



INLAND REGIONAL CENTER

...valuing independence, inclusion, and empowerment

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Mr. Cruz:

Inland Regional Center (IRC) is submitting this correspondence in response to a Department of Developmental Services (DDS) letter dated July 2, 2021. That letter informed IRC that based on caseload ratio data IRC submitted to the Department on March 1, 2021, IRC did not meet the required caseload ratios for 1) consumers enrolled in the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver; 2) individuals aged thirty-six months, younger; 3) individuals over three years old, non-waiver, non-mover individuals; 4) individuals with complex needs. These caseloads have been out of compliance for two consecutive reporting periods. These ratios are mandated by the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) section 4640.6 sub (c). This is the IRC plan of correction as required in Section 4640.6 (f) of the WIC.

The March 2021 caseload ratio data for clients enrolled in the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver was 1 to 77 (the required caseload ratio is 1 to 62, California average 1 to 77), and individuals aged thirty-six months, younger was 1 to 65 (the required caseload ratio is 1 to 62, California average 1 to 58). Furthermore, the caseload ratio for movers between 12 and 24 months is 1 to 48 (the required caseload ratio is 1 to 45, California average is 1 to 38). Finally, clients with complex needs caseload ratio are 1 to 32 (the required caseload ratio is 1 to 25, California average 1 to 25, California average 1 to 25).

As in previous years, IRC has continued to experience tremendous growth in our consumer population during the past year. At the end of August 2021, IRC had 39,956 consumers. IRC has continued to post employment opportunities for consumer services coordinators (CSCs) and hire those positions. Since July 2020, IRC has established and filled 9 new case management growth positions. However, IRC also lost and had to refill 40 additional case management positions. As stated above, we continue to advertise for new employees and continue to hire.

On September 16, 2021, IRC posted a notice to clients, families, staff, and community members soliciting input on bringing caseloads into compliance. They were given the option to submit opinions via email, fax, survey, or regular mail.

On September 20, 2021, a caseload ratio survey in English and Spanish was posted to all of IRC's social media platforms to solicit ideas. Parents, clients, vendors, and community partners were also given the opportunity of attending one Public Meeting on October 7, 2021, at 4 pm, via Zoom.

The topic was also brought up at the September 20, 2021, Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) meeting, but no feedback was provided.

State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD), in an email on September 16, 2021, stated that without the additional funding, the solution to the problem of high caseload ratios is challenging to solve.

While gathering data from the staff, a common theme of IRC doing as much as possible over the next year to prevent the loss of current CSCs and support staff would be essential. The staff also expressed that the high caseload ratio reduces the amount of time and effort spent on staff training and relationship building with the clients and their care providers. The need for additional funding to recruit, hire, train, support, and deploy new CSCs is a must to lower the caseload ratio.

The staff provided some possible solutions that could be explored to assist in lowering the caseload ratio while additional funding to hire is sought. The common theme was to consider allowing college interns to assist CSCs with their caseloads. This would allow the CSCs to focus on the clients, care providers, and required training. Then, when the intern graduates from college, they will have experience at IRC, which would make the transition to becoming a CSC easier.

The September 20, 2021, English caseload ratio survey posted to inlandrc.org revealed a common theme of the need to hire additional CSCs to lower the caseload ratio. We received no response to the Spanish caseload ratio survey posted to inlandrc.org.

In speaking to families on October 7, 2021, via Zoom, no public input was given after a brief presentation was provided. Two parents of IRC clients attended the meeting.

In reviewing the survey responses, respondents expressed the need for IRC to hire additional CSCs to lower the caseload ratio. Also, the respondents mentioned the need for the state to provide additional funding to do so. Additionally, a theme of using interns was noted in the survey responses.

Sincerely,

Lavinia Johnson
Executive Director

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