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SAPC INFORMATION NOTICE 26-12

July 22, 2026

TO: Substance Use Disorder
Contracted Treatment Provider Agencies

FROM: Brian Hurley, M.D., M.B.A., Interim Bureau Director
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control Bureau 

SUBJECT: **FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027 BILINGUAL BONUS CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT**

Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) is issuing an Information Notice to notify existing and new treatment provider agencies about changes in how SAPC's Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project is implemented.

The Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project will no longer be administered under SAPC's Payment Reform Value Based Initiatives (VBI). During FY 26-27 it will be administered under the authority of this Information Notice.

SAPC is committed to ensuring that treatment provider agencies can offer culturally and linguistically appropriate services to their clients. The Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project supports treatment provider agencies in recruiting and retaining bilingual direct service staff that are able to offer Substance Use Disorder (SUD) treatment services in a client's chosen non-English language (i.e., language concordance). Studies have shown that language concordance when applied in the treatment settings improves client engagement and retention.

What follows outlines the eligibility, allowable use of funds, and describes steps for approval and reimbursement.

ELIGIBILITY AND GUIDELINES

Eligible Direct Service Staff:

Bilingual bonus reimbursement will only be available to the following practitioner types that have demonstrated language proficiency and who provide direct SUD treatment services under SAPC Drug Medi-Cal (DMC) Organized Delivery System (ODS) contracts:

- **Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts (LPHA) Direct Service Bilingual Staff** – Refers to licensed and licensed eligible *psychologists, clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and clinical counseling practitioners* who currently or will be able to offer direct services in at least one identified non-English threshold language and who has demonstrated proficiency in that language.
- **SUD Counselor/Peer Support Specialist Direct Service Bilingual** – Refers to *registered/certified SUD counselors*, (this may include Case Managers or Care Coordinators only when they are registered/ certified SUD Counselors) and *certified peer support specialists* who currently or will be able to offer direct services in at least one identified non-English threshold language and who has demonstrated proficiency in that language.

Language Proficiency Assessments

Language proficiency is based on results from a standardized language proficiency exam (e.g., American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL], Interagency Language Roundtable [ILR]) at the level of advanced (2+ using ILR) or higher in speaking and listening. Results must be in the form of a certificate (or other approved evidence) produced by a recognized testing agency.

- **SAPC-Sponsored Language Proficiency Testing:**
SAPC has engaged a vendor – TransPerfect Language – who will conduct language proficiency testing at no cost to providers or staff. This supports treatment provider agencies' verification of the language proficiency of bilingual direct service staff. Only one proficiency assessment per eligible staff will be provided.
- **Agency Provided Language Proficiency:**
Treatment provider agencies that maintain their own language proficiency assessment processes and who wish to participate in the Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project **must** submit their assessment and language proficiency policies for SAPC approval in advance.

Instructions for accessing SAPC sponsored language proficiency testing will be provided upon approval to participate in the Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project.

Treatment Provider Agency Participation Eligibility

All treatment provider agencies that wish to participate in the Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project must submit the below documents **by August 14, 2026**:

1. Completed [Language Access Plan \(LAP\) Worksheet](#): **ONLY** required for agencies that did not participate in the VBI Bilingual Bonus FY 24/2025 or 25/26. Submit the LAP according to the instructions in the LAP worksheet also accessible in the [CRLA tab](#) under Manual, Bulletins and Guides webpage.
2. Completed Attachment 1 - Bilingual Bonus Participation Attestation and Agreement submitted to EAS@ph.lacounty.gov.

The bilingual bonus will be paid through your DMC contract. Treatment provider agencies should monitor their funding utilization to ensure appropriate use of funds and to determine if augmentation is required. Treatment provider agencies should also establish a separate cost center for this project to accurately track and support these reimbursements.

REIMBURSEMENT:

Bilingual Bonus reimbursement is based on approved invoices and on the following rates:

- LPHA Direct Service Bilingual Staff: \$150 per month per eligible staff
- SUD Counselor/Peer Support Specialist Direct Service Bilingual Staff: \$100 per month per eligible staff

Reimbursement for non-certified bilingual direct service staff becomes effective the month they obtain certified proficiency.

INVOICE/SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND TIMELINES:

Bilingual bonus reimbursements are processed on a quarterly basis for eligible staff.

Quarterly Submission Timelines:

Quarterly Submission Deadline	Quarter Covered
October 10 th	July – September 2026
January 10 th	October – December 2026
March 10 th	January – March 2027
July 10 th	April – June 2027

Deadlines for submissions of invoices and supporting documentation are FIRM. For each quarterly deadline, SAPC will only accept invoices and documentation covering the applicable quarter. Forms submitted for reimbursement from prior quarters will not be accepted.

Supporting Documentation Requirements

To receive bilingual bonus reimbursements for eligible direct service staff, each quarter, provider agencies shall:

- Complete and submit the [Bilingual Bonus Submission Form](#)
 - This is the bilingual bonus invoice
 - Only one form per treatment provider agency
- Submit copies of language proficiency test results for eligible direct service staff – this document is **ONLY** for *Agency Provided Language Proficiency* assessments approved by SAPC.
- Provide documentation verifying that staff were paid a bilingual bonus.
Acceptable documentation includes the following:
 - Pay Stub (preferred): A copy of each staff's paystub(s) or warrant(s) for the entire reporting period, with the amount paid for Bilingual Bonus clearly identified or highlighted.
 - OR**
 - General Ledger: A copy of the general ledger indicating payroll amounts for the entire reporting period, with the amount paid for Bilingual Bonus clearly identified or highlighted.
 - AND**
 - For treatment provider agencies using differentials **ONLY**, completed [Supplemental Bilingual Differential Verification form](#) outlining methodology

for converting the SAPC-provided Bilingual Bonus into a differential. This MUST be signed by the appropriate party (no printed names will be accepted).

- Submit invoice and supporting documentation to EAS@ph.lacounty.gov. by the submission deadlines.

More information on the Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project is available in Attachment 2- Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project FAQ.

COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING

As with all County reimbursement for services, these funds are subject to programmatic and fiscal compliance verification. Funds must be accurately tracked and used as described in this information notice. Any instance of non-compliance may result in a Corrective Action Plan or other contract action. Additionally, funds not fully or accurately supported are subject to recoupment.

EFFECTIVE PERIOD

This guidance will be effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, unless otherwise revised.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional questions or requests, please contact EAS@ph.lacounty.gov.

BH:am

Attachments:

- I. Bilingual Bonus Participation Attestation and Agreement
- II. Bilingual Bonus Capacity Building Project FAQ