

# The Lanterman Act Appeals Information Packet

The [Lanterman Act](#) establishes eligibility criteria and services that are available to qualifying Californians who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. This Information Packet explains the appeals process under the Lanterman Act. This process may be used when individuals want to appeal a regional center's decision that they are not eligible for Lanterman Act services, or to appeal a regional center's decision about the type or amount of services.

This packet talks about regional centers. The appeals process also applies for anyone residing in a state-operated facility: Porterville Developmental Center, Fairview Developmental Center (STAR acute crisis center), Canyon Springs Community Facility, and the STAR (Stabilization Training Assistance Reintegration) homes. The process for appealing state-operated facility decisions is the same as described in this packet.

There is a different information packet for individuals who receive [Early Start services](#). Early Start services are for children under the age of 3 who qualify for regional center services due to a delay in their development, certain conditions, or certain risk factors.

This packet was made with input from the community. We appreciate the contributions of self-advocates, families, advocacy organizations, community-based organizations and regional centers. Your input about the packet and insights about how to best distribute this information are invaluable. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) appreciates all of your time and effort to make this information packet helpful to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

If you need a printed version of this packet, please print it from the DDS website: <https://bit.ly/AppealInfoPacket>, or contact:

- Your regional center service coordinator
- Your clients' rights advocate (CRA) at:
  - (800) 390-7032 for Northern California, or
  - (866) 833-6712 for Southern California, or
  - Find the clients' rights advocate at your regional center here: <https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/what-we-do/programs/office-of-clients-rights-advocacy-ocra/ocra-staff-links>
- The Ombudsperson Office at (877) 658-9731 or [Ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov)

# How to Use this Information Packet

This packet gives you information about the appeals process and your rights. There are links throughout this information packet to fact sheets and other resources which provide more information. The ten parts of the Appeals Information packet are below. Click on one of parts below to get more information:

1. [Overview of the Appeals Process](#)
2. [Getting Help with an Appeal](#)
3. [Notice of Action](#)
4. [Appeal Deadlines, and How to File an Appeal](#)
5. [Appeal Rights](#)
6. [Informal Meeting](#)
7. [Mediation](#)
8. [Hearing](#)
9. [After the Hearing Decision](#)
10. Appeals Process [Flow Chart](#) with Deadlines

## Overview of the Appeals Process

### What Is an Appeal?

An appeal is a way to solve a disagreement with your regional center. Examples of a disagreement might be:

- Your regional center wants to cut the number of hours you receive for an individual program plan (IPP) service. You want to keep your service hours the same.
- You asked the regional center to provide a new service. The regional center said the service is not needed.
- You applied for regional center services. The regional center said you are not eligible.
- You currently get regional center services. The regional center said you no longer are eligible.

If you and the regional center do not agree, you have the right to appeal the regional center's decision.

## Notice of Action (NOA)

You get a Notice of Action (NOA) when you and the regional center don't agree. The NOA is sent to you by the regional center and tells you about the reasons for its decision. The NOA tells you the date the decision will happen. The NOA describes your appeal rights, and it provides an Appeal Request form.

You will not get a NOA if you and the regional center agree about a decision. This agreement must be in writing. Your agreement is called mutual consent.

## How to Request an Appeal

You submit an Appeal Request form to DDS to start your appeal. Your NOA provides the Appeal Request form. The online Appeal Request form also is here: <https://bit.ly/DDSAppealForm>.

- The fastest way to request an appeal is online on the DDS website at the link above.
- You may send the form by email to [appealrequest@dds.ca.gov](mailto:appealrequest@dds.ca.gov). You can download a paper copy from that same website.
- If you want to send the form by mail, address your request to:  
Office of Community Appeals and Resolutions  
1215 O Street MS 8-20  
Sacramento, CA 95814
- You may fax the form to 916-654-3641.

You will receive an email or letter from DDS saying that your appeal request was received.

## Deadline to File Your Appeal Request

You must file your appeal request on time. There are two deadlines.

- To keep your current services the same during your appeal, your request must be postmarked or received by DDS no later than 30 days from when you got your NOA and before the action takes place. Keeping your current services during an appeal is called aid paid pending.
- If your appeal request is filed 31 to 60 days from when you got your NOA, the regional center's decision will happen while your appeal continues.
- All appeal requests must be postmarked or received by DDS no later than 60 days from when you got your NOA.

## Appeal Rights

You have certain legal rights during an appeal. The rights are described in your NOA. A more detailed description of your rights also are available here:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Appeal-Rights-Trifold-WEB.pdf>.

You have the right to file an Appeal if you disagree with a decision or action made by the regional center. Your appeal request must be filed within 60 days of the notification of the decision or action.

During an appeal, you have the following rights:

- To receive adequate notice and information in your preferred language that you can understand.
- To receive information by mail, email, or other method that you choose.
- To choose the appeal process you want. This could be an informal meeting, mediation, or hearing. You may amend your appeal request at any time, and you may attend the informal meeting, mediation or hearing by phone, video or in person.
- To keep your current services during the appeal if your appeal request is received by DDS or postmarked 30 days after you got your Notice of Action, and before the action takes place.
- To access a regional center's records about you.
- To choose a convenient time and place for your informal meeting, mediation, or hearing.
- To have someone help or support you during your appeal. It may be an attorney or another person, including your authorized representative.
- You also may have an attorney attend any part of your appeal. You must tell the regional center in advance if you will have an attorney attend an informal meeting, mediation, or hearing.
- To have an interpreter that can interpret effectively, accurately, and neutrally.
- To request more time if you need it.
- To request a different Mediator or Hearing Officer if you think they cannot be fair.
- To attend all parts of your appeal.
- To choose whether you want your hearing open or closed to the public.
- You have the right to speak freely and openly at your hearing. The Hearing Officer will listen, ask questions, and gather documents from you and the regional center get the facts into the official record.
- To provide the Hearing Officer with information to support your appeal.

- To have witnesses testify on your behalf.
- To ask questions to the regional center's witnesses.

## Information In Your Preferred Language

You identify your preferred language and can request an interpreter on the Appeal Request form. An interpreter is provided during all parts of your appeal if your preferred language is not English. An interpreter must be able to interpret effectively, accurately, and neutrally. The regional center provides an interpreter at your informal meeting. The Hearing Office provides the interpreter for your mediation and hearing.

Your Notice of Action (NOA) and other documents and forms must be in your preferred language. If you receive information, a letter, or a form that is not in your preferred language, you may ask the regional center to have it translated.

## Parts of the Appeals Process

The appeals process has three parts. You may use one or more of these parts. Choose the parts you want to use on your Appeal Request form. If you don't resolve your disagreement using one part, you may decide to use other parts. The three parts of the appeals process are:

1. Informal Meeting

You meet with the Regional Center Director or someone they choose. You and the regional center will try to resolve your appeal.

2. Mediation

You and the regional center meet with a Mediator. The Mediator is an impartial person. The Mediator does not work for the regional center. The Mediator tries to help you and the regional center make an agreement about the regional center's decision. If you don't make an agreement, you may use other parts of the appeals process.

3. Hearing

Your hearing is with a Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer does not work for the regional center. The Hearing Officer listens to information from you and the regional center. The Hearing Officer helps you bring out your facts. The Hearing Officer makes the hearing fair and informal. Then the Hearing Officer makes a decision about the issues in your appeal.

## Attorneys

Everyone has a right to be assisted by an attorney during the appeals process, including you. However, regional centers may have an attorney attend an informal meeting, mediation, or hearing only if you have an attorney attend with you. You must tell the regional center in advance if you will have an attorney attend your mediation or hearing. A Mediator or Hearing Officer may allow an attorney to attend if the Mediator or Hearing Officer determines that doing so would be in the interest of justice, but this is rare.

## Deadlines for Completing Appeals

Appeals must be finished 90 days after DDS received your Appeal Request form. These deadlines may be extended if you or the regional center requests a continuance. This chart (<https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Appeals-Timeline.pdf>) shows the appeal deadlines.

If you need help, please see [Section 2](#) of this packet.

# Getting Help With Your Appeal

If you have questions about making an appeal request, or about the status of your appeal, you may send an email to [appealrequest@dds.ca.gov](mailto:appealrequest@dds.ca.gov)

You may get help with your appeal request. People who may help you are:

- Your service coordinator or other regional center staff, if you ask them.
- Your clients' rights advocate (CRA) at:
  - (800) 390-7032 for Northern California, or
  - (866) 833-6712 for Southern California, or
  - Find the clients' rights advocate at your regional center here: <https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/what-we-do/programs/office-of-clients-rights-advocacy-ocra/ocra-staff-links>
- [Ombudsperson](#) Office at (877) 658-9731 or [ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov](mailto:ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov)
  - If you are in the Self-Determination Program email [sdp.ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov](mailto:sdp.ombudsperson@dds.ca.gov) instead
- You also may get help from a Family Resource Center: <https://frcnca.org/get-connected/>
- Your regional center may help you find a local parent support group or community-based organization that may help you

# Notice of Action

## When You Get a Notice of Action (NOA)

The regional center sends you a written NOA when you and the regional center don't agree about a regional center's decision about your services or your eligibility for services. A blank NOA is available here so you can see what it looks like: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/DS1820-NOA.pdf>.

## When You Will Not Get a NOA

The regional center won't send you a NOA if you agree with the regional center's decision that:

- Reduces, changes or stops a service
- Denies a new service you want
- Determines you are not eligible for regional center services

Your agreement with a regional center's decision must be written in a document. This agreement is called mutual consent. The things that show you agreed are:

- You signed an Individual Program Plan (IPP) with the proposed change or denial in it.
- You signed a list of services with the proposed change or denial in it.
- The regional center sent you a good faith belief letter that you did not object to.
- You sent the regional center a written document or email that says you agree with the regional center's decision.

## Regional Center Deadlines for Sending You a NOA

The regional center will send you a NOA if you don't agree with the regional center's decisions about your services:

- 30 days before the regional center reduces, changes or stops a service
- 5 business days after the regional center denies a service or support you want to add to your IPP

The regional center will send you a NOA about your eligibility for regional center services:

- 30 days before you stop being eligible for regional center services
- 5 business days after you are denied eligibility to receive regional center services

## **What The Notice of Action (NOA) Tells You**

Your NOA will tell you:

- The action the regional center plans to take. This is the regional center's decision.
- The reason for the decision.
- The facts and law or policy that support the decision.
- The date the decision will become effective.

Your NOA also will:

- Tell you how to appeal.
- Provide you a copy of the Appeal Request form.
- Include a copy of your appeal rights.
- Tell you how to get help with an appeal.

Your NOA will be in your preferred language.

If you need help, [go to Section 2](#) of this packet.

# Appeal Deadlines, and How to File an Appeal

## **Deadline to File Your Appeal**

You must file your appeal request on time. There are two deadlines.

- To keep your current services the same during your appeal, your request must be postmarked or received by DDS no later than 30 days from when you got your NOA *and* before the action takes place. Keeping your current services during an appeal is called aid paid pending.



- All appeal requests must be postmarked or received by DDS no later than 60 days from when you got your NOA. If your appeal request is filed 31 to 60 days from when you got your NOA, you will not get aid paid pending.

## Where to File Your Appeal

Your appeal request must be sent to DDS.

- The fastest way to request an appeal is electronically on the DDS website: <https://bit.ly/DDSAppealForm>.
- You may fill out and print the form online here: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/DS1821-Appeal.pdf> and send the form by email to [appealrequest@dds.ca.gov](mailto:appealrequest@dds.ca.gov)
- If you want to send the form by mail, the address is:  
Office of Community Appeals and Resolutions  
1215 O Street MS 8-20,  
Sacramento, CA 95814
- You may fax the form to 916-654-3641

You will get a confirming email or letter from DDS that your appeal was received. **Please keep the appeal request tracking number that DDS gives you.** DDS will tell the regional center that you have filed an appeal. DDS will tell the Hearing Office if you have requested an informal meeting, mediation and/or hearing as part of your appeal request.

On your appeal request form, you may write any dates or times that you are not available within the next 90 days. Your informal meeting, mediation, or hearing will not be scheduled on these dates or times.

If you need help, go to [Section 2](#) of this packet.

## Appeal Rights

You have rights during an appeal. The rights are included in your Notice of Action (NOA). A more detailed description of your rights is online here: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Appeal-Rights-Trifold-WEB.pdf>. Here are a few of the most important rights that you have at each step of the appeal process.

### **An Interpreter**

If your preferred language is not English, you have a right to an interpreter. An interpreter will be provided at all parts of your appeal. You may ask for an interpreter on your Appeal Request form. An interpreter must be able to interpret effectively, accurately, and neutrally.

### **Access to Records**

You have the right to access the regional center's records about you. You also may get a copy of your records. Regional centers can charge you for the actual cost of making your copies. If you can't afford to pay for the records, tell your regional center. You can get free copies of the records. You should get access to your records within three business days of your request.

### **Have Help or Support From Other People**

You have the right to have someone help or support you. It can be an attorney or another person. This person may be your authorized representative. If you agree, your authorized representative will receive information about your appeal.

You may ask an attorney or someone else to help you prepare for your appeal. You also may have an attorney attend any part of your appeal. You must tell the regional center at least 5 days before a mediation if you will have an attorney attend a mediation. You must tell the regional center at least 15 days before a hearing if you will have an attorney attend the hearing. The regional center cannot have an attorney attend any part of an appeal unless your attorney attends. There is a rare exception to this when a Hearing Officer allows an attorney in the interest of justice.

### **Keep Your Current Services**

You have a right to continue the services you currently receive during an appeal. This is called "aid paid pending." To keep your services, your appeal must be received by DDS on time. This means your appeal must be received or postmarked 30 days after you got your Notice of Action (NOA) and before the date the regional center said it will change or end your services or end your eligibility.

### **Request to Continue Any Part of the Appeal**

If you need more time, you may request more time. This is called a continuance. Requesting a continuance may extend the time for completing your entire appeal.

### **Request a Different Mediator or Hearing Officer**

You may request a different Mediator or Hearing Officer if you think they cannot be fair or impartial. You must do this before the mediation or hearing starts. You must give a reason for your request.

You also have the following rights at a hearing.

### **Attend the Hearing**

You have the right to attend all parts of the hearing.

### **Provide the Hearing Officer with Information.**

You may provide the Hearing Officer with information to support your appeal. This information is called evidence. You and other people you choose may verbally give information to the Hearing Officer. These people are called witnesses. You also may provide the Hearing Office with written documents.

### **Ask Regional Center Witnesses Questions**

The regional center may have witnesses testify at the hearing. You have the right to ask questions to the regional center's witnesses.

### **Decide if the Hearing Is Open to the Public**

Hearings are open to the public. If you don't want the public to attend your hearing, tell the Hearing Officer you want the hearing closed.

### **Get a Hearing Decision Within 90 days**

You should get a hearing decision within 90 days of the date that you filed your appeal request. This time will be extended if you asked for a continuance. It will also be extended if the regional center asked for a continuance with a good reason and the Hearing Officer agreed.

If you need help, go to [Section 2](#) of this packet.

## **Informal Meeting**

If you asked for an informal meeting on your Appeal Request form, it will be the first part of your appeal. An informal meeting is with the Regional Center Director or someone they choose. At the meeting, you and the regional center will try to resolve your concerns.

## Time and Place of Your Informal Meeting

DDS tells the regional center that you want an informal meeting. The regional center contacts you to schedule the meeting. The meeting must be reasonably convenient for you. The meeting may be in person, by telephone, or by videoconference, based upon your request. You and the regional center agree about how to hold the meeting.

The informal meeting must be held no more than 10 days after DDS tells the regional center about your request. You can ask for more time. This is called a “continuance”. A continuance extends the 10-day deadline.

## What Happens at the Informal Meeting

You discuss your need for services, any barriers you have come across and any other information you want to share. The regional center explains its decision and listens to the information you share. The regional center works with you to find a solution.

The regional center provides a qualified interpreter if your preferred language is not English.

You may have an attorney or someone else help or support you. You may ask an attorney or someone else to help you prepare for your informal meeting. This could be your authorized representative, if you have one. The regional center cannot have an attorney attend the informal meeting unless you are an attorney or have an attorney attend.

## What Happens After the Informal Meeting

After your meeting, the regional center will give you a written decision within five days. This decision will come on a Notification of Resolution form. A blank example of this form is here so you can see what it looks like:

<https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/DS1822-NOR.pdf>. The decision will be in your preferred language. The decision tells you:

- What the regional center decided about each issue
- The facts and specific laws or policies that support its decision

### **If you agree with the decision:**

- Tell the regional center you agree by signing the Notification of Resolution form and returning it to the regional center.
- The informal meeting decision goes into effect within 10 days after you tell the regional center.
- Your appeal will end. The regional center will tell DDS and the Hearing Office.

### **If you disagree with all or part of the regional center's decision:**

- Your aid paid pending ends 10 days after the informal decision unless you choose another part of the appeal process. This means the services that were continued during your appeal will stop.
- Tell the regional center you want to go ahead with all or part of your appeal.
- The regional center tells DDS and the Hearing Office.
- If you asked for a mediation or a hearing on your Appeal Request form, that will happen next.
- If you did not ask for mediation or a hearing when you initially requested an appeal, you may update your appeal request to use the mediation or hearing parts of the appeal process. Let DDS know what parts you want to use by filing an appeal request change form with your [appeal request tracking number](#) that you received from DDS.

If you need help, go to [Section 2](#) of this packet.

## Mediation

The second part of the appeal process is a mediation. You and the regional center meet with a Mediator. The Mediator is a neutral person who works for the Hearing Office. The Mediator helps you and the regional center make an agreement about your appeal.

### **Time and Place for Your Mediation**

The Hearing Office lets you and the regional center know the date and time of your mediation. It will not be scheduled on any of the dates or times that you

will not be available that you listed on your appeal request form unless you agree.

Mediation must be held within 30 days of the date your appeal request was received by DDS. You may request a continuance if you need more time. A continuance will extend the mediation deadlines.

Mediation may be held in person, by telephone, by videoconference or through other electronic means, based upon your request. You and the regional center and the Hearing Office agree about how to hold the meeting.

## **What Happens at the Mediation**

Mediation often is the next step in the appeals process if the informal meeting does not result in agreement with you and the regional center. You do not have to participate in an informal meeting before requesting mediation. Mediation is informal. You discuss your need for services, the barriers you have come across trying to get eligibility or services, and any other information you want to share. The Mediator listens to what you are sharing. The regional center explains its decision. The Mediator may meet with you and the regional center separately. The Mediator helps you and the regional center reach an agreement.

If you need an interpreter for the mediation, the Hearing Office will provide one.

You may have an attorney or someone else help or support you at the mediation. You may have an attorney or someone else help you prepare for your mediation. You must tell the regional center at least 5 days before the mediation if you will have an attorney attend the mediation. The regional center cannot have an attorney attend the mediation unless you are an attorney or have an attorney attend.

It might take more than one mediation meeting to reach a resolution. You and the regional center may agree to additional meetings with the Mediator.

## **What Happens at the End of Your Mediation**

**If you and the regional center agree:**

- The Mediator, with help from you and the regional center will write a mediation agreement. This agreement will outline what each of you agrees to do and the date you will do it. You will all sign it.
- You and the regional center will also sign a Notification of Resolution form. A blank example of this form is here so you can see what it looks like: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/general/appeals-complaints-comments/forms/NOR.pdf>.
- The agreement goes into effect within 10 days after you agree.

**If you and the regional center don't agree with all or part of the Mediator's decision:**

- You and the regional center can agree to have another mediation.
- Your aid paid pending ends 10 days after the mediation unless you choose another part of the appeal process. This means the services that were continued during your appeal will stop.
- Tell the Mediator and the regional center that you want to continue with your appeal.
- The Mediator will tell DDS and the Hearing Office.
- If you asked for a hearing on your Appeal Request form, that will happen next.
- If you did not ask for hearing when you initially requested an appeal, you may update your appeal request to ask for a hearing. Let DDS know that you want a hearing by filing an appeal request change form with your [appeal request tracking number](#) that you received from DDS.

If you need help, go to [Section 2](#) of this packet.

## Hearing

The third part of the appeals process is a hearing. This is a hearing with a Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer gathers information, reviews documents, and listens to testimony from you, the regional center, and the witnesses. The Hearing Officer makes a decision about your appeal.

### Time and Place for Your Hearing

The Hearing Office lets you and the regional center know the date and time of your hearing. It will not be scheduled on any of the dates or times that you will not be available that you listed on your appeal request form unless you agree.

The hearing must be held within 50 days of the date your appeal request was received by DDS. You may request a continuance if you need more time. A continuance will extend the hearing deadlines.

The hearing may be held in person, by telephone, by videoconference or through other electronic means, based upon your request. You and the regional center and the Hearing Office agree about how to hold the hearing.

## **What Happens Before a Hearing**

The regional center gives you and the Hearing Office a written position statement two business days before the hearing. It will be sent by email unless you want to receive it some other way.

The position statement must be provided in your and your authorized representative's preferred language. The position statement provides facts about the regional center's decision and the reasons for the decision. It includes information about the regional center's witnesses. It also includes documents the regional center will use at the hearing.

If an attorney attends the hearing with you, they must provide a position statement and the documents you will use at the hearing two business days before the hearing.

If you do not have an attorney, you must give the regional center and Hearing Office some information two business days the hearing. The information you must share is:

- A list of people you want to testify at the hearing. You must list how these people are related to you. For example, the person may be a family member, or a therapist, or a doctor.
- Copies of any professional assessments or reports you will use at the hearing. This could be a report from a doctor or therapist.

If you do not have an attorney, you may provide copies of other documents before or at the hearing. You may also submit a written statement about your case, but you do not have to provide one.

If you do not provide the information you must share, the Hearing Officer can give you more time to get it and continue the hearing, or proceed without that information, or a combination of these options.



For information about your rights at a hearing, go to [Section 5](#) of this packet.

## **What Happens at the Hearing**

The hearing is open to the public unless you tell the Hearing Officer that you do not want the public to attend.

The hearing is held by a Hearing Officer. The Hearing Officer listens to information provided by your witnesses and the regional center's witnesses. The Hearing Officer also reviews documents you and the regional center provide.

The Hearing Officer must make the hearing fair and informal. The Hearing Officer must help you and the regional center share the facts. This is called "engaged neutrality". To help share the facts, a Hearing Officer may do the following:

- Question any witness,
- Call a witness to testify at the hearing, and
- At the end of the hearing, give more time to have any witness testify or provide other documents.

## **Deadline for Getting a Hearing Decision**

The Hearing Officer usually makes the final decision. The decision is made and sent to you and the regional center within 10 business days after the last hearing day. It also must be made and sent no more than 80 days after the date the appeal request was received by DDS. These deadlines are extended if someone requested more time during the appeal process, which is called a "continuance".

Sometimes the DDS Director will make the final decision. If this happens, DDS will send you a decision no more than 90 days after the date the appeal request was received by DDS. This deadline is extended if there was a continuance.

The hearing decision will be in your preferred language. You also will get a copy in English.

The hearing decision is the final decision unless you or the regional center request a reconsideration. This is discussed below.

If you need help, go to [Section 2](#) of this packet.

# After The Hearing Decision

## Reconsideration

After the hearing, you or the regional center may request “reconsideration.” Reconsideration is a way to correct a clerical error or correct a mistake of fact or law in a hearing decision. This also may include reconsideration of a denied request to disqualify a Hearing Officer. These are the only factors a reconsideration can address. You must ask for a reconsideration within 15 days of receiving the hearing decision.

## Aid Paid Pending After the Hearing Decision

Your current services will end:

- 15 days after you receive the final hearing decision unless you or the regional center requested reconsideration, OR
- 15 days after you receive the reconsideration decision.

## Implementation of the Hearing Decision

The regional center must implement the final hearing decision. This must happen as soon as possible and not more than 30 days after the date of the final decision. If the regional center cannot meet that deadline, they must tell you and DDS. They must tell you the exceptional reasons the decision cannot be implemented. They must tell you when they will implement the decision. If you need help from DDS getting your hearing decision implemented fill out this form online: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HearingImpDelay-Consumers> or email [hearingimplementation@dds.ca.gov](mailto:hearingimplementation@dds.ca.gov).

## Court Appeals

You or the regional center may file an appeal in superior court. A court appeal must be filed within 180 days of the hearing decision. This usually requires that you use a lawyer.

If you need help, go to [Section 2](#) of this packet.

# Appeal Process Flow Chart and Deadlines

To help you understand the appeals process, DDS developed a flow chart. The flow chart shows you the steps in the appeals process and key deadlines. An online copy of this flow chart is here: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Appeals-Timeline.pdf>