

**Purchase of Service (POS)
Expenditure Data Report
Redwood Coast Regional Center
May 2025**

This report is provided to the Department of Developmental Services as required in Article VII: Section 6 of Redwood Coast Regional Center's Contract.

Public Meetings Held to Present Purchase of Services Data and Obtain Public Input:

The Redwood Coast Regional Center (RCRC) conducted two public meetings, one in English and one in Spanish, to share Purchase of Service Data and obtain public input regarding ways to improve access and equity.

More than 30 days prior to the meetings, announcements (English and Spanish) were posted on the RCRC website, social media, and RCRC Newsletter. Flyers and public service announcements were provided to all area media. Community partners and the Department of Developmental Services were notified at least 30 days prior to the meetings via email.

The meetings were held on March 18th and 20th of 2025, via Zoom video/teleconference, allowing community members from all four counties RCRC serves to participate, along with other participants from across the State of California. Both meetings commenced at noon, to maximize the opportunity for participants to attend, and time was provided for community members to introduce themselves, ask questions and provide public comments. Presentation material was presented in English and Spanish. Interpreters in Spanish and ASL attended the meeting in English and interpreters in English and ASL attended the meeting in Spanish. Closed Captioning was enabled, and an email was provided for those who preferred to submit questions and input via writing. Information was presented in easy-to-understand language. Step by step guidance with visual support was provided to show how to access the information presented online, including how to switch the RCRC website into another selected language.

Present at the meetings were self-advocates, parents/family members, Regional Center staff, board members, community advocates, community-based organizations, and staff from the Department of Developmental Services. There were over thirty community members. Representatives participated from community organizations and agencies including the Office of Clients Rights, the State Council of Developmental Disability, and GT Independence.

The meetings were opened with acknowledgement of the ancestral Native American land on which the meetings were taking place. Part of the vision statement of the Redwood Regional Center was shared, "It is the vision of Redwood Coast Regional Center that all people in our community, including individuals with developmental disabilities, will live, learn, work, travel, and play in the best, most inclusive environments". The vision statement was followed by sharing the purpose of the meeting.

All meeting participants were directed to the RCRC website containing graphs and charts of the POS expenditure data from 2023-2024 in an easy-to-understand format. The graphs and charts were prepared by RCRC and served as discussion guides for the meeting. The charts and graphs contained required new information regarding expenditure and expenditure trends. Explanatory notes and definitions of terms used in the report and comparisons to statewide data were available. The information can be found at: <https://redwoodcoastrc.org/transparency/reporting/pos-expenditures/>. The postings include the data for FY 2023-2024 as well as POS Expenditure data from prior fiscal years.

Step-by-step explanations with visual support were provided to access the data online. This was followed by sharing the definitions and categories and presenting the purchase of service data. Data, with graphs and tables, was presented including residence, eligibility diagnosis, ethnicity and language (including social recreation, educational services, non-medical services, camping). The data included info on client population, age, per person expenditure, percentage of clients with no POS expenditure, and utilization rates. Information on IPP translation requests and delays, and steps RCRC is taking to improve access and equity was also shared.

Following presentation of the data, the meeting was opened for introductions, questions and public comments. Attendees engaged in public questions and comments, and diverse perspectives were shared. The specific discussion topics/questions may be found in the attached meeting minutes.

The attendees were thanked for their participation. Participants were asked to send any additional comments and/or questions by email by April 1, 2025, to: Disparitydata@redwoodcoastrc.org.

Recommendations and Plans

Through data analysis and feedback from public meetings, RCRC has recognized the importance of continuously improving service access and equity. Below are the areas from last year's plan including steps taken over the past year, as well as the ongoing efforts RCRC continues to take in the year ahead, to improve service access and equity.

Community engagement

Meetings/groups:

RCRC holds community meetings to understand how underserved communities would like to see improvements in service access and equity. Community and client satisfaction data are continually collected and analyzed to enhance the cultural responsiveness of Regional Center services.

Over the past year, RCRC has participated in 42 community meetings, with a total of 1,464 attendees across all events. 15 of the meetings were conducted in Spanish to better engage our Spanish-speaking community, and 10 were in collaboration with our local tribal communities.

On a monthly basis, RCRC hosts a virtual community meeting/training in Spanish, facilitates two in-person Spanish-speaking support groups, and participates in the in-person Brighter Future parent group meetings.

Community meetings offer a space where information about RCRC services can be provided. Parent support groups promote leadership and empowerment among community members. The Brighter Future parent group, supported by the Brighter Futures grant, meets regularly in Hoopa. Efforts have also been made over the past year to expand these group meetings to coastal areas.

Moving forward, RCRC plans to continue community meetings and support groups, as well as planning more listening sessions.

Listening Sessions:

Three in-person listening sessions have been held over the past year. These sessions included bilingual staff and community members, with the majority of the participants identifying as Latin and/or Native American.

Moving forward, to improve access for those unable to attend in-person, RCRC plans to conduct a virtual bilingual staff listening session as well, to better understand the improvements needed during the intake process. RCRC also plans to host two in-person listening sessions covering our full catchment area. One session will be conducted in Spanish in collaboration with Redwood Conecta, a local community-based organization with strong ties to the Spanish-speaking community. The second session will be conducted in English, in partnership with Two Feathers, a Native-led community organization. Spanish interpretation will also be available during this session to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

Outreach events:

RCRC participates in community and cultural events to raise awareness of RCRC's intake process, help individuals and families understand and access RCRC services, and recruit bilingual/bicultural staff.

Over the past year, RCRC has participated in 137 outreach events across Humboldt, Mendocino, Del Norte, and Lake Counties. These events reached a total of 18,624 attendees. Of those, 2,189 identified as Native American, 3,593 as Latin, 154 as Hmong, and 41 as African American. 105 events were held in English and 34 were held in Spanish. It is important to note that our Diversity Outreach team is bilingual, enabling us to effectively engage with Spanish speakers at any event. Additionally, 40 outreach events were considered cultural. Some of the key events we participated in include Día del Niño, Cinco de Mayo, Día de los Muertos, and the California Indian Big Time Celebration.

RCRC covers a large geographical area, including four counties, with many rural and diverse communities. In the year ahead, outreach will continue as an ongoing effort to improve service access and equity. Over the next two months, RCRC diversity outreach is scheduled to participate in over 20 events (including Black Humboldt Juneteenth, Tolowa Dee-Nation Soft Opening, Round Valley Big Time) with more outreach events in the process of development for the year to come.

Collaboration:

RCRC actively collaborates with leaders in Spanish-speaking, Native American, Hmong, Lao, and LGBTQIA+ communities. This includes collaboration with 35 community-based organizations (CBOs), including 14 Native American led organizations, 17 organizations serving the Spanish-speaking community, 3 Lao-focused organizations, 2 African American led organizations and 1 LGBTQIA+ organization. RCRC continues to collaborate with local CBOs to help individuals and families understand and access Regional Center services.

Improving service access in remote and underserved areas:

In addition to outreach efforts through events, meetings, and collaboration, RCRC has an enhanced caseload coordinator team, with dedicated service coordinators working with Latin and Native American communities. RCRC's enhanced team regularly travels to underserved areas within the RCRC service region, including communities such as Hoopa, Orleans, Weitchpec, Willow Creek, Klamath, Covelo, Laytonville, Willits, Lakeport, Kelseyville, Clear Lake, and even Fort Bragg and Manchester. Over the past year, efforts have been made to access these rural areas 4–6 times per month, depending on client needs and geographic location.

The enhanced caseload coordinator team, consisting of four service coordinators, has a reduced caseload ratio (40:1) to allow more time to build relationships and provide individualized support.

RCRC offers travel reimbursements and regularly schedules in-person visits to promote trust, accessibility, and consistent support across our region. The Diversity Outreach team also maintains consistent participation in cultural and community events within these same areas, further strengthening

trust and engagement with the communities RCRC serves. These efforts are critical to maintaining a strong presence in communities that often lack local services, particularly on Tribal reservations.

By enhancing services and support in remote and underserved areas for individuals and their families, many of whom face significant transportation and service access challenges, RCRC is working to reduce barriers and ensure continuity of care.

Given the rural nature of the RCRC service area, access to services remains a key challenge. RCRC will continue to offer travel reimbursement and support service coordination to travel and be a presence with our underserved and remote communities. RCRC has ongoing internal meetings to address staffing and service provider shortages, high caseload-to-provider ratios, rural service challenges, the need for increased bilingual and bicultural services and increased access for underserved populations.

Bilingual-Bicultural Workforce Capacity

In response to community suggestions, RCRC offers accessible training and certification programs to build the capacity of bilingual and bicultural staff through the Service Access and Equity grant.

The 40-hour Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) Training offers participants the foundational skills necessary to begin a career in Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). This training, along with all associated materials, is provided at no cost to participants, thanks to funding from a Service Access Equity grant through the Department of Developmental Services. RCRC developed this initiative to address the significant shortage of RBTs within our service area and to respond to community input to increase bilingual and bicultural service providers. Many regional center clients with approved services and available funding were experiencing lengthy delays in accessing essential behavioral services due to this shortage, which was particularly acute in Latin and Native American communities.

To address this, RCRC has actively promoted the training through increased outreach and by fostering relationships within these underserved communities, with the aim to provide this training and build workforce capacity in these areas, particularly with individuals who are bilingual and/or bicultural. Beyond the training itself, RCRC collaborates with local behavioral agencies to assist graduates with job placement. We also offer stipends, up to \$350, to graduates who pursue certification with the Behavior Analyst Certification Board.

We have seen considerable community interest and have established valuable partnerships with local providers. Training sessions may include parents seeking a deeper understanding of the science behind their children's ABA services, staff from various behavioral agencies and schools, and other individuals who would like to pursue a career in Behavioral Services. We highly value these partnerships, as increased training within the community and among service providers directly contributes to higher quality and availability of care for RCRC clients.

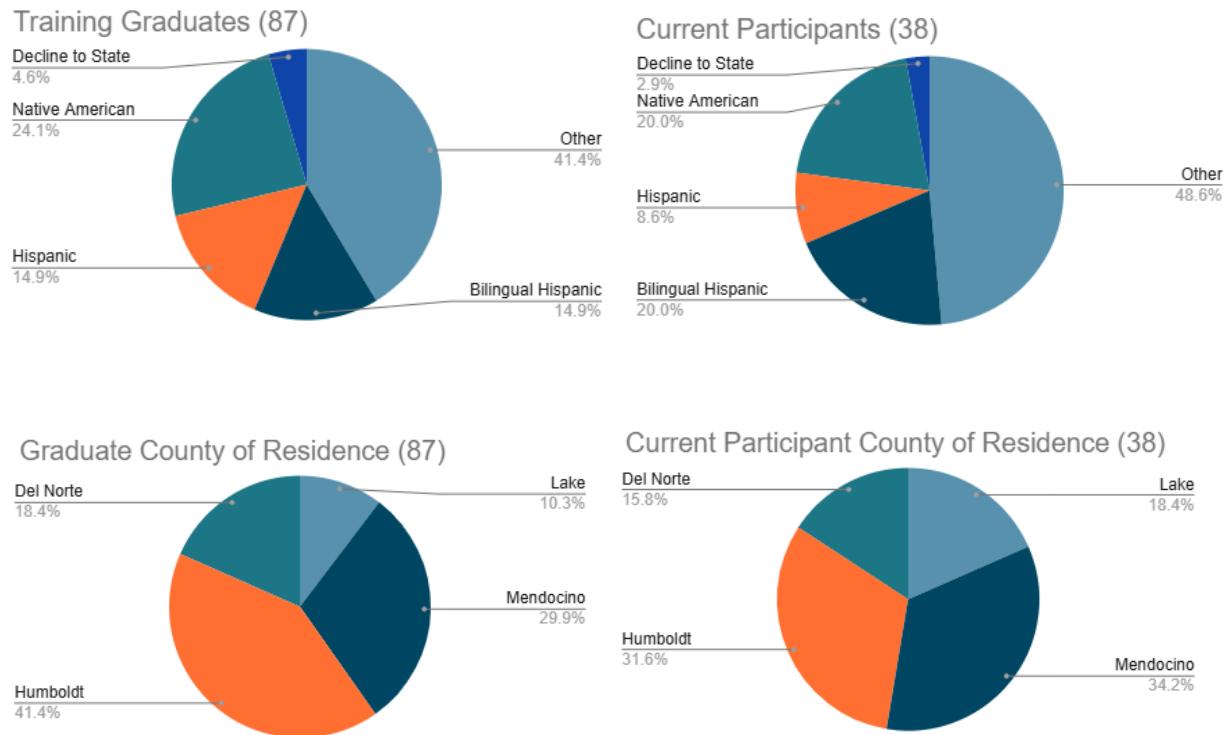
Additionally, we have developed a 16-hour behavioral workshop specifically for Special Education staff. Last fall, we successfully conducted two workshops with Ukiah Unified (33 participants) and Del Norte Unified (42 participants), and we are currently planning two sessions with the Mendocino and Lake County districts for the upcoming school year.

The courses have been offered both online for accessibility across all four counties as well as in-person in underserved areas, with a total of 4 courses completed and another currently in session. All online sessions provide live Spanish translation of the class with documents provided in both English and

Spanish, including the PowerPoint, Quizlet study material (flashcards, quizzes & practice exams) and all Zoom polls.

Over the past year, 87 students have completed the 40-hr RBT course and there are 38 currently in session now. Of these students, a total of 20 are bilingual and 28 are Native American. Below are graphs of the data of the percentages of students, separated by students who have completed the course and students currently in session.

Graphs to support data:



In addition to providing training to increase bilingual and bicultural staff, RCRC provides staff referral incentives and stipends to recruit and retain more bilingual-bicultural staff. RCRC currently has 29 bilingual staff and aims to increase bilingual and bicultural staff numbers further.

Training:

In addition to RCRC offering accessible training and certification programs to build the capacity of bilingual and bicultural staff, RCRC also provides training to clients and RCRC staff and vendors.

Client Trainings:

Monthly online trainings, conducted in Spanish and informed by community-identified needs, are provided for clients. RCRC has hosted 8 virtual training courses covering all four counties in our catchment area. The topics included: IEP training in Spanish, Transition to Adulthood, Meeting my Needs, How to Succeed in IPP, Resources for Parents, Lunch and Learn: Intro to Developmental Disability Services and Regional Centers in California, as well as resources on financial planning in collaboration with CalAble. Over the past year, in response to community input, monthly trainings have also been provided in Spanish on Basic Technology.

RCRC Staff and Vendor Training: RCRC staff and vendors receive training in culturally appropriate practices. Over the past year, training in Cultural Competency & Humility and Implicit Bias has been provided to vendors and all RCRC staff. Further Cultural Humility and Effective Communication trainings are scheduled for the year ahead, including Practicing Cultural Humility and Effective Communication. This includes discussion of historical and cultural factors that impact engagement, trust, and communication, foundations of cultural humility, advocating effectively for families, and how to ensure our language and practices promote dignity and understanding.

Language Access and Cultural Competency:

The Language Access & Cultural Competency (LACC) Grant through the Department of Developmental Services has provided funding support for RCRC to take further steps in many areas. As aforementioned, RCRC hosts community listening sessions, distributes community surveys for ongoing input (312 collected), conducts targeted outreach to multicultural communities within the RCRC service area, and provides monthly technology classes to better assist parents navigating the RCRC systems. RCRC also contracts independent contractors for interpretation at community meetings and translation of documents into multiple languages (24 documents). These services are supported by LACC.

Community-Based Services:

RCRC remains committed to supporting individuals to reside in their communities by continuing to provide community-based services.

Legislative Advocacy:

RCRC is actively involved with legislation and advocacy for RCRC clients. This past year, RCRC client advocates, Executive Director and other RCRC staff members, travelled to Sacramento to advocate for RCRC clients, speaking with governor representatives. Topics addressed included: workforce development, making sure everyone has full access to the community regardless of their type of disability, affirming the Lanterman Act, sharing info received from listening sessions, and working to save Medicaid in partnership with other State organizations. RCRC travels to Sacramento annually to speak with legislation and will continue to advocate for the rights of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Conclusion:

The Redwood Coast Regional Center has been and continues to take many steps to improve service access and equity including community meetings, listening sessions, support groups, data collection, outreach, training, advocacy, contracting independent translators and interpreters, increasing bilingual/bicultural workforce capacity and promoting presence in underserved communities. It is the aim of RCRC to uphold its vision that all people in our community will live, work, travel and play in the best, most inclusive environments.