

**DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

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May 31, 2023

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: SERVICES AND SUPPORTS FOR YOUTH DUALLY SERVED IN FOSTER CARE RESIDING IN A SHORT-TERM RESIDENTIAL THERAPEUTIC PROGRAM OR OTHER TEMPORARY SETTING

The purpose of this correspondence is to remind regional centers about their responsibilities regarding the provision of regional center services for children, youth or Non-Minor Dependents in foster care, hereafter referred to as "youth dually served" in short-term or temporary settings.

AB 403 (2015) granted California the authority to implement provisions of Continuum of Care Reform beginning January 1, 2017. AB 403 created a new licensing category referred to as Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) which replaced the Group Home rate classification level structure. STRTPs provide an integrated program of core services in a licensed residential setting. Core services may include Medi-Cal specialty mental health services, services to achieve permanency, transition support services, educational, physical, and behavioral/mental health supports. Services can range from six to 12 months and are based on both the age and individual needs of the youth. More information on the core services and lengths of stay may be found in the [Interim Licensing Standards, Chapter 7.5, Version 4 for STRTPs](#).

While STRTPs are not intended as permanent settings, youth in these settings are often in need of evaluations, assessment or services and supports that are provided by regional centers. Timely access to regional center services must not be delayed based on residing in this setting type or until a permanent setting is secured.

Regional Center Intake for Youth Residing in an STRTP or Temporary Setting

For youth dually served residing in an STRTP or other short-term or temporary setting, regional centers must accept referrals and adhere to applicable statutory intake and assessment timelines. Per Welfare and Institutions (W&I) Code section 4643(a), assessments shall be conducted as soon as possible and in no event more than 60 days following initial intake where any delay would expose the client to unnecessary risk to health and safety, further delay mental or physical development, or the client would be at imminent risk of moving to a more restrictive environment.

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Regional Center Executive Directors

May 31, 2023

Page two

#### Regional Center Case Transfers for Youth Residing in an STRTP or Temporary Setting

Per W&I Code section 4643.5, when a youth dually served by a regional center has an order for or is awaiting foster care placement, or is placed in out-of-home care through voluntary placement, regional center case transfers must be coordinated between the regional center of origin and the receiving regional center after notification from the county social worker or minor's attorney. Nothing precludes regional centers from accepting case transfers based on the type of setting the youth is residing in and therefore case transfers for youth dually served residing in STRTPs must not be denied solely based on the current residential setting. Regional centers must consider the most effective, timely and appropriate way to ensure service access, including case transfer, shared case management or timely courtesy vendorization processing. Case transfer requests in this situation should be reviewed by the Individual Program Plan (IPP) team and driven by the needs of the youth dually served. As specified in the Inter-Regional Center Transfer Guidelines, each case transfer request should be coordinated between the Directors of Consumer Services, or at a similar management level, reflecting the importance of this responsibility. Inter-Regional Center Transfer Guidelines developed per W&I Code section 4643.5(c), must be adhered to for timely, coordinated and collaborative transitions for children and youth. Any denial of a case transfer based on a youth residing in an STRTP is a violation of law as specified in W&I Code section 4643.5.

#### Regional Center Services Provided in an STRTP or Temporary Setting

Per W&I Code sections 4646 and 4648, the IPP will take into account the needs and preferences of the youth dually served and the family, if appropriate, as well as promoting community integration, independent, and productive lives, and stable and healthy environments and is developed through a process of individualized needs determination. Services and supports shall be flexible and individually tailored to the youth and, if appropriate, the family. Services and supports must not be denied solely based on the youth dually served residing in an STRTP or the view that the services are only temporary. When a youth dually served is residing in a STRTP, services and supports should be provided according to the IPP taking into account the needs and preferences of the youth dually served in their current setting. Each STRTP has a unique program design, which includes care and supervision components as well as mental/behavioral health and/or Medi-Cal specialty mental health services. Regional center services and supports should be provided as appropriate and as determined by the IPP and Child and Family Team (CFT). STRTP providers should be included in the CFT and at the discretion of the youth dually served, the IPP meeting. STRTP providers can provide information about their core services and how those may support the IPP goals, or help to identify needed services and supports that may not be included within the scope of their program. In partnership with the CFT and the IPP team, regional centers should review IPP services and supports to identify which regional center services complement the core services provided within the STRTP to ensure IPP goals are supported.

Regional Center Executive Directors  
May 31, 2023  
Page three

If you have questions regarding this correspondence, please contact the DDS Children and Youth System of Care by email at [SystemofCare@dds.ca.gov](mailto:SystemofCare@dds.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

*Original Signed by:*

BRIAN WINFIELD  
Chief Deputy Director

cc: Regional Center Administrators  
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services  
Regional Center Community Services Directors  
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