

HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER
Self-Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC)
Meeting Minutes
June 3, 2026

Opening:

Harbor Self Determination Advisory Committee (SDAC) was called to order at 6:08 PM on Wednesday, June 3, 2026, via Zoom.

Quorum was established at 6:11 PM.

Committee Members Present:

Deaka McClain – Individual Served, Committee Chair

Kathy Maye – Parent

Shirlys Gruber – Parent

Kyungshil Choi – Parent

Tim'an Ford – Peer Advocate

Marleni Pineda – Parent

David Gauthier – Committee Member

Miriam Kang - Parent

Harbor Staff Present:

Patrick Ruppe – Executive Director

Antoinette Perez – Director

Ricardo Orozco – PCS

Bryan Sanchez – CSM

Jimmy Silvestre – CSM

Erika Castillo – CSM

David Hernandez – CSM

Maria Rivas - CSM

Jessica Sanchez – CSM

Johnny Granados - CSM

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Visitors:

Lucy Paz – Interpreter

Jan – ASL Interpreter

Aastyn Strandberg – IF

Aaron Mosley

Adaptive SDP

Adelayda Sanchez

Adriana Garcia

Albert Feliciano – SCDD Advocate

Amelia Castellanos

Austyn Perez – PPL FMS

Beth Martinko

Carolina Beltran

Cecilia Ramos

Celeste Hernandez

Cendy Topete ICC

Cesilia Ortiz Barajas

Claire Seo

Debra Jorgensen

Don D

Elvia Martinez

Gilberta Castellanos

Ivon Muniz Diaz

Jaqueline Casas

JeNae Waterfield

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Johnanthony Alaimo

Jose Luis Avalos

Kenghuy Ung

Kim Lewis

Kim Sinclair – ASLA

Laura

Lisa Sorensen

Lisa Walker

Lulu Aguilar

Marizela Arroyo

Michael Velasco

Naomi Hagel – Phoenix Facilitation

Nisha J

Peng Luo

Preselah Seymore – GT Independence (FMS)

Reiko Umeda

Shelia Jones

Sydnee C

Teresa Hernandez

Tina Ewing-Wilson – Disability Voices United

Tyrone Johnson

Abbreviations:

Harbor: Harbor Regional Center

IF: Independent Facilitator

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PCP: Person-Centered Plan

SCDD: State Council on Developmental Disabilities

SDP: Self-Determination Program

DVU: Disability Voices United

FMS: Financial Management Service

DDS: Department of Developmental Services

RFP: Request for Proposal

SDAC: Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee

OCRA: Office of Clients' Rights Advocacy

ASLA: Autism Society of Los Angeles

CSM: Client Services Manager

Welcome:

Introductions of committee members and guests via the chat.

Committee Members Responsibilities and Agreements:

Mission Statement (read aloud by Kathy Maye and Marleni Pineda)

Committee Responsibilities (read aloud by Miriam Kang):

- attend meetings regularly and commit to being on time
- be mindful of participants' time by helping keep meetings on track
- listen attentively
- maintain an open mind towards others
- support the actions and efforts of the committee

Committee Agreements (read aloud by Deaka McClain):

- We agree to be respectful of each other
- We agree to respect privacy by not sharing any personal information
- During public comments, raise your hand and wait to speak until called

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- One comment per person, unless there is time for additional questions or comments
- If your questions were not answered during the meeting, email your Harbor service coordinator or Harbor PCS team

Open Forum:

- Preselah Seymore (GT Independence) –FMS that is interested in educating the community with SDP, no budget cap, no waitlist. Contact information was added in the chat, 626.718.6733 or pseymore@gttd.org
- Beth Martinko: Free 24/7 online navigation program for self-advocates and families to learn how to navigate the regional center system.

Public Comments:

- Elvia Martinez – New IF, received certification in March 2026 through ASLA and would like to learn more and advance her career.

Committee Chair Statewide Updates:

Deaka attended the statewide LVAC meeting on May 5, 2026, for updates on SDP implementation funding and statewide program issues, including changes to orientations, implementation efforts, and oversight measures.

The meeting also covered the Governor's proposal to eliminate implementation funds, with concerns about reduced outreach, education, and access to SDP, especially for underserved communities. Members also discussed potential Medicaid changes, barriers to choice and flexibility, and delays in assessments for SDP services and supports.

Public comments focused on concerns about the budget and statewide access to SDP.

On May 28, the Senate Budget Subcommittee on Human Services recommended \$1 million in annual LVAC funding in response to community advocacy. The Assembly Budget Committee on Human Services still needs to review the budget.

Advocacy efforts should continue with Senate and Assembly committees.

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Full meeting minutes are available on the website.

Approval of Minutes:

May 6, 2026, minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes made by Tim'an Ford seconded by Marleni Pineda.

Minutes were approved by all committee members in attendance: Deaka McClain, Kathy Maye, Shirlys Gruber, Kyungshil Choi, Marleni Pineda, David Gauthier and Tim'an Ford.

Harbor Regional Center Monthly Updates:

Harbor Regional Center has been actively working on updating the Harbor Spending plan template and will be shared in the August SDAC.

- Current SDP enrollment: total of 619 SDP, there has been an increase is SDP enrollment roughly about 200 participants
 - EC - 25
 - Children and Adolescent - 352
 - Adults - 242
- Current FMS – 19 in total; one new added (Balanced FMS)
 - Bill Payer (315) - 19
 - Co-Employer (316) - 15
 - Sole Employer (317) - 16

Harbor's Presentation

- Role of the participant
 - Learning and making informed decisions
 - Collaborating with SDP team
 - Creating the Spending plan
 - Manage and monitor funds
 - Coordinate services
 - participate in IPP meetings
- Role of the Service Coordinator
 - Provide information and Guidance
 - Facilitate Person-Centered Planning
 - Review Spending Plans
 - Collaborate with IPP team and Harbor staff

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- Complete documentation
- Support Problem Resolution
- DDS Website and SDP Page
 - <https://www.dds.ca.gov/initiatives/sdp/>
 - DDS website overview on how to navigate SDP page to access SDP related resources, including orientations, FMS information, the Ombudsperson, the independent facilitator list, FMS rates with employer burden, DDS FAQs, and DDS directives. Information was shared on how to access SDP service codes, what services may be authorized through those codes, how to use each tab on the site, and how to change the webpage language.
- Questions
 - Shirlys – asked if the current SC will be the same SC once they go live or what is the criteria in choosing the SC for SDP.
 - Harbor clarified the goal is to keep the same SC but at times if an SC has reached their cap in SDP cases a switch may happen.
 - Shirly's asked how we are sure that the SC is equipped with current information in regard to SDP and they are knowledgeable with SDP.
 - Harbor clarified that all SCs receive SDP training when they are hired, along with ongoing training throughout the year. SCs should discuss SDP as an option with families during the IPP process. In addition, PCS team members and their CSMs are available to support SCs and help answer questions related to SDP.

Partner Updates:

- OCRA
 - Johnanthony Alaimo
 - <https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/events>
 - Attended on behalf of Jamie Zoellner. He shared to reach out if there are any questions or concerns regarding IHSS, School,

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Medi-Cal, SSI and regional center. He shared a link to ORCRA's website. They are also able to support with IEP, IPP, and any issues with Regional Centers.

- State Council (SCDD)
 - Albert Feliciano
 - <https://scdd.ca.gov/sdp-orientation/>
 - SDP Orientation is held through State Council and broken up into two parts (Part A and Part B) based on feedback from the community. Each part is two hours long. Will receive a certificate after each part is complete.
 - Marleni shared that there are families who were not able to complete the survey after the orientation but would like to see if they can complete the survey after the training.
 - Albert shared that after completing the orientation each family will receive approximately four reminder emails at their registered email address. These emails will include a link to complete the survey. If families are having difficulty with the survey they can reach out to Albert.
 - Deaka asked for clarification why did state council take over the orientations instead of regional centers.
 - Albert shared that based on feedback from the public that DDS made the decision to only have the orientations completed by SCDD.

SDP Success Story:

- Harbor shared a participant success story highlighting the positive impact of the Self-Determination Program for an adult with different needs.

SDP Orientation:

- Calendar and QR code was shared in the chat
 - <https://scdd.ca.gov/sdp-orientation>

Additional Questions/Comments

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- Miriam requested that an item be added to the next SDAC agenda seeking clarification on funding for out-of-state camps held in California. She asked why families are being denied access when the camp's business license is based outside of California, even though services are provided and funds are spent within the state.
 - Harbor clarified that, per DDS guidance, if a business holds an out-of-state license, the funding is considered to be going out of state. While services may be provided outside of California, the business itself must be based in California. DDS has issued guidance on out-of-state services, though exceptions may be considered. Harbor noted that this topic can be discussed further at a future SDAC meeting.
- Deaka suggested that at the end of each meeting, following the success stories, participants should be asked to propose topics for the next SDAC meeting agenda.
 - Shirley's responded that this has already been addressed at previous meetings and was agreed that it would be included moving forward.
 - Committee agrees this will be a standing item.
- Lulu Aguilar inquired about how to support families who do not have an IF in completing spending plan modifications, particularly those who struggle with the process. She noted that some IPP teams have informed families they cannot assist, creating barriers to accessing services through the SDP.
 - Harbor shared that FMS providers are available to support families in creating or modifying spending plans. Additionally, Harbor noted that DDS has incorporated support within SDP through the option of an Independent Facilitator (IF), who can provide added assistance. While the IF role is optional, it is available to families who need extra support.
- Ana Davaa an IF and parent of an individual served, shared that she feels Harbor is doing a good job and expressed satisfaction with the supports provided. She also noted that she is available to assist families in her role as an IF.
- Marleni Pineda asked Alberto about the orientations she attended through SCDD, stating that the option of having an Independent

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Facilitator (IF) in the SDP was not discussed. She expressed that including this information would be beneficial for families.

- Cesilia Ortiz noted that funding for an IF is not included in the budget, and at times the allocated budget is not enough to cover IF services. She added that for minor changes, other regional centers are able to provide support, and expressed a desire for Harbor to offer similar assistance with making spending plan modifications.
- Shirlys Gruber requested that Harbor host a roundtable or town hall meeting for IFs to provide a space for discussion and to address concerns and barriers in supporting families. She also asked that this item be included on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Miriam shared that there are many Independent Facilitators (IFs) available, including Spanish-speaking providers. She emphasized that families should feel comfortable with their chosen IF and have the ability to select someone who best meets their needs. She also noted that families are expected to find an IF to help them navigate the SDP, as much of the responsibility falls on them.
- Ana shared that she agrees with Miriam's comments, she supports the idea of hosting roundtable meetings for Independent Facilitators, as these could provide valuable additional support. She emphasized that there are many IFs available and that families are responsible for selecting one that best meets their needs.
 - Shirley responded to Ana and Miriam's comments, stating that while she has seen improvement from Harbor, there is still room for growth. She added that this is an opportunity for everyone to share their concerns about Independent Facilitators and discuss the barriers to accessing services.

Closing:

- Next SDAC Meeting
 - No SDAC in July
 - August 5, 2026, from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM via Zoom.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

Minutes submitted by Erika Castillo and translated by Wendy Velazquez.