

A simple step-by-step guide for families considering Trexo

At a Glance

The Self-Determination Program (SDP) is a California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) program for eligible regional center consumers. It gives individuals and their families more freedom, control, and responsibility in choosing services and supports that help meet goals in their Individual Program Plan (IPP).

The program is voluntary and is available to eligible individuals receiving regional center services.

Traditional Model vs. Self-Determination

- Traditional model: The regional center purchases services from regional-center vendors.
 - Self-Determination Program: The participant and family have more control over choosing services and supports, within an individual budget and the rules of the SDP.
-

Before You Begin

- SDP is based on your child's individual needs and goals. There is no guarantee that a particular item or service, including Trexo, will be approved.
 - Your request should explain your child's specific needs, how those needs affect daily life, and how the requested support would help meet goals in the IPP.
 - Generic resources, such as Medi-Cal, private insurance, IHSS, or school services, generally must be used first when they are available and applicable.
 - SDP may be able to fund services, supports, and certain goods that address an identified need or goal in your child's IPP, meet federal and California SDP requirements, are not available through another applicable funding source, and meet the other requirements of the SDP spending plan.
-

Step 1: Contact Your Regional Center

Tell your regional center service coordinator that you are interested in the Self-Determination Program and want to learn how to get started. Ask what your regional center requires for the current SDP enrollment process.

Step 2: Complete the Required SDP Orientation

For new participants, the SDP orientation currently consists of two required two-hour sessions.

- Part A must be completed before Part B.
 - Both sessions must be completed before SDP enrollment and before accessing SDP transition supports.
 - As of April 1, 2026, the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) is the approved statewide provider of the SDP orientation.
 - If you completed the SDP orientation before April 1, 2026, or are already enrolled in SDP, you do not have to take it again.
-

Step 3: Build a Person-Centered Plan and Explain Why Trexo Is Needed

Work with your planning team to identify what is important to your child and what your child needs to achieve their goals. Keep the focus on your child rather than on claims about Trexo.

- Your child's strengths and interests
 - Your child's goals
 - What your child needs to meet those goals
 - Current supports and services
 - What your child is currently able and unable to do
 - Unmet needs and limitations, and include how that impacts your child's daily life or goals
 - Supports that could help meet those needs
 - How the requested supports relate to your child's IPP goals and how it would be used in day to day life
-

Step 4: Gather Supporting Documentation

Ask the appropriate professionals involved in your child's care to document your child's specific needs and why the requested support is appropriate.

- Letter of medical necessity or clinical support, when appropriate (Trexo has a template for you to use)
- Prescription for Trexo usage
- Physical therapy or other clinical documentation
- Relevant evaluations or assessments
- Documentation from a Trexo trial, if available

A Trexo trial can be useful if available, but a trial should not be presented as an automatic DDS requirement.

Step 5: Develop the Individual Budget

The individual budget is the amount of money available to purchase needed services and supports through SDP.

- The IPP team determines the individual budget.

- For people with an established service history, the budget is generally based on the regional-center purchase-of-service funds used during the most recent 12 months, with adjustments when allowed.
 - The budget can be adjusted when the IPP team determines that the participant's needs, circumstances, or resources have changed.
 - For someone who does not have a 12-month purchase-of-service history, the IPP team identifies needed services and supports and available resources to determine the budget.
 - The individual budget cannot exceed what the regional center would have spent to provide the needed services under the traditional model.
-

Step 6: Create the Spending Plan

The spending plan explains how you will use the individual budget to implement your child's IPP.

- List the services, supports, and items you need.
- Explain how each one relates to an IPP goal or identified need.
- Identify how often each service will be provided and its cost.
- The total spending plan cannot exceed the individual budget.
- The spending plan is attached to the IPP.
- The regional center reviews the spending plan to make sure it follows state and federal requirements.
- What Does the Regional Center Review?
- The regional center reviews your spending plan to make sure it follows California and federal Self-Determination Program requirements. In general, the review considers whether:
 - The requested goods or services address identified needs or goals in your child's IPP.
 - The purchase meets applicable SDP and federal Medicaid funding requirements.
 - Another applicable funding source, such as Medi-Cal, private insurance, IHSS, or school services, is available and must be used first.
- The spending plan fits within your child's individual budget.
- Any applicable provider qualifications and other program requirements are met.
- Federal Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) rules also support person-centered planning, individual choice, and participation in community life.
- For families: You do not need to interpret federal Medicaid rules on your own. Ask your regional center service coordinator to explain the requirements that apply to your specific request.
- Remember: Trexo is not automatically approved or excluded simply because it is equipment. Approval depends on the applicable requirements and the individual circumstances of the request. Provide appropriate clinical documentation and any available trial information. Do not assume that a physician letter, trial, or particular type of documentation guarantees approval.

Step 7: Consider an Independent Facilitator

An Independent Facilitator (IF) can help you understand and use SDP.

- Help with person-centered planning
- Help identify services and supports
- Help develop the spending plan
- Help coordinate services
- Help you participate in the planning process and advocate for your child

You may choose whether to use an Independent Facilitator. If you do not use one, your regional center service coordinator may provide the applicable support functions.

Step 8: Work With a Financial Management Services Provider

Every SDP participant must use a Financial Management Services (FMS) provider.

- The FMS helps manage the individual budget and spending plan.
- The FMS pays providers and employees directly.
- The FMS can help with hiring, provider qualifications, payroll, taxes, and other employment requirements.
- The FMS provides spending information to help you track the budget.
- The cost of the FMS is paid by the regional center and does not come out of the participant's individual budget.

Step 9: If Trexo Is Denied

If the regional center denies a request, ask for the decision in writing and keep a copy.

You have appeal rights, including:

- An informal meeting
- Mediation
- A fair hearing

You can choose the appeal option that is appropriate for your situation, and you may request a fair hearing.

Important deadlines:

- You generally have 60 days from receiving the notice of the decision to request an appeal.
- If you request an appeal within 30 days, you may be able to keep existing services in place while the appeal is pending (aid paid pending), when applicable.

Do not wait until the deadline is close. If you disagree with a decision, ask your regional center about your appeal rights right away.

Step 10: Keep a Funding File

Keep copies of everything related to your request.

- IPP documents
- Person-centered planning documents
- Individual budget
- Spending plan
- Letters from doctors, PTs, and other professionals
- Evaluations and assessments
- Trexo trial documentation
- Emails and letters from the regional center
- Funding decisions or denial letters
- Appeal or hearing paperwork
- Important dates and deadlines

Tips for Families

- Start with your child's needs and goals.
- Be specific about what your child needs and why.
- Connect the requested support to the IPP.
- Use your child's own experiences and examples.
- Consider needs at home and in the community.
- Ask questions if you do not understand a regional-center decision.
- Consider other funding sources when appropriate.
- Keep all documents and calendar every deadline.

Where to Get Help

Email: sdp@dds.ca.gov

Families can also contact their regional center for help getting started.

Important: SDP rules, service definitions, budgets, and procedures can change. Always confirm current requirements with DDS and your regional center before making a funding request.

Tips from a parent who used SDP

- Enroll in the Self-Determination Program. Approval under the traditional regional-center model is likely to be much harder.
- Describe the request as your child's unmet need, tied to their goals: for example, the physical activity they are not getting now, and how it supports their other personal goals.

- Ask your child's physician for a letter that explains why the doctor recommends it for your child.
- If the request is denied, do not be afraid to ask for a hearing. This parent went to hearings twice; both times the regional center offered the request shortly before the hearing date.

Watch a webinar from a mom who has had success with the Self-Determination Program:

[youtube.com/watch?v=0va94Lh_4eA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0va94Lh_4eA)

Updated October 2026

Trexo Robotics. General information, not legal advice. Program rules change; confirm current requirements with DDS and your regional center. Trexo Theo is a prescription device; see the full Indications for Use and safety information at us.trexorobotics.com/safety.