

Regional Center of the East Bay Caseload Ratio Plan of Correction

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) notified the Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB) on September 16, 2020 that our regional center was out of compliance with the requirements in Section 4640.6 c. of the Welfare and Institutions (W & I) Code. This section requires the regional center to maintain service coordinator to consumer ratios at or below specific averages.

On March 10, 2020, RCEB submitted data to the DDS about our consumer numbers and the number of case managers. This data indicated that we did not meet required caseload ratios in three areas.

For consumers on the Home and Community Based Services Waiver, the required ratio is 1:62.

Our ratio was 1:74.

For consumers under the age of three years, the required ratio is 1:62.

Our ratio was 1:65.

For consumers over the age of three who are non-waiver and haven't moved from a developmental center, the required ratio is 1:66.

Our ratio was 1:87

This section of the law requires that a regional center that does not meet the caseload requirements for two consecutive reporting periods must develop a plan of correction. (Section 4640.6(f) of W&I Code). This plan must be developed following input from the state council, local organizations representing consumers, family members, regional center employees, recognized labor unions, service providers, and other interested parties. At RCEB, we are required to submit a plan as we have not met all at least one caseload ratio for many years

Analysis

The Regional Center of the East Bay has not met our caseload ratios for many years. This is not the intent of our regional center but rather the outcome of a funding methodology that does not adequately fund our growth in consumers and the actual costs of employing case managers in the San Francisco Bay Area. In previous plans of correction we have identified the causes of this inability to maintain caseload ratios. These include the budget allocation methodology that funds core positions at salary levels that date back to the early 1990s. With each consumer increase, we get further behind in maintaining caseload ratios. This allocation methodology also doesn't take into account the substantial increases experienced in the costs of healthcare, worker's compensation, and technological needs.

During the 19/20 fiscal year our regional center grew by 723 new consumers. While this would necessitate at least 10 new case managers to maintain last year's caseload, the allocation from DDS will only allow for half that number at most. This deepens the problem.

RCEB continues to experience the challenges of being located in a high cost area with a housing market that is increasingly more expensive. While we have made strides in filling vacant positions, we continue to see a trend of staff moving out of the east bay to more affordable areas of the state. Case manager salaries are not competitive when compared with social work positions offered through the county or health care providers. It is not unusual that we make a job offer and have an individual start work with us only to have them leave for a better salary at another agency within a short time. We currently have 13 posted but unfilled case management positions.

Plan

Our plan remains similar to that of previous years as nothing has changed from our previous analysis. We will continue to advocate for funding for regional centers that is adequate to maintain the required caseload ratios. We believe that the availability and time of the case manager is critical to individuals and families and impacts the quality of support that they receive. As we plan for any

new positions at RCEB, we will continue to prioritize case management positions however acknowledging that supports for case managers that allow them to have more time for direct contact is also important. Furthermore, in looking at our process changes as a result of the pandemic, our regional center is focusing on efficiencies in all areas that allow for more time for meaningful contact with individuals and families. There will be areas in which we will advocate to continue some of the options including remote services upon consumer and family request as well.

If you wish to share any feedback with us . please email writetous@rceb.org on or before 5 PM on November 12th 2020.