



Client Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting Agenda

February 21, 2025, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Teleconference via Zoom Webinar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85984599282?pwd=ZzKY22gGcoT30ZY74Z622b4467Epb.1>

Webinar ID: 859 8459 9282

Passcode: 499622 Or Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location): International numbers available:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85984599282?pwd=ZzKY22gGcoT30ZY74Z622b4467Epb.1>

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isis.rasmussen@kernrc.org



AGENDA

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Introduction | Tracey |
| 2. Ice Breaker Question | Open Discussion |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your favorite sport to watch or play? | |
| 3. Housing Symposium | Tracey / Open Discussion |
| 4. Chair Report (attachment 1) | Tracey |
| 5. Upcoming events and future topics | Open Discussion |
| 6. Meeting Adjourned | Tracey |

Client Advisory Committee (CAC): Meeting Minutes

Facilitators: Tracey Mensch and Tomas Cubias

Leadership Member(s) Present: Tomas Cubias and Michael Cummings

Languages Interpreted: Spanish, American Sign Language (ASL)

Platforms: In person and via ZOOM-Hybrid

Translated Documents: CAC January Meeting Agenda and December Meeting Minutes

Date: 1/24/2025

Number of attendees: In person at Bakersfield office- 14, in person at Ridgecrest via ZOOM- 5, via ZOOM- 1

Introductions were made by temporary CAC President Tracey Mensch. Tracey welcomed all attendees present both in person and online. Introductions followed by Kern Regional Center (KRC) team members, agencies present, and participants present in person and online. This meeting was also held at the KRC Ridgecrest office, with the attendees joining via ZOOM. Tracey stated it was wonderful to have attendees both in person and online, from different locations. Tracey introduced the first thing in the agenda being the ice breaker question.

The following discussions took place during the meeting:

- Discussions began with an ice breaker question, “What is your goal for 2025?” Answers from in person attendees varied from making more time for hobbies such as cooking and baking, being on the Board of Directors for KRC, prioritizing health such as attending doctor appointments and eating better, employment, and budgeting money to learn to be independent. Other goals shared were more advocating for disabled individuals, staying healthy, getting more involved with the deaf community to increase resources, read more books, and doing things with more intention and purpose. Tracey stated her goals were to slow down professionally to make more time for friends and family. Tracey stated her goal was to start her enterprise again. She shared her goal was to have more information and resources, such as the information being shared in CAC meetings, to make a difference in people's lives.
- Attendees from Ridgecrest shared some of their goals were to continue working at the animal shelter, being more independent, and getting involved with programs for young children to assist them in being prepared for their futures.
- An attendee shared one of their goals is to give back by raising money for handicap individuals in Mono and Inyo counties.

Next topic: Grassroots Day

- The following topic in the agenda was “Grassroots Day”, what it is and what matters to attendees. Tracey introduced Grassroots Day as a day where different organizations throughout California and the 21 Regional Centers speak to legislators about the different issues that are affecting them in their local areas or statewide, and explaining to legislators how they can help individuals. Tomas Cubias followed, sharing Grassroots Day is a day lead by the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA) where employees, vendors, and clients from the 21 Regional Centers go to Sacramento for legislative advocacy. Tomas shared some topics that were discussed the last year were budget cuts and uninterrupted implementation of vendor rates. Tomas shared Tracey will assist by taking what is important to attendees here as topics to legislators in Sacramento.
- Tracey shared Grassroots Day is March 3 and 4, 2025.
- Tomas shared KRC attended Grassroots Day last year. An attendee shared they were able to attend last year, and the trip was amazing. The attendee stated what they remember most was educating other attendees about the Regional Centers as many did not know what the Regional Centers are and how long they have been around.
- Tracey shared more information will be shared as it comes out as information was just released recently within the past few weeks about the event itself. Tracey shared she will collect suggestions from attendees to take as ideas for Grassroots Day.
- An attendee shared a helpful item they saw last year at Grassroots Day was having packets to hand out to people attending that explain what the Regional Centers are and what they are doing. The attendee stated their wish to create informational packets to pass out to other attendees during Grassroots Day. Tracey shared that she thought it is a great idea.
- Tracey asked if anyone had any questions or comments about Grassroots Day. An attendee shared their interest in attending Grassroots Day for 2025.
- Tracey then asked “What matters to you that we bring to Grassroots Day? What matters to you within the community that we can bring to share during Grassroots Day?” An attendee shared the importance of more funding for direct care staff. Tracey shared she agrees and as a client she believes direct care staff should be paid more. The attendee shared another topic is the need for more funding for Regional Centers to employ more Service Coordinators. Tracey stated she agreed, there is some funding in the budget right now, but it is not enough, and thanked for the response.
- Tracey asked if anyone else in person or online had any suggestions for her to take to Grassroots Day. An attendee asked if some of the bullet points from the Master Plan could be one of the points being taken and shared with delegates when they go speak with lawmakers to share the importance and put a face to the changes being made. The attendee shared another thing becoming important is what the Master Plan will be addressing is the streamline to services. The attendee shared difficulties in getting the services participants truly in need due to lack of communication between service

providers and the Regional Center. The attendee shared this is an important topic to address as right now there is currently nothing addressing it.

- There was an attendee in Ridgecrest that was wondering about services to people with disabilities such as those in wheelchairs, and eligibility for assistance. The attendee shared he is unsure about what will qualify them. Tracey responded that she would have someone reach out to them to communicate with them to guide them on the process of becoming a client and eligibility.
- Another suggestion from an attendee was bringing up the topic about livable wages and cost increases that are affecting individuals. Tracey agreed this is an important topic and it is something that needs to be addressed, she shared it is something that is important to bring up during Grassroots Day.
- Tracey asked if there was anyone else that wanted to share about anything else – in person or online via ZOOM. There were no other comments/questions.
- Tracey thanked for all the suggestions and shared they will be reviewed and will be brought forth for Grassroots Day.
- Tracey shared that if anyone else wanted to reach out with suggestions and things that matter to them, they can feel free to reach out to Isis Rasmussen or Tomas Cubias. Tomas shared the best way to reach out is through the SAE (Service Access & Equity) email SAE@kernrc.org for the quickest response.
- Tracey stated she had a comment: She thanked everyone for being open in having this open conversation on Grassroots Day because she wants to know what matters to everyone as she wants to make sure everyone's voice is heard both statewide and locally. She shared she is excited about this advocacy for the community through the CAC. She shared there are great things happening both in the future and in the present.

Following topic: Upcoming events, and future topics

- Tracey shared some updates with attendees. She shared as part of the state level CAC member, she was able to share one of their main goals is currently housing. She shared her and other state level CAC members will be part of a panel for housing at an upcoming housing symposium in Sacramento. Tracey stated being open to suggestions and ideas for the housing panel if any attendees had any concerns or suggestions that they believe should be shared.
- An attendee commented on housing that it would be interesting to see a collaboration from KRC with other Regional Centers that are working with local collaboratives in housing. The attendee stated she believes appropriate housing is not aligned with low-income housing and wonders if collaborations can be done to work on improvements.
- Marian Constantino, KRC's Housing Specialist, shared one of her current goals is to create better housing opportunities for KRC clients and is currently working on a plan

for that. She shared she will also be attending the housing symposium and if anyone has suggestions, they can reach out to her.

- Tracey shared another update, stating she recently attended an ARCA meeting where some of the topics were Social Security and employment. There was a conversation about Social Security where attendees shared their difficulties in obtaining Social Security benefits while still having employment. An attendee commented about Social Security stating the reporting processing needs to be improved as it is delayed. An attendee from Ridgecrest shared he had difficulties when he was employed part-time and believes something needs to be done. An attendee shared people can go to the California Department of Rehabilitation office as they have people there that can assist in training how to turn in wages. Another attendee shared there is a Social Security app that can allow people to report their wages.
- Tracey shared her goal is to have someone come in from the Social Security Administration to present on services for everyone to understand the ins and outs of Social Security. Tracey asked how attendees would feel about this. Attendees shared it would be helpful in having someone come in that could give a better understanding.

Comments/Questions:

- Tracey opened the floor for any final questions and suggestions from attendees.
- An attendee asked if there is a date set for February's CAC meeting. Tracey stated the goal is for the 3rd Thursday of the month, but availability of a room is not yet confirmed.
- Tracey stated she had a final question, asking if attendees feel they are getting the information they need when they attend the CAC meetings. Attendees, online and in person, stated yes. Tracey thanked; meeting ended.

Facilitators: Next meeting date to be announced on the KRC website and social media.

Attachment 1

Attachment 1



ARCA REPORT FOR THE CAC

BY TRACEY MENSCH

February 21, 2025

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

BUDGET FOR FY 2025/2026:

The Governor's Budget total of \$19 Billion in funds for regional centers.



**OF THE \$19 BILLION,
\$12.4 BILLION
ALLOCATED FROM THE
STATE'S GENERAL FUND.**



**THE REMAINING AMOUNT
COMES FROM VARIOUS
WAIVERS
(FEDERAL FUNDS).**

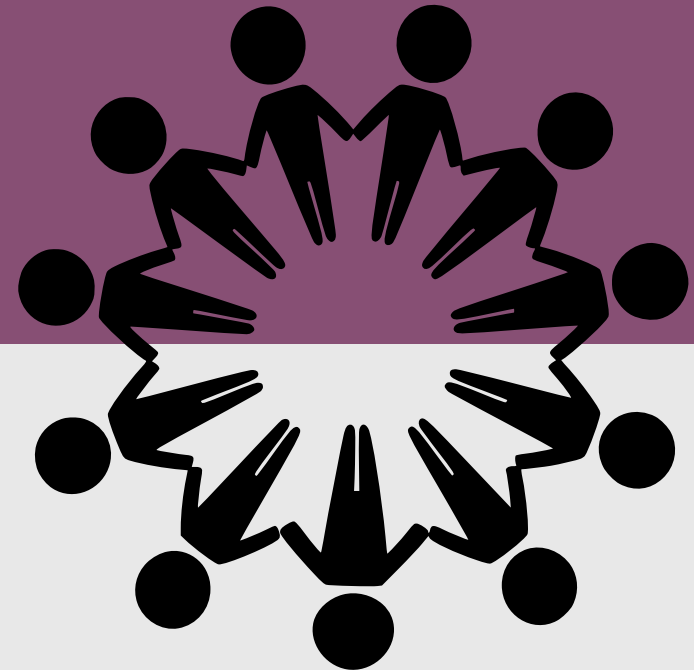


Next year's budget represents a net increase of \$3.2 billion over our current budget.

Public Request Act

Effective January 1, 2026, regional centers will be subject to the Public Records Request Act.

- **Regional Centers are starting to prepare for this new mandate. ARCA is assisting regional centers in getting prepared.**



• Individual Program Plan

- Regional Centers were to start using the Standardized IPP starting on January 1, 2025.
- DDS is working with SANDIS to develop the template in the case management system.
- The IPP guides for clients and families are available on the DDS website. The following guides are available at www.dds.ca.gov/rc/ipp/

- Your Plan
- Your Child's Plan
- Your Youth's Plan

The guides are in both English and Spanish





Thank You