



EASTERN LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER
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**ELARC Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2025
Approved as Recorded on July 8, 2025**

Board Members Present:

Terry Munoz, President
Dalia Mendoza, Secretary
Joel Moreno, Vendor Representative
Fely Navera
Dr. Terry Baruch
Alex Wu
Joshua Tjahjadi
Theresa Chen

Staff Present:

Gloria Wong, Executive Director
Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of
Consumer Services
Judy Perez, Associate Chief of
Consumer Services
Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services
Manager
Johnny Trombley, IT Supervisor
Brendali Maldonado, Community
Communications Officer
Angie Salas, Executive Secretary

Absent:

Pat Gomez, Treasurer
Dr. Linda Lopez, Vice-President
Marisol Guerrero, CAC Chair

Guests: Refer to Sign-In Sheet

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I. Welcome & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 P.M. by Mrs. Terry Munoz, ELARC's Board President. The meeting arrangement consisted of a Zoom Conference/Teleconference line and material was displayed on agency website and available to all visitor participants with a link from the agency website.

Mrs. Munoz welcomed all to the Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center Zoom Board of Directors Meeting.

Roll call was conducted. A quorum was established in order to conduct necessary business.

Brendali Maldonado, Community Communications Officer, provided information on how to access interpreter services to community guests/visitors.

II. Community Introductions/Opening Round:

The Board members and guests were asked to introduce themselves, the latter are noted in the “Sign-In” sheet.

III. Community Input:

- ❖ Fely Navera, Board Member, parent, shared her son has been assigned a new service coordinator, Blanca Rodriguez, in the Aging with Purpose Unit. Mrs. Navera expressed her joy in knowing that Mrs. Rodriguez was previously an ELARC office assistant in the Community Services Department who had assisted her many years ago in running the Family Advisory Committee. Mrs. Navera expressed her appreciation and welcomed the surprise to learn that Ms. Rodriguez had promoted and being assigned her sons’ service coordinator.
 - Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, commented that Blanca Rodriguez was an office assistance in the Community Services Department and thanked Mrs. Navera for sharing her story.
- ❖ Chala Jitpatima, parent, introduced her son Charles to the audience. Charles greeted all and thanked ELARC for helping him grow.

IV.

Approval of Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Motion Required - ATT #1

M/S/C (Joshua Tjahjahdi/Theresa Chen) To approve the general session of BOD Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2025. Unanimous.

M/S/C (Fely Navera/Theresa Chen) To approve the Executive Session meeting minutes of May 13, 2025 as recorded. Unanimous.

V. Executive Director’s Report - Gloria Wong

1. Rate Reform Implementation Status ATT #2, #3, #4, and #5

Ms. Wong provided background information on Service Provider Rate Reform, a major undertaking that began in 2019 in an effort to standardize service codes, rates, and provider requirements. The

implementation has required significant staff effort across departments, with teams working to help providers understand the process and comply with new requirements while minimizing service disruptions.

Ms. Wong introduced Elizabeth Harrell, Community Services Manager, as the presenter on the overview of rate reform implementation at ELARC.

Mrs. Harrell reiterated that Rate Reform is a major undertaking across the State of California. The Overview of Rate Reform discussion focused on:

- ❖ What is Rate Reform?
 - More information is available on the DDS website here <https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/vendor-provider/rate-reform/>
- ❖ Provider Directory
- ❖ Service Code Alignment: Exemptions & Crosswalk
- ❖ Timeline
- ❖ How does it impact those we serve and their families?
- ❖ What about Self-Determination?
- ❖ ELARC Implementation efforts

Mrs. Harrell explained in 2019, the Legislature commissioned a thorough study of how services to individuals with developmental disabilities are provided and compensated throughout the state. This comprehensive review led to the development of rate reform measures that seek to make services more accessible, more consistently provided across different regions of the state, and are compensated in a way that is transparent and equitable. Mrs. Harrell explained that there is no grandfathering for new directives and that service providers are already working to crosswalk services.

Mrs. Harrell shared the following information:

❖ **Equitable Rate Reform**

Across the State of California was done in three (3) phases:

- 1) First phase difference bridged approximately by 25%
- 2) Second phase bridged by 50%

3) Third phase

❖ **Rate Adjustments:**

The law outlines a multi-year timeline to implement rate reform. Beginning in April 2022, phased rate adjustments incrementally increased provider rates. The final incremental rate adjustment to fully implement the rate models took effect January 1, 2025.

❖ **Quality Incentive Program (QIP):**

Participation in the Provider Directory. The final step in rate reform establishes two components for provider rates:

- 1) A base rate equal to 90 percent of the rate model and
- 2) A quality incentive payment of up to 10 percent of the rate model. For the period of January 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, the quality incentive payment portion of the rate will be based solely on data collection, registration, and validation in the provider directory. Ultimately, the Provider Directory will make it easier for individuals and families to find service options.

❖ **Hold Harmless Provisions:**

Implementation of rate reform has resulted in rate increases for most, but not all, service providers. Providers' rates that exceed the rate model amounts are "held harmless" (e.g. not reduced) by law until June 30, 2026*, after which rates are expected to be adjusted to equal the rates of other providers of the same service in the region. **May Revise proposal to push date forward to March 1, 2026*

❖ **Service Code Alignment:**

Implementation of rate reform requires standardization in the use of service descriptions, billing codes, and payments. As a result, some or all of the following activities may be necessary depending on the provider and type of service:

- Alignment with updated service descriptions
 - Updated staffing or service requirements
 - Service and subcode changes
 - Rate adjustments and billing unit changes

- Coordination for individuals served
 - Individual Program Plan (IPP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) updates
 - Service authorization updates

❖ **Provider Directory:**

The Provider Directory is an online Directory that stores and displays information about service providers statewide. The Provider Directory is being developed in phases.

- The first phase of the project includes launching the directory, registering for the directory, and validating the data in the directory. Service providers will receive an email invitation to register for the Directory. Following registration, they will review prepopulated data from existing DDS systems and approve or submit edits to their data.
- Even Providers who are not eligible for Rate Reform must participate in the Provider Directory. Currently, only service providers that billed after June 2021 and were vendorized in a qualified service were included. Providers with the following service codes are excluded:
 - Service codes:
 - 24, 65, 73, 77, 93, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425 and 890
 - Apart from Fiscal Management Services (FMS) service codes (315-317), all Self Determination Program (SDP) service codes (300-series)
 - DDS manages the Provider Directory

❖ **Exemptions and Crosswalk:**

Some providers deliver services that do not align with services defined in statute, regulation, and/or the directives issued as part of rate reform. Often, these services use one of the codes listed in Attachment A of the 10/30/24 directive. If a regional center determines that a provider's service does not fit into any of the updated service descriptions, the regional center must request DDS approval to utilize one of the service codes listed in the top table of Attachment A. The existing service code and rate may continue to be used while DDS' decision is pending.

- Affected codes include but not limited to 055 and 063
- DDS developed a "crosswalk" to help providers figure out potential new codes

❖ **Timeline and Consequences:**

Per April 1, 2025 DDS Directive:

- May 30, 2025 was the deadline for Service Providers to complete the Service Acknowledgement Form (SAF) for Rate Reform. Service Providers that are eligible for Rate Reform who not sign the SAF will be considered noncompliant and subject to potential termination under California Code of Regulations Title 17 section 54370 (c).
- May 30, 2025 is the deadline for ALL Vendored Service Providers to complete the steps in the Provider Directory. Service Providers that do not submit the required information in the provider directory by May 30, 2025, will have their billing suspended beginning July 2025, until they submit this information and it is validated.

❖ **Self-Determination:**

- DDS looking at impact on SDP and plans on releasing guidance
- Rate models posted but are not necessarily reflective of true rate for the service in SDP, should be looked at case by case
- Individual Budget adjustments have to be made on a case by case basis
- The planning team to meet and review
- As in Traditional Services, Community Services provides support and information to Consumer Services

❖ **ELARC Implementation Activities:**

- Weekly “Rates Team” meeting
- Weekly DDS Office Hours
- Two Community Services Supervisors at lead for Rate Reform
- Pulled five Specialists
- Rates and Vendorization Coordinators
- New Community Services Supervisor at lead for Provider Directory

- Impact on workflow, pace of vendorization, and resource development

The group discussed the timeline for rate reform, with May 30th being the deadline for the acknowledgment forms, Edith Hernandez-Daniels stated that guidance is still pending for mid-year participants.

Comments from the community:

- ❖ Fely Navera, Board Member, Parent, inquired about her sons' staff, "Adaptive Skills" staff. She noted that unfortunately they do not have college degree, although knowledgeable and experienced, can they be grandfathered in?
 - Mrs. Harrell responded that Adaptive Skills requires a degree and Independent Living Skills does not. There is no wiggle room allowed and not grandfathering in. There is an exemption to process to request the service codes being omitted to be kept.
 - Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, shared service providers are working with community services department to crosswalk their service to other options so the service may continue in a different capacity.
- ❖ Michael Young, posed a question on the rate reform implementation:
Is it going to be done at the planning team phase, how is it going to be done for midyear participants will they receive the increase in the middle of the year or not?
 - Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels, indicated it is done on an individual basis and is being addressed through the IPP process. ELARC continues to wait for additional guidance from DDS.

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared the Local Vendor Advisory Committee (LVAC) asked to have a discussion with families related to Rate Reform and Self-Determination Program (SDP). Conversations are happening with the Community Engagement Team to discuss further.

2. Public Meeting: Caseload Ratio Survey Results 2025 HANDOUT #3 and ATT #6

HANDOUT #3

Ms. Wong reviewed the Caseload Ratio Community Meeting flyer. The upcoming Board Meeting scheduled for July 8, 2025 will be used to report on Caseload Ratio Surveys.

ATT #6

Ms. Wong shared the “Caseload Survey Results of March 10, 2025” as a preview of what will be discussed. ELARC met all six (6) categories which are assessed for compliance.

3. Budget Update Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 – ‘25 ATT #7, HANDOUT’s #1, #2,#4 and #5

Purchase of Services (POS) Expenditure Projection (PEP) Report

HANDOUT #5

Ms. Wong reported on the PEP report ELARC is projecting a deficit of \$53,719,286.

Budget Performance Report: Operations

HANDOUT #4

Ms. Wong reported on the Budget Performance Report – Fiscal Year 2024 – ‘25 with a surplus of \$63,791.

HANDOUT #2

Ms. Wong reviewed the City National Bank Loan Revision Agreement and explained the approved rolling line of credit.

Comments from the community:

- ❖ Alex Wu, Board Member, asked if this occurs annually?
 - Mrs. Wong replied yes this is done on an annual basis as a safety measure in the event the State budget is not passed on time. It ensures ELARC can meet its operation and POS payments.

ATT #7

1. Budget Update

A. Governor's Budget May Revision

- \$19 billion allocation
 - a) \$3.2 billion increase from FY 2024-25
- Budget Reductions
 - a) Elimination
 - Health & Safety Waiver - (\$3 million)
 - Implicit Bias Training - (\$3 million)
 - Direct Service Professional (DSP) University
 - b) Rate Model: Hold Harmless
 - Policy to end February 2026 vs. June 30, 2026
 - c) Self-Determination Program (SDP)
 - Reduction of \$22.5 million (FY 25-26)
 - Ongoing reductions in future fiscal years.
 - Implement new “guardrails” that protect sustainability of the SDP.
 - d) Association of Regional Centers (ARCA) response to governor's May revision.

2. Federal Funding: Federal Match

- A. Medicaid vs Medi-Cal
- B. Home & Community Based Services (HCBS)
- C. Potential funding reductions & impact to California

3. Master-Plan for Developmental Services

- A. Purpose & Focus Areas
- B. Draft Report: March 28, 2025
- C. DDS ongoing commitment
 - Conduct biannual meetings
 - DDS to submit an annual progress report to legislature starting March 2026 to 2036

4. Public Records Act Assembly Bill (AB) 1147

5. Conflict of Interest (COI) Changes

Comments from the community addressed.

HANDOUT #1

Ms. Wong went over correspondence from DDS “Fact Sheet on Privacy Protection”.

Comment from the community:

- ❖ Lizette Duarte, parent, is there a staff person that is overseeing and monitoring legislative/budget updates to the community/parents can reach out to if they have questions.
 - Ms. Wong replied any changes to the budget status is posted on ELARC’s website.
- ❖ Yvette Baptiste, Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (FRC), Executive Director, parent, shared the DDS is forming a new group for people who have a disability and identify as being LGBTQIA+.

VI.

Consumer Services Report Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services

Edith Hernandez-Daniels, Chief of Consumer Services, shared information on the Emergency Preparedness and Safety Expo held on Saturday, June 7th, 2025. Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared many families attended the event which was well received. There was a special presentation by the Los Angeles County Emergency Management Office.

The event consisted of the following:

- ❖ Information packets
- ❖ Tools
- ❖ Resources
- ❖ Southern California Edison – emergency backpack giveaway
- ❖ Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department and Explorers
- ❖ Kids’ Corner – Coloring books and crayons provided
- ❖ Meals provided by Subway

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared Gina Esparza, Emergency Management Officer, is the lead on Emergency Preparedness at ELARC and did an amazing job in putting the event together.

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels, reported on forensically involved individuals in the population ELARC serves. Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared Vanessa Saucedo Lara, Forensic Specialists, who offers

support to those individuals who become involved with the law and require specific support. Mrs. Saucedo Lara's role includes the following but not limited to:

- Consults with service coordinators
- Provides information and guidance on how to handle the court systems
- How to interact with probation, parole, and the court system
- Attorney access for support if necessary

Bobby Vargas, Jail Liaison, assists ELARC in navigating the Judicial System. In addition, there are service providers that support with this capacity and will go into the jail system and support the individual there and assist with:

- The exiting of the jail system
- Independent Living Skills (ILS) within the jail system
- How to get the individual situated once they exit the jail system
 - Work Employment
 - Housing

Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared ELARC has a good working relationship with RDA, Court System, Bench Officers, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Edelman Children's Court, etc. Training have taken place to make sure they know the population ELARC serves and the services being provided to be able to intervene if required.

Comments from the Community:

- ❖ Yvette Baptiste, Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center (FRC), Executive Director, parent, suggested ELARC should have a training around the movement of mandating reporting to community supporting for children and child welfare. Mandatory trainings are being redone for mandated reporters in the system.
 - Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels thanked Mrs. Baptiste and stated there is a need for ongoing training to continue to educate the system.
- ❖ Karina Andrade, EL ARCA, shared in light of the current situation the community is afraid and do not want to participate in their community integration activities. Many requests from parent to keep their children in the servicing facility. Community Integration has been cancelled at both facilities. In addition individuals are not allowed to view live views to prevent additional stress.
 - Mrs. Hernandez-Daniels shared she is aware of this information and thanks Ms. Andrade for sharing.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Consumer Advisory Committee (CAC) - (Marisol Guerrero)

The CAC report will be deferred until the next BOD meeting.

B. Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC) - (Joel Moreno)

Joel Moreno, VAC Representative, reported on the Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC).

- Last VAC meeting is held on Thursday, May 22, 2025
 - Gloria Wong, ELARC Executive Director, to provide a systems update on May Revise
- Liz Harrell, Community Services Manager, shared the VAC Meeting held on May 22, 2025 was held in person and was a big milestone since it was the first VAC Meeting being held in person since COVID. There were over one hundred (100) service providers in attendance and turned out to be a great event.

C. Finance/Personnel Committee (Terry Munoz/Fely Navera)

Mrs. Terry Munoz, Board President, reported there was no Finance/Personnel Committee meeting.

No comments from the community.

VIII. Miscellaneous Announcements

Lizette Duarte, parent, thanked ELARC for providing great information and resources that she can share and take back to the community. She's looking forward to future events that ELARC will hold to continue to engage the community.

No comments from the Community.

IV. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss the motion was made to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 7:48pm.

M/S/C (Dalia Mendoza/Fely Navera). Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dalia Mendoza".

Dalia Mendoza,
Secretary,
ELARC Board of Directors

Recorded by: Angie Salas,
Executive Secretary