

EMPLOYMENT-FIRST POLICY

- I. **Purpose:** It is the intent of San Andreas Regional Center to make meaningful, integrated, and competitive employment an objective for every adult individual who wishes to work and receives services from this regional center. San Andreas Regional Center supports the intent of the state of California's Employment-First Policy. This policy is intended to bring San Andreas Regional Center fully into compliance with Sections 4646.5, 4648, and 4896 of the California Welfare and Institutions Code.

San Andreas Regional Center recognizes that meaningful, integrated, and competitive employment is the first option that all individuals served should be given when planning for their futures. The planning team will explore all options for successful employment.

II. **Definitions:**

- *Consumer, individual, and person served are used interchangeably in regional center policy and the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act, and mean a person who has been found eligible and receives services from the regional center.*
- *Meaningful, integrated, and competitive employment means a job at a workplace among individuals with or without disabilities that is full or part-time at or above minimum wage.*

- III. **Policy:** The individual program plan team is required to discuss and assist any individual served who is 16 years or older in obtaining meaningful, integrated, and competitive employment. Once required services and supports are determined, the IPP team will draft the individual's service plan with goals to assist the individual in obtaining employment. All appropriate services and supports will be explored, including programs through Local Education Agencies, the Department of Education, or the Department of Rehabilitation, self-employment, and competitive employment in keeping with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For individuals requiring more assistance or support, the planning team may consider adult day programs and adult work services funded through the regional center.

San Andreas Regional Center will, as a matter of policy and practice, partner with other developmental disability community stakeholder organizations to work effectively with private and public employers to develop successful employment opportunities for individuals we serve.

- IV. **Purchase of Service Standard:** Purchased services will be that service or constellation of services most-appropriate and cost-effective to meet the objective of obtaining and sustaining employment. Such purchases of service will be made in keeping with each service's applicable purchase of service policy.

- V. **Exception Process:** The executive director has full discretion to authorize purchases of service which are exceptions to the board-adopted purchase of service policies and standards. The executive director has designated certain individuals within the regional center who are authorized to grant an exception in the executive director's stead; these individuals are referred to as director's designees.

The first formal discussion of a request for service takes place at the planning team meeting. If the request falls within the service policy, the request is granted.

If the request for service is not consistent with the policy, the service coordinator starts the exception review process by exploring the basis for the request. A time line for the director's exception review is set by agreement between the individual/family and the service coordinator but the time line may not exceed fifteen (15) days. Within that time, another planning team meeting will be convened. In the meantime the coordinator presents the information to the manager to determine whether a director's exception may be warranted. At the scheduled planning team meeting the decision will be made. The director's designee will attend the planning team meeting if necessary. If the exception is granted, the service coordinator amends the person-centered individual program plan, notifies the individual/family, and gives a copy of the amended plan to the individual/family.

- VI. **Notice of Action:** If the exception is not granted, the service coordinator promptly informs the consumer/family that it has not been granted, informs the consumer/family of their appeal rights, and sends a notice of action and a fair hearing form.

If a decision is made to deny, reduce, or cancel the service without the agreement of the consumer or the consumer's representative, a Notice of Action will be sent.

Adopted 12/21/2015