**Inland Regional Center (IRC)**

**About IRC and Qualification:**

Inland Regional Center is a springboard to greater independence for people with developmental disabilities in the Inland Empire. They are a non-profit agency that has provided support to people with intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy since 1972. Today, they provide case management and service coordination for more than 39,800 consumers in Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

The information below is provided as a summary and a reference guide for CASAs seeking to understand t how youth to qualify IRC services. IRC eligibility criteria is defined by law California Welfare and Institutions Code §4512.

There are three key factors that are used to determine whether a youth may be eligible for IRC services.

1. Youth must have a qualifying diagnosis to qualify for IRC servings. Diagnoses that may qualify a youth for regional center services including the following:

* Autism
* Cerebral Palsy
* Intellectual Disability
* -Epilepsy
* Conditions closely related to, or that require treatment similar to, that required for an intellectual disability

2. The qualifying diagnosis must

* originate prior to age 18
* be expected to continue indefinitely
* be a substantial disability, meaning the person experiences significant limitations in three or more of the following areas: self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living, economic self-sufficiency

Note: The law states that learning disabilities, or disabilities that are solely psychiatric or physical in nature, are not included in the definition of developmental disabilities.

3. A youth must meet all criteria AND reside in Riverside or San Bernardino County.

This means that during the time the SSP **SUBMITS** a referral, the youth must reside in Riverside or San Bernardino County. Once they are accepted as a regional center client, it does not matter if they are placed out of county, they will continue to qualify for IRC services, and IRC will transfer the case to the prospective regional center while they are placed out of county. Once the youth returns to Riverside County, IRC will resume providing services.

A list of out-of-county regional center services providers can be found here: <https://www.dds.ca.gov/rc/listings/>

Should a youth residing out of County need regional center services, the Riverside County SSP can refer them to the respective regional center in which they currently reside. Should the youth be returned to Riverside County, the out of county regional center will transfer the case to Riverside IRC.

**Application Process:**

If you think that you are serving a youth who is appropriate for an IRC referral, have a conversation with our Advocacy Supervisor to discuss ways to advocate for the referral to be made.

**Why IRC is important:**

Although the youth will not always receive services right away (since DPSS is still involved and providing services), IRC will follow them for the rest of their lives. They will ensure that they receive needed services and will make sure that placement is appropriate. IRC is a wonderful option for youth who may need extra support past the age of 18 due to their disability.

Many children who are exiting the system at 21 years of age and have a developmental disability have nowhere to go and no extra support, simply because IRC was not referred. It is a significant undertaking for the social worker and requires a lot of information gathering. **IF a youth is IRC eligible:** DPSS will request that the case close when the youth turns 18 years old, and IRC assume responsibility for providing services. IRC will then find an adult placement that is suitable and appropriate for the youth and the court will terminate dependency.

**What YOU can do as a CASA to help:**

* Work with your Advocacy Supervisor to encourage the SSP to fill out a referral for a youth if you are assigned to one that you believe may meet the criteria. You can also ask you Advocacy Supervisor to send them an email with the information and referral process.
* IRC referrals are complicated and many SSPs may not have had opportunities to refer children., Bring it up in a CFTM so the team can discuss it, too.
* CASAS cannot fill out the referral packet, since some of the information needed we do not have immediate access to, but you can let the SSP know you are there for support or anything they need and you can help gather information from school or doctors as needed, too.
* If you hold educational rights or even if you do not but still attend educational meetings, make sure the SSP knows all that you do. Information you have may help with the qualification.