

SAN GABRIEL/POMONA REGIONAL CENTER

January 20, 2021

TO: Dr. Gisele Ragusa, Board President & Board of Directors
San Gabriel / Pomona Valleys Developmental Services, Inc.

FROM: Anthony Hill, M.A. J.D. Esq.
Executive Director

RE: Executive Director's Report

Happy 2021 SG/PRC Community

2020 was a challenging year for all of us. However, we had many blessings along the way. We are a more united community in that all of us are playing a key role with protecting everyone's health and safety and managing the spread of COVID-19. We now have new lingo, "Zoom" and "Zoom fatigue."

We celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday two days ago. When I think about him, the concepts, including love, unity, togetherness, kindness, and hope resonates in my mind and heart.

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."..... Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. King's words of leadership inspires us as we engage our important work. Let's continue our good work through uplifting each other, every second, every minute, every hour, every day, every year and always.

SG/PRC's Critical Business Functions

The SG/PRC office remains open to the public on an appointment only basis. We are pleased to report that all critical functions including Intake/Eligibility, Fiscal, Clinical, Human Resources, Quality Assurance and Information Technology are at optimal levels.

SG/PRC is an essential business, according to "Essential Workforce Coronavirus Covid-19 Response", under Healthcare/Public Health Sector as a business that supports social workers serving individuals with developmental disabilities. All visitors to the SG/PRC office and staff are required to pass a contactless, scanner temperature check and face masks monitoring station upon entry into the building. There are no reported transmissions of COVID-19 within the SG/PRC office. SG/PRC's remote workforce is 95% percent.

SG/PRC retains the distinction of being the only regional center in California that offers full scope intake and eligibility services throughout the COVID-19 Health Pandemic. The following reflects our data ending December 31, 2020 representing the second quarter (See Attachment A).

Early Intervention/Intake

785 New Referrals
767 Reviews
726 children found eligible

Lanterman/Intake

128 New Referrals
80 Reactivations
179 Eligible (Including EI transitions)

Mrs. JoAnn Boutin

It is with deepest regret and with heavy hearts that we announce our recent loss of Mrs. JoAnn Boutin. Mrs. Boutin served our SG/PRC community for well over 35 years in various Service Coordinator roles and more recently as our Special Incident Reporting Coordinator. JoAnn is survived by her husband Clay, and daughters Amanda and Sarah. JoAnn is remembered for her kindness, and always lending a helping hand to others as she supported our shared mission of service. She would take anyone and everyone under her wing without hesitation sharing her knowledge and talents. JoAnn was a very loving mother and wife. JoAnn enjoyed SG/PRC’s Spooktacular Halloween events and would imagine and create innovative costumes for all of us to admire and enjoy. Throughout her lifetime, JoAnn shared her goodwill with others with generosity and love. JoAnn... we miss you and we love you. You are always part of our SG/PRC family.

COVID-19 LA County Surge

As many of you are aware, Los Angeles County is experiencing a surge of COVID-19 transmissions. As expected, SG/PRC has experienced a sudden rise in the reporting of COVID-19 cases since Thanksgiving (See Attachment B). In response, the SG/PRC leadership, Nurse Advocates and management team have been working around the clock triaging and assessing service needs, engaging resource identification, developing risk mitigation strategies, and assuring follow-up activities occur to protect the health and safety of individuals served and their families. Our surge strategy including Direct Support Professional Registries, Nursing Registries, and Surge Residential Settings have held up.

Our PPE efforts continue to be comprehensive. SG/PRC is securing PPE from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and it is being delivered by SG/PRC’s Transportation Service Providers to all Service Providers within our service area. Parent’s Place in partnership with SG/PRC is providing and delivering PPE to individuals served and their families. Recently, SG/PRC has created a long-term PPE acquisition and distribution strategy. The following table illustrates SG/PRC’s PPE distribution efforts throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Face Masks (N95 & surgical masks)	1,250,400
Gowns	182,000
Hand sanitizer bottles	40,176
Gloves	668,000
Face shields	48,384
Total number of PPE units distributed	2,188,960

The following table illustrates SG/PRC’s PPE Inventory.

Surgical Masks	250,000
N95 Masks	187,520
Gowns	45,000
Hand sanitizer bottles	10,050
Gloves	220,000
Face shields	12,000
Total number of PPE units	724,570

SG/PRC Budget 19/20

Our FY 19/20 Operation Budget (OPS) has a small reserve. Our Purchase of Services (POS) budget shows a year-end balance of \$3,347,565. Regional Centers’ budgets are within a three-year budget cycle.

SG/PRC Budget 20/21

SG/PRC’s OPS allocation for FY 20/21 is \$31,674,844 projecting at \$31,444,842 at the end of the fiscal year. Current month expenditures are \$2,261,844 and year to date is \$12,459,132 with \$19,265,547 remaining. This trend suggests an OPS surplus of \$230,002. SG/PRC’s POS budget allocation is \$271,307,068 with year-to-date expenditures of \$103,024,029 projecting a deficit of \$7,996,289 when including late claims. Our projected POS budget overrun is due to COVID-19 Health and Safety Exemptions allowable under DDS Directives.

Performance Contract 2021

Annually, SG/PRC is required to develop its Performance Contract that includes measurable outcomes related to assisting individuals served with achieving life quality outcomes, exceeding current baseline data through developing services and supports intended to reduce disparities and improving equity in purchase of service expenditures. On November 11, 2020, in accordance with Welfare & Institutions Code Section 4629, SG/PRC submitted its draft Performance Contract to DDS for review and approval. DDS approved SG/PRC’s Performance Contract adopted by the SG/PRC’s Board of Directors on October 28, 2020 (See Attachment C).

Independent Audit Report

On January 13, 2021, the SG/PRC’s Board of Directors, Executive Finance Committee has received SG/PRC’s independent audit report conducted by AGT Certified Public Accountants including fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. The report did not state any material findings and expressed an unmodified opinion.

LA County Department of Public Health-COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization

SG/PRC recently received guidance from Laurel Fowler, Deputy Director, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) regarding its COVID-19 vaccine prioritization Phases and Tier system. Currently, LACDPH is within Phase 1A Tier (2) for “Health Care Workers” including those in the regional center system. Accordingly, all non-residential Service Providers, IHSS Workers and regional center staff are designated as “Health Care Workers” and are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccination when presenting an employee Identification Card, a letter from the regional center and proof of employment (See Attachment D).

On January 13, 2021, DDS issued a letter regarding [state] public health policy for vaccine prioritization including certain family caregivers for individuals served through regional centers that are diagnosed with cerebral palsy, epilepsy, Down Syndrome or have Specialized Health care needs including dependence upon ventilators, oxygen and other technology. We must keep in mind, LACDPH’s COVID-19 vaccine prioritization guidelines remain under the sole jurisdiction LACDPH (See Attachment E).

The DDS letter further states that either the regional center or the family member can provide evidence that the individual cared for fits with one of the four categories that might create access to the COVID-19 vaccine while not expressing that the caregiver fits within the term “Health Care Workers.” At this time, we have not received confirmation that LACDPH is agreeable to any DDS amendment or modification of its published guidelines. Thus, there are no guarantees that LACDPH will honor or apply the guidance offered by DDS. Family members caregivers of an individual served that fits within the DDS classification should contact their Service Coordinator. We are monitoring the impact if any of the proposed amendment by DDS, and we will respond accordingly in conformity with further guidance provided by LACDPH.

Department of Developmental Services

Family/ Self-Advocate Survey

DDS recently conducted a statewide survey intended to measure regional centers’ responses to meeting the needs of individuals served and their families during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The DDS survey closed on December 18, 2020. DDS is currently analyzing survey results. Reportedly, DDS received at least 8000 surveys from intended stakeholders.

Rate for Supported Living Services

On January 8, 2021, DDS issued a directive establishing a new Supported Living Services (SLS) rate of \$48.06 per hour when it is necessary for the SLS Service Provider to quarantine or isolate together with the individual served. The effective date is January 1, 2021 (See Attachment F).

Alternative Monthly Rate – Non-Residential Services

The Alternative Monthly Rate implementation is on schedule and is effective January 1, 2021. SG/PRC is currently uploading its rate table, creating purchases and authorizations before the next billing cycle. At least 4000 purchases and 4000 authorizations will be generated within a 6-day window of time. This billing change has been a major undertaking.

Rate Increases Effective January 1, 2021

On December 21, 2020, DDS issued guidance regarding Service Providers' rate increases pursuant to Assembly Bill 79 for specific service codes that had not been included within the broad scale rate increases that represented an investment for the regional center service delivery infrastructure. The rates that fall within AB 79 are Independent Living Programs, Infant Development Programs and Early Start Specialized Therapeutic Services. However, these rate increases are only effective through approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Also, many Service Providers might be eligible for a rate adjustment to offset the minimum wage increase from \$13 to \$14 dollars effective January 1, 2021 (See Attachment G).

Governor Newsom's Budget FY 21/22

The regional center system's budget outlook is status quo. This is good news. Savings in regional center operations or purchase of services funding are not projected, despite a dip in the overall caseload number within the regional center system (8,534) representing the size of a small regional center.

In the regional center operations budget, there is no reduction. There are increases. \$5.3 million for Community Navigators implemented through Family Resource Centers. \$534K for (5) Forensic Specialists. \$2 million for (21) Regional Center Emergency Coordinator positions. Within the purchase of service budget, the Uniform Holiday Schedule remains suspended and the sunset date for provider rate increases is extended (See Attachment H).