

Rehabilitation Administrative Manual  
INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PROVIDERS (ISPs)

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**29000 INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PROVIDERS (03/11)**

It is the policy of the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) to use Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and existing community resources to meet the service needs of our consumers, with CRPs being the primary and preferred providers. This rule is in place based on the stringent accreditation, certification, and documentation that CRPs undergo before providing quality services to DOR consumers in a timely and cost-effective manner.

In some situations, however, CRPs may not offer the vocational rehabilitation services needed by a consumer, or a CRP may not be available to provide timely services to DOR consumers in a specific geographic area of the state. In such situations, the DOR recognizes the need for Individual Service Providers (ISPs) to provide the services necessary to assist DOR consumers in achieving successful employment outcomes as outlined in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

When CRPs or other community resource services are not available or not feasible, counselors have the option to use ISPs. However, in no case shall multiple service providers (CRPs and/or ISPs) be authorized to concurrently provide the same service to a single consumer.

Approved ISPs may be used in instances such as the following:

1. There is a specific need for a service not offered by a CRP.
2. The needed service is not available from other community agencies.
3. There will be a significant delay in the delivery of service from a CRP or other community resource.

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Upon determining that a CRP is not available, counselors and consumers select Individual Service Providers on the basis of the

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ISP's personal and professional ability to meet the specific needs of the consumer.

### Definition of an ISP:

- An individual who provides services as an independent contractor, which is defined as an individual:
  - who establishes his or her own working hours;
  - who procures his or her own tools, equipment, or necessary licenses for his or her work; and
  - whose service and completion of work are delivered in a stipulated period of time for an agreed-upon amount;
- An individual who is not working for a CRP, vendorized facility, DOR-related program, school, or other private business organization authorized by DOR; the DOR will determine any exceptions on a case-by-case basis.
- The ISP must not have a designated space within any DOR office;
- ISPs must personally provide direct services to a consumer;\*\*
- An ISP may not subcontract services to any other individual or entity.

**\*\*NOTE:** The potential exists for direct services to be provided via telecommunication and electronic media. Such services must be preapproved and provided in real-time. Additionally, the nature of certain services (e.g., job developer) necessitates an expenditure of time that benefits the consumer yet is not a face-to-face delivery of services.

Specific descriptions of ISP services and qualification standards are set forth in Exhibit A.

Refer also to Exhibit B, which shows categories, levels of service, and rates of payments in a Quick-View format.

The DOR is authorized to establish maximum rates of payment under federal and state regulations. (34 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR))

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361.50 and Title 9 Code of California Regulations (CCR), Section 7321)

**29200 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (03/11)**

**29210 District Administrator or Designee (03/11)**

The District Administrator (DA) is responsible for ensuring that district staff follows all established policies and standards as defined in this chapter. The DA or designee will certify that a need for a particular service exists and participate in ISP interviews. The DA may delegate this review / approval authority as needed. The DA will designate a single point of contact (SPOC) and one backup to support the ISP process. (Title 9 CCR, Sections 7008 and 7024.5)

**29211 Rehabilitation Supervisor (03/11)**

A Rehabilitation Supervisor works with the Rehabilitation Counselor and district / branch support staff to review the necessity and suitability of ISP services, and appropriate documentation in a consumer's record of services. This position will coordinate with district staff, Community Resources Development (CRD), and others, as necessary, to ensure efficient and effective service delivery and compliance with DOR regulations, policies and procedures. This position will also conduct a prior review of any ISP applications and / or services that may require District Administrator approval (e.g., applications for services provided by friends / family members).

**29212 Rehabilitation Counselor (03/11)**

A Rehabilitation Counselor, in collaboration with a consumer, determines necessary and appropriate services in accordance with a consumer's IPE. The Rehabilitation Counselor authorizes the services and works with appropriate staff to update the consumer's file using the ISP's monthly progress report. The Rehabilitation Counselor works with the consumer to ensure the ISP's services are of value and effective. The Rehabilitation Counselor or Rehabilitation Supervisor, along with DOR staff, is responsible for approving all

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DR296 invoices submitted by the ISP. (RAM Chapter 13, Section 13112)

**29213 District or Branch Support Staff (03/11)**

District / branch support staff works with counselors, supervisors, and consumers. This staff may receive and obtain ISP information and forward it to the district ISP SPOC as requested.

**29214 ISP Single Point of Contact (03/11)**

The DA will designate a single point of contact (SPOC) and one backup to support the ISP process. This position will conduct reviews and assist in quality assurance.

**29215 Community Resources Development (CRD) (03/11)**

In collaboration with the districts / branches, CRD staff will monitor the status (active / inactive) of ISPs on a regular basis. CRD also assists with approval of ISPs to ensure the services are needed and cost-effective and cannot be supplied by a CRP.

**29216 Consumer (03/11)**

In accordance with Title 9 CCR, Section 7029.9, it is the consumer's responsibility to be an active and full partner in his or her vocational rehabilitation plan; therefore, the consumer should assist the Rehabilitation Counselor in identifying and selecting the ISP whenever possible. Once an ISP is selected, the consumer should keep his / her Rehabilitation Counselor informed about the ISP's effectiveness by reporting any dissatisfaction with or concerns about the ISP's service(s).

**29217 ISP Vendor (03/11)**

The ISP provides an individual consumer with only the approved, agreed-upon services; maintains sufficient and adequate records to support the actual hours and specific services provided directly to

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each consumer; and complies with all the terms and conditions listed in the ISP Handbook.

**29300      ISP APPROVAL POLICIES (03/11)**

**29310      Approving ISPs to Serve Multiple Districts (03/11)**

Once approved, an ISP may provide services in more than one district. However each district reserves the right to request that an applicant undergo the application and approval process for their respective district.

**29311      Restriction on Copying Social Security Cards,  
Driver's Licenses, and Other Confidential Documents  
(03/11)**

In conformance with Title 9 CCR, Section 7140(a)(1) and Civil Code Section 1798 et seq., and to ensure the confidentiality and security of a DOR consumer's or an ISP's personal information, field staff will limit the collection and usage of Social Security numbers (SSN) on forms. SSN information is necessary to properly identify the individual applying to provide services to DOR consumers. Identification must be asked for, viewed and documented, but not copied.

**29312      Expedited Authorization in Limited Circumstances  
(03/11)**

If, due to unforeseen circumstances, the time to obtain the required approval documentation results in undue delay or hardship to the consumer, the Rehabilitation Counselor may request a one (1) business day, expedited approval for 30 days' worth of services at the Level 1 pay rate prior to the ISP applicant undergoing the full approval process. Rationale for the expedited approval process must be documented in a case note.

Expedited Authorization must be approved by the DA or designee and CRD, and is applicable to only the following ISP service categories:

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- Academic / Vocational Tutors
- Language Interpreter Providers
- Orientation & Mobility Training Service Providers
- Personal Support Service Providers (excluding Drivers)

Further authorization of services beyond the initial 30 days is prohibited until the ISP applicant has provided the follow-up documentation and participated in an interview to complete the ISP application process.

### **29313 Friends / Family Members as ISPs (03/11)**

As noted in Title 9 CCR, Section 7169(c), consumers' friends and family members are occasionally identified as potential ISPs.

If the approval criteria are met, a friend or family member of the consumer may be approved as an ISP; however, **all applications for services provided by the friend / family member require DA approval.** The DA will document his / her approval on the DR172.

The approval process includes verification of the following:

- A. When a family member or other closely associated person is able to provide the service but refuses to do so without pay, the approval of the District Administrator shall be obtained prior to authorizing such individual to provide the service. The District Administrator's approval shall be based upon verification that:
  - (1) The consumer meets the specified qualifications: blind, deaf, or significantly disabled.
  - (2) The consumer is not eligible for comparable benefits.
  - (3) No provider, other than a family member or other closely associated person, is available to provide the necessary service(s).

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**29314      Authorizing Transportation Costs for ISPs (03/11)**

Transportation costs are defined as mileage, tolls, and parking fees. These costs must be pre-approved by the Rehabilitation Counselor and the ISP must retain receipts for audit purposes.

Transportation costs can be paid to those ISPs who travel in excess of 25 miles roundtrip to provide a service.

- For ISP drivers, the mileage begins when the consumer is picked up and ends when the consumer is dropped off at the destination.
- For other ISP services (i.e., job development), only one roundtrip in excess of 25 miles per consumer per day will be reimbursed.

The DOR does not reimburse for travel between multiple consumers. However, an exception may be made when an ISP provides services to consumers who live in semi-remote areas. In these instances, a Rehabilitation Counselor may authorize mileage beyond 25 roundtrip miles to allow the ISP to travel to a semi-remote geographic area where more than one consumer is located.

The maximum allowable per-mile charge is in accordance with the rates set forth by the Department of Personal Administration to reimburse excluded employees. The state mileage rates mirror those of the Internal Revenue Services' (IRS) published mileage reimbursement rates and are subject to change.

**29400      REVIEWING / MONITORING ISP SERVICES (03/11)**

Ongoing monitoring of ISP usage in each district is crucial to ensure regulatory compliance, effective provision of services to consumers, and efficient and proper usage of state resources.

To ensure compliance with ISP standards, each district must monitor ISP services for compliance and effectiveness.



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District monitoring and review may include:

- Setting annual “tickle” date to ask ISPs who transport consumers for new DMV records and current insurance coverage documents.
- Checking expiration dates of any required documentation or certifications.
- Running quarterly ad hoc reports of monthly payments to ISPs.
- Conducting interviews / discussions with counselors / consumers to be used in assessing the quality of ISP services provided during year.
- Case review of record of services files – for compliance with documentation of ISP usage.

### **29500      ISP RIGHT TO REVIEW (03/11)**

If an approved ISP does not adhere to the DOR's established terms and conditions as set forth in the ISP Handbook, the DA / designee shall notify the ISP in writing of the decision to remove the ISP from the active list.

The letter shall contain the specific reasons for inactivation and the subsequent steps the ISP may take to request a secondary review of this decision.

The ISP has ten (10) business days in which to contest the decision. If the ISP contests the decision, a neutral party (e.g., non-participating DA / designee, program manager) shall review the request and decide if the ISP shall be re-activated or remain inactive.

### **29600      ISP INVOICING (03/11)**

At the end of each month, the ISP shall invoice the DOR for actual hours incurred in the provisions of authorized services not to exceed authorized amounts. The ISP Handbook provides procedures to assist the ISP with the DOR invoicing process.

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All invoices received for payment must be handled promptly. Some invoices are subject to the California Prompt Payment Act, which requires state agencies to pay properly submitted, undisputed invoices within 45 calendar days of receipt of the invoice.

For invoices not properly submitted or in dispute, DOR staff must follow the disputed invoice policy and procedures to prevent the start of the 30-day Departmental processing requirement.

Payment at the local level from the revolving fund is prohibited.

(See RAM Chapter 13, Sections 13500 and 13400, for the full policy, procedures, and timeline.)

### **29700 REVIEW OF ISP INVOICES (07/11)**

District staff are responsible for reviewing ISP invoices to ensure that services were provided according to the authorization.

With the exception of invoices for services rendered in the Personal Support Service Provider category (i.e., readers, note takers, attendants, and drivers), all invoices must be accompanied by a progress report for each consumer to which services were provided during that month.

District staff shall discuss and resolve billing discrepancies with the ISP prior to invoice approval.

(RAM Chapter 13, Sections 13110 and 13401)

### **29800 ADDING NEW CATEGORIES OF SERVICE (03/11)**

In developing an IPE, the needs of individual consumers may require the creation of new categories of service.

Should a service need arise that cannot be met by the existing categories of service listed in Exhibit A, the DA or designee shall work with the appropriate program area (e.g., Blind Field Services,

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Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Assistive Technology), district staff, and other resources such as CRD to define the following points:

- Description of the proposed service;
- Qualification standards for the service to be provided;
- Appropriate maximum fee rates;
- Documentation identifying the “usual and customary” rates statewide.

This information shall be forwarded to the Chief of CRD for review. Once reviewed, the Chief of CRD will send the research and documents to the Assistant Deputy Directors (ADD) of Community Programs Support and Development and of Budgets and Fiscal Forecasting for his / her approval.

Once the ADDs have approved the new category of service, the Chief of Centralized Services will incorporate complete descriptions of the new categories and required documentation into RAM Chapter 29, Exhibit A: ISP Categories of Services. Basic information, levels of service, and corresponding fee rates will be reflected in Exhibit B: Quick-View.

### **EXHIBITS**

(Note: To assist staff in printing the exhibits for ISPs and consumers, the Exhibits will be maintained as separate electronic documents in the G:\User Resources\Rehab Admin Manual folder.)

**[Exhibit A](#)** **ISP Categories of Services**

**[Exhibit B](#)** **Quick-View: ISP Categories, Levels, Payment Rates**

**[Exhibit C](#)** **Consumer Information**

**[Exhibit D](#)** **QAA Directive Response: Procedures for Evaluating Communication Assistants**