

Statewide Self-Determination Advisory Committee Recommendations for Enrollment in the Self-Determination Program Prior to June 7, 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Statewide Self Determination Advisory Committee (SSDAC), which consists of the chairpersons of 21 Regional Center Self Determination Local Advisory Committees (SDLAC) and 1 member of the State Council, convened its regularly scheduled meeting on February 16, 2021. With the participation of more than 100 attendees, including regional center (“RC”) staff, vendors, service providers, independent facilitators, fiscal management services and community action group members, SSDAC developed a list of recommendations for implementation of the first phase of the Self-Determination Program (SDP). This phase will be completed on June 7, 2021, at which time the SDP will be available to all persons and families served by RCs who wish to participate in it.

The focus of the meeting was on what each Local Self-Determination Advisory Committee (LAC) could do to assist and facilitate the completion of enrollment of those selected to participate in the SDP during the interim remaining period of the first phase. The outcome of the meeting was the development of specific recommendations to all 21 regional centers (RCs) and LACs for implementation of the SDP and to overcome common barriers to enrollment in the SDP. The list of recommendations is not all-inclusive, instead, it is intended to put forth recommendations that are believed to be possible to achieve before June 7th. It is the hope and expectation of the SSDAC that the recommendations will be considered by each LAC in an effort to successfully enroll as many of the SDP participants as is reasonably and practically possible before expiration of the first phase of the SDP on June 7, 2021.

Finally, the SSDAC has determined that in order for the SDP to be successful, its goal must be to focus not on what DDS can do, but on what each LAC can do, collaboratively with each RC, to fulfill the purpose and intent of the SDP. All of the recommendations are applicable to the first phase of the SDP. Many of the recommendations will be equally relevant to the longer-term effort to overcome barriers to the SDP and to prepare for the full expansion.

Recommendation 1: Transitioning all phase-in participants by June 1st

RCs should reach out to all persons selected to participate but who have not completed enrollment to determine: 1) what stage of the SDP process they are in; and 2) who is responsible for next steps. There should be a goal of moving each participant through the next stage of the process by March 31, 2021 - including finishing all orientations - and a goal of completing enrollment and transitioning to the SDP by June 1, 2021.

Recommendation 2: Simplifying Orientation & Ongoing Training of Participants

RCs and LACs should participate in the revision of the orientations in order to make them clearer and in shorter segments. The SSDAC will be providing a new sample orientation to SDLACs that can be presented in short training modules. The LACs should continue to conduct trainings after participants have enrolled in the SDP as necessary. As much as possible, orientations and trainings should be conducted by self-advocates and family members in the SDP in collaboration with RC staff, independent facilitators, and other leaders in the SD movement.

Recommendation 3: Coaching of Participants

LACs, in cooperation with RCs, should facilitate coaching or mentoring of individual participants by individuals and organizations funded by federal participation funds. First-year funds should be allocated for this purpose not later than March 31, 2021. Planning for expenditure of second-year funds should be completed and approved by each LAC not later than April 30, 2021, with allocation completed not later than June 30, 2021. This is sometimes referred to as “fast-tracking” participants to enrollment by June 1, 2021.

Recommendation 4: Training of RC Staff

RCs, in collaboration with the LACs, should conduct SDP trainings of RC staff, specifically, service coordinators (SC). Training presentations should be in plain language and easy to understand. LAC members should co-lead all trainings. RC staff should share best practices among themselves as well as with the LAC.

Recommendation 5: Outreach to Underserved Communities

RCs should prioritize the enrollment of underserved and Spanish speaking participants. RCs should increase effective, culturally-competent outreach to these participants. RCs should include race and ethnicity in SDP enrollment data which is provided in monthly reports to DDS. Additionally, RCs should provide to their LACs a copy of this report when it is sent to DDS.

Recommendation 6: Collaboration with RC Executive Director & Key Staff

Each LAC should meet with its RC executive director and other key staff involved in the SDP monthly to discuss meaningful collaboration and preparation of a plan for statewide SDP expansion. At each LAC meeting, there should be discussion about progress being made and time allocated for additional planning meetings.

Recommendation 7: Response Timelines for RCs

LACs and RC staff should meet and confer about reasonable timelines for the provision of annual cost statements, certification of budgets and approval of spending plans and changes in spending plans. It is recommended that there be a turnaround time implemented of no later than 10 days for a response by RC staff. RCs should create spreadsheets to identify and track the specific progress of each participant's enrollment, to assign responsibility for next steps and to identify barriers to moving forward to completion of enrollment.

Recommendation 8: LAC Member Enrollment

All LAC members or their family members should be enrolled in the SDP not later than May 31, 2021.

Recommendation 9: LAC Meetings More Open

LAC meetings should be more open, accessible, informal and less bureaucratic. All discussions at meetings should be led by LAC members. Meetings should allow for maximum opportunities for community input to enhance each LAC's oversight role. Security should be put in place to prevent "Zoom bombers" from disrupting meetings, but these measures should not inhibit or limit public participation. LAC meetings should be interpreted and materials should be provided in all threshold languages (5% or more of the consumers prefer this language) in each RC's catchment area.

Recommendation 10: Collaboration with Independent Facilitators and FMS'

LACs should invite independent facilitators and FMS' to present their experiences in the SDP enrollment process, including providing examples of successful collaborations with RC staff and barriers to enrollment. Independent facilitators and FMS' should be invited to all LAC meetings. LACs should monitor whether payments to FMS' and independent facilitators are made in a timely manner by requiring RC staff to provide a report detailing delays in payments, if any. If requested by participants, RCs should provide regularly-updated lists of independent facilitators which are available to provide services. However, RCs should inform participants that independent facilitator lists are not exclusive.

Recommendation 11: Preparing for the Statewide Expansion

In anticipation of the statewide expansion of the SDP, RCs should send letters to all consumers and families announcing the expansion not later than May 31, 2021. RCs should share links to videos and DDS information on the SDP and should create a website and other opportunities for easy registration for orientations. RCs should individually contact those who

are on the SDP waiting list not later than May 1, 2021, to inform them of the June 7th statewide rollout. RCs, in collaboration with LACs, should conduct orientation for those interested in entering the SDP (including those not on the waiting list) beginning as soon as possible with a range of day and time options before June 1st.

CONCLUSION

It is expected that the outcome of phase one of the SDP will be to complete the enrollment of as many of those selected to participate who wish to transition before June 1, 2021, and to serve as models for enrollment after the statewide expansion. It is only with the effort of each LAC, working together with each RC, that the anticipated outcome be achieved. We look forward to an exciting period in the history of the SDP and trust that these recommendations, while not an exhaustive list, will serve as a guide for all LACs to implement the SDP phase-in between now and June 7, 2021.