicaid Waiver program, and continuing to increase funding for the system and for the people we serve.

Letters requesting input on this plan were sent to the regional manager of the State Council; Office of Client Rights Advocate; all WRC employees; members of the Westside Regional Center Vendor Advisory Committee; and a notice was also posted on the WRC website, WRC Facebook Page, and WRC Instagram Page, requesting input from the people we support, family members, and community members. Copies of your July 2, 2021 letter and Section 4640.6 (c) of the W&I Code were attached to the letter and notice. Copies of the letters and notices are enclosed

If you have questions please call me at 310-258-4042.

Sincerely,



Mary Lou Weise-Stusser, MA
Interim Executive Director
Westside Regional Center

cc: Board of Directors, Westside Regional Center
Amy Westling, Association of Regional Center Agencies

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*Section 4640.6(c), (d), (e), and (f) of the Welfare and Institutions Code
(Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act)*

(c) Contracts between the department and regional centers shall require regional centers to have service coordinator-to-consumer ratios, as follows:

(1) An average service coordinator-to-consumer ratio of 1 to 62 for all consumers who have not moved from the developmental centers to the community since April 14, 1993. In no case shall a service coordinator for these consumers have an assigned caseload in excess of 79 consumers for more than 60 days.

(2) An average service coordinator-to-consumer ratio of 1 to 45 for all consumers who have moved from a developmental center to the community since April 14, 1993. In no case shall a service coordinator for these consumers have an assigned caseload in excess of 59 consumers for more than 60 days.

(3) Commencing January 1, 2004, the following coordinator-to-consumer ratios shall apply:

(A) All consumers three years of age and younger and for consumers enrolled in the Home and Community-based Services Waiver program for persons with developmental disabilities, an average service coordinator-to-consumer ratio of 1 to 62.

(B) All consumers who have moved from a developmental center to the community since April 14, 1993, and have lived continuously in the community for at least 12 months, an average service coordinator-to-consumer ratio of 1 to 62.

(C) All consumers who have not moved from the developmental centers to the community since April 14, 1993, and who are not described in subparagraph (A), an average service coordinator-to-consumer ratio of 1 to 66.

(4) For purposes of paragraph (3), service coordinators may have a mixed caseload of consumers three years of age and younger, consumers enrolled in the Home and Community-based Services Waiver program for persons with developmental disabilities, and other consumers if the overall average caseload is weighted proportionately to ensure that overall regional center average service coordinator-to-consumer ratios as specified in paragraph (3) are met.

For purposes of paragraph (3), in no case shall a service coordinator have an assigned caseload in excess of 84 for more than 60 days.

(d) For purposes of this section, "service coordinator" means a regional center employee whose primary responsibility includes preparing, implementing, and monitoring consumers' individual program plans, securing and coordinating consumer services and supports, and providing placement and monitoring activities.

(e) In order to ensure that caseload ratios are maintained pursuant to this section, each regional center shall provide service coordinator caseload data to the department, annually for each fiscal year. The data shall be submitted in the format, including the content, prescribed by the department. Within 30 days of receipt of data submitted pursuant to this subdivision, the department shall make a summary of the data available to the public upon request. The department shall verify the accuracy of the data when conducting regional center fiscal audits. Data submitted by regional centers pursuant to this subdivision shall:

(1) Only include data on service coordinator positions as defined in subdivision (d). Regional centers shall identify the number of positions that perform service coordinator

duties on less than a full-time basis. Staffing ratios reported pursuant to this subdivision shall reflect the appropriate proportionality of these staff to consumers served.

(2) Be reported separately for service coordinators whose caseload includes any of the following:

(A) Consumers who are three years of age and older and who have not moved from the developmental center to the community since April 14, 1993.

(B) Consumers who have moved from a developmental center to the community since April 14, 1993.

(C) Consumers who are younger than three years of age.

(D) Consumers enrolled in the Home and Community-based Services Waiver program.

(3) Not include positions that are vacant for more than 60 days or new positions established within 60 days of the reporting month that are still vacant.

(4) For purposes of calculating caseload ratios for consumers enrolled in the Home and Community-based Services Waiver program, vacancies shall not be included in the calculations.

(f) The department shall provide technical assistance and require a plan of correction for any regional center that, for two consecutive reporting periods, fails to maintain service coordinator caseload ratios required by this section or otherwise demonstrates an inability to maintain appropriate staffing patterns pursuant to this section. Plans of correction shall be developed following input from the state council, local organizations representing consumers, family members, regional center employees, including recognized labor organizations, and service providers, and other interested parties.