



Harbor Regional Center is one of 21 private non-profit centers in California operating under contract with the Department of Developmental Services to provide community-based services to citizens with developmental disabilities and their families.

THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

Regional centers serve people with developmental disabilities and their families, infants at risk for developmental disabilities, and pregnant women who are at risk for having a child with a this type of disability. In the year 2009, Harbor Regional Center served approximately 10,000 clients and their families who reside in the South Bay, Harbor, Long Beach, and southeast areas of Los Angeles County.

The term *developmental disability* describes a group of conditions including intellectual disabilities (mental retardation), cerebral palsy, autism, epilepsy, and other conditions similar to mental retardation or requiring services such as would be required by a person with mental retardation. A developmental disability must have occurred before the age of 18, and it must be substantially handicapping and lifelong in nature. An infant or toddler considered to be “at risk” for a developmental disability is one who is under the age of three years and has one or more problems generally associated with developmental delay or disability, such as low birth weight, prematurity, severe medical problems at birth, and prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol.

TYPES OF SERVICES AND SUPPORTS:

Regional centers provide diagnosis, assessment, service coordination, resource development, and public information. Regional center counselors also help clients and families access a variety of services through community agencies such as the public schools, public mental health programs, and vocational services.

Adult Day Activities:

These services provide supportive, non-vocational activities during the day for adults with developmental disabilities. Examples of such activities are training in functional skills of daily living, socialization, basic mobility, and inclusion in the community.

Early Intervention:

Counselors help families identify community resources for children who have, or are at risk for, developmental delay or disability, and who are not yet eligible for a public school program. Services and supports emphasize parent-child interaction and focus on the development of interpersonal, social, language, cognitive, and motor skills. Services are typically provided under the supervision of specialists in child development, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech, and social work. Preference is given to services

and supports provided in natural environments, such as in neighborhood preschools.

- Medical:** Medical review and consultation occurs as part of the interdisciplinary assessment process, at the time of intake and periodically thereafter. The regional center also provides referral to public and private (as appropriate) medical professionals and services at the request of the client or family.
- Parent Training Classes:** Educational and skill development classes by the regional center focus on topics such as specific types of disabilities, parenting the child with special needs, and managing challenging behaviors.
- Residential Options:** The regional center makes every effort to provide the services and supports that enable families to maintain their son or daughter at home. If this is not possible or is not a desired option, licensed residential services are available as an alternative. Licensed residential alternatives include: skilled nursing; small group homes for children or adults (some of which provide specialized health services); and foster family homes. In rare cases, a state developmental center may be an appropriate option.
- Respite Care:** Temporary relief from care and supervision may be provided to parents or other primary caregivers for clients with significant self-care deficits, ongoing medical needs, or behavioral challenges.
- Social/Recreation:** The regional center expects that families may choose to provide social and recreational opportunities for their child with a developmental disability, just as they would for a typical child. We help families to identify appropriate resources in their own community.
- Supported Living:** Services and supports are available to prepare and assist adult clients who want to live on their own in a home, condo, or apartment in the community.
- Vocational Services:** Harbor Regional Center supports adults in finding jobs, including competitive employment, supported employment, and work activity programs.

All services are designed to promote the acquisition of functional skills, to support an optimal level of health and physical well-being, and to help the person with developmental disabilities to live an independent and productive life in the community.