



CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

Office of the Secretary

October 14, 2026

The Honorable Todd W. Blanche
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Blanche:

In the 1999 *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision, the United States Supreme Court held that people with disabilities have the right to live in their communities, reinforcing the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These laws and the Supreme Court decision describe the isolation and segregation of people with disabilities as a serious, pervasive form of discrimination.

On June 18, 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Legal Counsel issued a legal opinion targeting *Olmstead v. L.C.* that threatens the integration rights of people with disabilities to live, work, receive services, and participate in their communities. On July 20, 2026, the DOJ declared that it will not enforce its longstanding *Olmstead* guidance, issued June 22, 2011.

Disability is a part of the human experience that connects us all. California is deeply concerned with the federal government's active undermining of the strongest civil rights protections supporting dignity, independence, and choice for people with disabilities. California strongly opposes any federal action that weakens these protections against unnecessary segregation, protections that have been in place for decades.

California affirms its strong and continuing commitment to the community integration principles upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision. We reject any federal action that diminishes our country's progress and leadership in supporting the rights and opportunities of people to live and participate meaningfully in communities. And the federal government should

recognize that its own actions fly in the face of its purported focus on fiscal responsibility. Caring for a person in an institution costs 9 times as much as caring for that person in a community setting. Many decades of federal policy and funding incentives prove this point.

California has made significant progress in strengthening community living options. Through the Lanterman Act, California guarantees that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are entitled to receive developmental services and supports in the least restrictive, most integrated setting based on each person's needs and choices. Developmental services are coordinated and delivered through a statewide network of 21 community-based, non-profit regional centers. In 2020, the last non-forensic residents of California's developmental centers transitioned to community settings. Through the [Master Plan for Developmental Services](#), California and community partners continuously work to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can live in inclusive communities with the resources they need to thrive. In alignment with the *Olmstead* decision, California now provides many supports for individuals living in communities across the State.

People may age with or into a disability. California older adult population is projected to reach nearly 10 million people by 2030, 25 percent of the state's total population. Through its comprehensive statewide aging framework – the [Master Plan for Aging](#) (MPA) – California takes a cross-sector approach to respond to the unique and growing needs of older adults, including older adults with disabilities. California has made investments to the state's home and community-based services (HCBS) programs that support Californians to live safely at home and avoid institutionalization. These include ensuring that comprehensive developmental services are covered for eligible Medi-Cal members in both fee-for-service and managed care delivery systems, including through expansions to Medi-Cal waiver programs, strengthening In-Home Supportive Services, providing caregiving education and training, and supporting Community-Based Adult Services and Multipurpose Senior Services Program, among others. In addition, the state's Independent Living Center network provides support to individuals currently living in institutions who want to return to the community.

California further recognizes that community integration includes meaningful access to employment and economic opportunity. Through the Vocational Rehabilitation program, California remains committed to supporting people with disabilities in pursuing competitive integrated employment, which can be essential to achieving greater economic independence, and full community participation.

California will continue to uphold the critical and non-negotiable community integration principle of the *Olmstead* decision that everyone is entitled to. We will continue to provide the services and supports individuals need to live, learn, work, and fully participate in their chosen communities. We urge the federal government to rescind the Department of Justice's June 18, 2026, legal opinion and to continue to rely upon its 2011 guidance, consistent with the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kim Johnson", followed by a large, stylized circular flourish.

Kim Johnson
Secretary
California Health and Human Services Agency