



**VALLEY
MOUNTAIN
REGIONAL
CENTER**

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Helping People with Developmental Disabilities Reach Their Maximum Potential

San Joaquin County
Main Office
702 N. Aurora Street
P.O. Box 692290
Stockton, CA 95269-2290
(209) 473-0951
FAX (209) 473-0256

Stanislaus County
Branch Office
1620 Cummins Drive
Modesto, CA 95358
(209) 529-2626
FAX (209) 526-5763

Amador, Calaveras and
Tuolumne Counties
Branch Office
52 N. Main Street
P.O. Box 1420
San Andreas, CA 95249
(209) 754-1871
FAX (209) 754-3211

★ Dear Consumers, Families, and Service Providers:

California is in a serious financial crisis. This is a result of the severe national economic recession and also the fact that for years California's income has not been sufficient to pay its bills. As a result, there is not enough money to pay for all the supports and services that the developmental disabilities system depends on. Failure of the ballot propositions in the special election held this Spring showed clearly that Californians are not willing to pay more taxes to support social services. As a result, the Legislature and the Governor had no choice but to make deep, painful budget cuts to many vital programs and services, including a \$334 million reduction to regional centers effective July 28.

Recently we posted a summary of changes to the Lanterman Act on our Web site. You can also view related information on the Department of Developmental Services Web site at www.dds.ca.gov. In reading these changes you will see that regional centers are prohibited from purchasing services in a number of categories, and that certain services are "suspended" until the development and implementation of a new individual budget model.

In making these very difficult changes, there is still a commitment to try to keep the basic promise of the Lanterman Act in delivering services and supports, individualized planning, and appeal rights. But we still have to save the \$334 million. Failure to make these savings will result in even deeper future cuts.

Some legally required reductions will affect services that are already authorized in Individual Program Plans (IPP), and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP). If one or more of your services is affected, your service coordinator will first contact you to discuss the required change. Planning Teams will be convened to discuss the services you have been receiving that are affected by these changes. A few statutory reductions provide for possible granting of an "exemption" based on "extraordinary circumstances". By now, you may have received a Notice of Action (NOA) if your services are affected. If you feel that you are entitled to an exemption, contact your Service Coordinator. If VMRC agrees, the Notice of Action will be canceled. If we disagree, you will need to appeal that decision through the regular appeal process.

We face unprecedented challenges in the coming months, and years. We have prevailed during other challenging periods and have always emerged stronger for it. I remain confident that working in partnership our system will survive and even continue to make progress.

Very truly yours,

Richard W. Jacobs
Executive Director