

Date of Hearing: April 14, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Alex Lee, Chair

AB 2414 (Nguyen) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

**SUBJECT:** Developmental services: direct support professionals

**SUMMARY:** Defines direct support professional and requires the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to develop billing guidance necessary to facilitate a pay differential for direct support professionals. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Defines “direct support professional” as an individual who receives compensation to provide direct support to children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, is employed by a service provider receiving regional center funding, and spends at least 50% of their working time completing direct support tasks, including, but not limited to, all of the following:
  - a) Services that enhance independence and community inclusion.
  - b) Assisting with skill development, including personal and vocational coaching.
  - c) Providing assistance with activities of daily living.
- 2) Requires DDS, on or before April 1, 2027, to develop the billing guidance necessary to facilitate a pay differential associated with required training.
- 3) Requires any proposed or active pay differential associated with training to be established and included in the rate model review.
- 4) Updates the term direct service professional to direct support professional.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the “Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Act”, which states that California is responsible for providing an array of services and supports sufficiently complete to meet the needs and choices of each person with developmental disabilities, regardless of age or degree of disability, at each stage of life, and to support their integration into the mainstream life of the community. (Welfare and Institutions Code [WIC] § 4500 *et seq.*)
- 2) Establishes a system of nonprofit regional centers, overseen by DDS, to provide fixed points of contact in the community for all persons with developmental disabilities and their families, and to coordinate services and supports best suited to them throughout their lifetime. (WIC § 4620)
- 3) Defines “consumer” as a person who has a disability that meets the definition of developmental disability described below in 4). (WIC § 4512 (a) (1))
- 4) Defines “developmental disability” as a disability that originates before an individual attains 18 years of age, continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial disability for that individual. As defined by the Director of Developmental

Services, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, this term shall include intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. This term shall also include disabling conditions found to be closely related to intellectual disability or to require treatment similar to that required for individuals with an intellectual disability, but shall not include other handicapping conditions that are solely physical in nature. (WIC § 4512 (d))

- 5) Requires DDS to develop and implement a direct service professional training curriculum that promotes person-centered services that are culturally and linguistically sensitive and improve consumer outcomes. (WIC § 4511.2)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown, this bill has not been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

**COMMENTS:**

**Background:** *Role of a Direct Support Professional (DSP).* DSPs work directly with people with intellectual or developmental disabilities to assist the people they work with to become independent and integrated into their community. According to the United States Department of Labor, DSPs are a part of the broader workforce of Direct Care Workers. Historically, DSPs primarily served as caregivers for the people they supported. In the past few decades, however, the needs of those served began to change, and the roles of DSPs began to change as well. Today, the role of a DSP goes beyond caregiving and focuses more broadly on supporting people with disabilities to participate fully in their communities, live in integrated settings, and seek competitive integrated employment. Some of the roles of a DSP include:

- Supporting engagement with the community by providing support in less congregate and more individualized settings, job coaching, employment support, and transportation.
- Using creative thinking for accommodations to help people with disabilities be more independent.
- Providing caregiving and support with activities of daily living, including: medication administration, mobility assistance, wound care, and accessing food.
- Working with the people they support to advocate for rights and services, such as accessing resources and opportunities in the community, and working with the employer to customize job duties.
- Providing emotional support.<sup>1</sup>

*DSP Training and Career Paths.* Because DSPs play a vital role in helping individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, California has recognized that training and development should match the professionalization of the role. As such, California has implemented a number of workforce initiatives including a training stipend for DSPs and an internship program. In addition to those efforts, AB 136 (Committee on Budget), Chapter 76, Statutes of 2021, required DDS to develop and implement a direct service professional training curriculum that promotes person-centered services that are culturally and linguistically sensitive

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/individuals/DSP>

and improve consumer outcomes. DDS is implementing this by establishing the “DSP University,” which, according to their webpage, is set to roll out in Winter 2026.

*This bill* requires DDS to establish billing guidance necessary to facilitate a pay differential associated with required training.

*DDS Rate Model Review.* AB 2434 (Mathis), Chapter 904, Statutes of 2024, required DDS to review and update the rate models per the cost inputs available at the time of the review and post the updated rate models on its website every two years. The first model was published this year.<sup>2</sup> The model is not required to be implemented and is merely a model of what rates would be if they were fully funded.

*This bill* clarifies that DSPs must be included in the model review.

**Author’s Statement:** According to the Author, “Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are on the front lines, providing direct and essential support to California's community of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs). This workforce ensures that folks with IDDs maintain their dignity, independence, and access to social opportunities by providing a wide range of supports, including job coaching and employment support, mobility assistance, wound care, and the administration of medication. Unfortunately, California is currently facing a DSP workforce shortage, which severely reduces supports and services for the IDD community. Low wages in exchange for this highly skilled labor are forcing workers to seek employment in other industries to make ends meet.

“[This bill] addresses this issue by standardizing references to DSPs throughout state law, strengthening workforce recognition, enabling consistent data collection, and supporting more effective policy development. By ensuring DSPs are formally recognized in state law, this bill also increases access to supports and services for individuals with IDDs.”

**Equity Implications:** Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who had previously experienced living in more restrictive settings have higher levels of concern about losing their independence if there are not enough DSPs to provide support for them.<sup>3</sup> DSPs are difficult positions to fill given the high responsibility and low wages. DSPs were excluded from the minimum wage increase for healthcare workers.<sup>4</sup> This has created frustration amongst DSPs and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. *This bill* may further equity amongst this workforce and help attract more DSPs to the profession.

**Arguments in support:** Alchemia writes, “Despite the essential role DSPs play in the disability services system and the broader economy, state law currently references them inconsistently and does not clearly define their responsibilities. This lack of clarity makes it more difficult to measure workforce needs, track turnover, and implement effective strategies to build and sustain the workforce. As these challenges persist, individuals with IDD and their families often face disruptions in accessing stable, person-centered support.

---

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/AB2423\\_RateModels\\_Vers202601\\_Master\\_2025-12-31.pdf](https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/AB2423_RateModels_Vers202601_Master_2025-12-31.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.cpcidd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/CPCIDD\\_Report\\_Jan2025.pdf](https://www.cpcidd.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/CPCIDD_Report_Jan2025.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/Health-Care-Worker-Minimum-Wage-FAQ.htm>

“By clearly defining and recognizing DSPs, [this bill] will help strengthen the foundation of the regional center system. A more visible, stable, and supported DSP workforce will ensure that Californians with IDD can reliably access the services they need and deserve.”

**Arguments in opposition:** None on file.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

4 Pillars Care LLC  
Alchemia  
California Disability Services Association  
California Mentor  
California Respite Association  
Care-Rite Vocational Services INC  
College of Adaptive Arts  
Easterseals Southern California  
Fontana Resources at Work  
Goodwill Industries of Oragne County, CA  
Hope Services  
InAlliance  
Jay Nolan Community Services  
Manos Home Care INC.  
Marin Center for Independent Living  
Momentum  
On My Own Independent Living Services  
PathPoint  
Placer Independent Resource Services  
Pleasantview Industries, INC.  
Porterville Sheltered Workshop (PSW)  
PosAbilities INC  
Project Independence  
The Arc Fresno Madera Counties  
Tri-County Respite Care Service  
Villa Esperanza Services

**Opposition**

None on file.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Alexandria Smith / HUM. S. / (916) 319-2089