

# SYSTEMS OF CARE

## FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### SYSTEM PROFILE: REHABILITATION SERVICES\*

Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) services are available to child/youth with a disability (YWD) between ages 14 – 24 (through 24). DOR services are additionally available to adults. Through a specialized program, a student with a disability (SWD) may be served if they are between ages 16-21 (through age 21) and enrolled in a recognized secondary or post-secondary education program. Both YWD and SWD would be considered for DOR services if they are interested in vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to prepare for, enter or retain/advance in employment.

As a state administered program, DOR services are available throughout the state in approximately 85 offices. DOR's website (<https://www.dor.ca.gov/>) is available to provide local contact information. A direct link to local offices is:

<https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/FindAnOffice>.

Enrollment entry points vary and can include, but are not limited to, the following referrals for DOR Student Services and/or DOR VR services:

- Self-referral/application with parental/ legal guardian consent/signature on DOR application as appropriate.
- DOR Student Services webpage online application for Student Services.
- DOR Cooperative Program (Transition Partnership Programs (TPP) and Mental Health Transition Age Youth) referral/application.
- Direct school (public-general/charter/alternative) referral.
- Regional Center referral.
- Mental Health services providers (state, county, private) direct referral.

\*This document provides a summary of the Rehabilitation Services System. It is not an exhaustive review of all relevant legal authorities and does not constitute legal advice.

### OVERVIEW

Our goal is simple: our programs must meet the needs of the children and youth we serve. These are our collective children, and they all deserve the very best.

We recognize that it is our obligation to ensure that the services we are providing are coordinated, timely, and trauma-informed. We must come together as one government to break down silos and build a culture that is focused on delivering services that are person-centered and not program-centered.

### PURPOSE

As a resource to state, county, and local staff, we developed system profiles that provide an overview of the services offered by our various systems that all serve children and youth.

This is our compendium of resources available to children and youth served by are various systems. The system profiles outline how eligibility is determined, what the denial appeal processes entail, how the system interacts with other systems or programs, how information is shared, and how referrals are made

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- Community Rehabilitation Programs direct referral.
- Regional partnership referrals from public entities such as the California Conservation Corp, Camarillo; Orange County Courthouse Parole Agent working with foster youth; and non-profit organizations such as the Family Care Network (SLO) and Casa Pacifica (Ventura) serving foster youth, and Grizzly Youth Academy serving at-risk youth.

The Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor – Qualified Rehabilitation Counselor (SVRC-QRP) determines eligibility for DOR VR and DOR Student Services. For those determined eligible for the VR program, the SVRC-QRP, in collaboration with the consumer, mutually develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), generally within 90 days of date of eligibility determination.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for DOR Student Services, the SWD must be:

- currently attending a secondary, post-secondary or other recognized education program;
- 16-21 years old and eligible for and receiving special education services under IDEA (typically those students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), or eligible for accommodations under a 504 plan (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act). Students with a 504 plan are typically students without an IEP who receive services or accommodations within the school setting to access school services. This could include, but not be limited to, students using sign language interpreters, elevators for wheelchair access, etc.

DOR Student Services include: Job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities to enroll in transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace readiness training (social skills and independent living), and instruction in self-advocacy. These services do not require eligibility determination and the development of an Individualized Plan for Employment. A SWD may also apply for the broader scope of DOR vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services: A youth with a disability (YWD) is eligible for DOR VR services based on the presence of a disability that results in an impediment to employment, and the youth desires and can benefit from DOR VR services to successfully achieve an employment outcome. DOR services may include career assessment and counseling, job search and interview skills, independent living skills, career education and training and assistive technology.

## DENIAL OF ELIGIBILITY

The youth/applicant, parent/guardian and child welfare worker/deputy probation officer, if applicable, would be notified of the denial of eligibility, the reason for the denial, and their rights for reconsideration of eligibility. At time of application, the individual identifies preferred method of communication and mailing address.

## APPEAL PROCESS

DOR attempts to address any concerns at the lowest possible level between the Rehabilitation Counselor and the youth. If the Rehabilitation Counselor and youth are unable to resolve their concerns, the youth, with the parent/guardian if applicable, may

exercise the following: An informal meeting with the youth's Rehabilitation Counselor's Manager.

- An administrative review with the District Administrator, within one year of the DOR action or decision. An administrative review decision is rendered within 15 calendar days from the request date or agreed upon later date. If the youth disagrees with the decision, they may file a request for a fair hearing within 30 calendar days after receipt of the written administrative review decision. Or, the youth may seek an administrative review concurrently with the formal mediation or fair hearing request.
- A mediation and/or fair hearing (may file for both concurrently):
  - A confidential mediation with a qualified, impartial mediator, within one year of the DOR action or decision. The mediation is held within 25 calendar days after receipt of the request or an agreed upon date.
  - A fair hearing with an Administrative Law Judge, within one year of the DOR action or decision or within 30 calendar days after receipt of written administrative review decision. The fair hearing is held within 60 calendar days from the request date or agreed upon later date.
- A Writ of Mandate with the California Superior Court within six months of the fair hearing decision.

The youth may ask a family member, other representative, or advocate to attend any meeting. In addition, the youth may seek an advocate and/or information regarding the appeal process from the Client Assistance Program

administered by Disability Rights California.

## PROGRAM INTERACTIONS

**Medi-Cal Managed Care** – DOR may recommend an individual access Medi-Cal services through a managed care plan if the individual is determined eligible for Medi-Cal through the County and is enrolled in a plan. If DOR wants to assist an individual in requesting services, DOR staff can call the specific plan's Member Services number or receive help from the Department of Health Care Services, Office of the Ombudsman at (1-888-452-8609).

**Medi-Cal Fee-For-Service** – DOR may recommend an individual access these services if the individual is determined eligible for Medi-Cal through the County and the provider is enrolled in Medi-Cal. A complete list of Medi-Cal fee-for-service providers is located at the California Health & Human Services Open Data Portal under "Profile of Enrolled Medi-Cal Providers".

**Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Services** – DOR interacts with this program to collaborate on the provision of services to support consumers individuals with achievement of an employment outcome as specified in the DOR Individualized Plan for Employment. DOR established Mental Health Cooperative Programs to provide an integrated, collaborative, and individualized approach for transitioning and supporting youth with mental illness in obtaining and maintaining job training and employment. DOR Mental Health Cooperative programs are administered through contracts that are developed locally between DOR and the county department responsible for mental health services, based on local services and available funding. The county department responsible for mental health and local DOR administration assess and establish need and evaluate the ability to develop local cooperative programs. Once a Mental

Health Cooperative Program is established, county mental health staff work with youth nearing transition age to determine vocational readiness for participation in a DOR Mental Health Cooperative Program and refer youth to the program, as appropriate. Local DOR staff involved with the youth's vocational training also participate as members of the CFT.

**Child Welfare Services** – If interested, foster youth with disabilities may be referred to DOR to be considered for DOR vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter, or retain/advance in employment. DOR is collaborating with CDSS to include DOR as a resource to foster youth-on-youth web pages.

**Juvenile Probation** – Youth with disabilities served through Juvenile Probation may be referred to DOR to be considered for DOR vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter, or retain/advance in employment.

**Regional Centers** – DOR partners with regional centers to provide employment and supportive services for youth with the most significant disabilities who require long-term support to learn and perform the job duties needed to retain competitive integrated employment. In addition, regional centers may also invite DOR to attend Individual Program Plan meetings and provide vocational expertise that help consumers develop Person-Centered Plans for Employment.

**Schools** – DOR engages with local high school programs to provide DOR Student Services and participates in Individualized Education Program meetings for both eligible and potentially eligible students, when invited.

## INFORMATION SHARING

Information is shared between programs via completed department/agency specific "Releases of Information" (ROI) with

parental/ legal guardian signature/approval, as appropriate.

Developmental screenings by the primary care pediatrician are not shared across programs unless appropriate completed ROIs are in place. The DOR is specifically required to receive the youth's written consent to obtain only the drug and alcohol information explicitly described in the youth's written authorization from a third-party. The DOR must also obtain approval to share medical information with a third-party in most cases in accordance with CCRs.

## REFERRALS

Referrals to other programs are entered in the individual's electronic Record of Services (ROS) via pre-populated "other programs" for IT tracking as well as general ROS case notes.

For individuals seeking referrals without applying for DOR VR services, referrals to other programs are entered in an electronic referral system via pre-populated "other programs" for IT tracking.

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Our Systems of Care work has been accelerated by the implementation of Assembly Bill 2083 (Chapter 815, Statutes of 2018), which requires each county to develop and implement a Memorandum of Understanding outlining the roles and responsibilities of the various local entities that serve children and youth in foster care who have experienced severe trauma.

The legislation is focused on the child welfare system, but can and must be expanded to look at children and youth served by various other systems.

The legislation calls for the establishment of a Joint Interagency Resolution Team to provide

guidance, support, and technical assistance to counties with regard to trauma-informed care to foster children and youth.

We have identified the mission of the State Restitution Team to be:

1. Promote collaboration and communication across systems to meet the needs of children, youth and families;
2. Support timely access to trauma-informed services for children and youth; and
3. Resolve technical assistance requests by counties and partner agencies, as requested, to meet the needs of children and youth.

For additional system profiles, including mental health services, rehabilitation services, developmental services and education services, please visit our website at [www.chhs.ca.gov](http://www.chhs.ca.gov).