



Caseload Ratio Public Meeting

Developing a Plan of Correction

August 3, 2023

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm (English with Spanish translation)

6:00 pm to 7:30 pm (Spanish with English translation)

Purpose of Public Meeting

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Background

- The Department of Developmental Services (“DDS”) is the agency through which the State of California provides services and supports to individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.
- Each year, DDS provides information about NLACRC’s Service Coordinator-to-consumer ratios.
- This year NLACRC’s Service Coordinator-to-Consumer ratios are higher than the ratios allowed in the Lanterman Act.
- DDS requires that regional centers hold a public meeting when caseload ratios are too high.

Purpose of this meeting

- Share information about which of NLACRC’s Service Coordinator-to-consumer ratios are too high and why.
- Get recommendations from the community about how to make NLACRC’s Service Coordinator-to-consumer ratios lower.

What to expect

- NLACRC will create a Plan of Correction.
- The Plan of Correction will include information from this public meeting and recommendations from the public.

NLACRC Mission Statement

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NLACRC's mission is to create a community (including families) where each individual with a developmental disability has the opportunity to live a healthy, productive, and inclusive life.

About NLACRC

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- NLACRC is **1 of 21** regional centers in California.
- NLACRC is the **largest** of the 7 regional centers in LA County.
- We served a total of **33,139** consumers as of February 2023
 - Active Consumers: **31,433**
 - Active Applicants in Intake: **1,706**
- We serve consumers in San Fernando Valley, Santa Clarita Valley, and Antelope Valley.

What is a Caseload Ratio?

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A caseload ratio tells us the number of consumers being served by Service Coordinator.

NLACRC's caseload ratios are high.

This means, in some cases, too many consumers are sharing a single Service Coordinator.

Regional Center Operations Budget

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- Each regional center is given money to operate their business. This is the operations budget.
- The operations budget is different than the purchase of services budget each regional center receives to purchase services for consumers.
- A regional center's operations budget is decided through a formula. The formula for the operations budget is a "tool" to decide how much money DDS will give to the regional center.
- The formula is based on the number of consumers that the regional center serves and the cost of hiring different positions.
- Since each regional center has different operations' needs, each regional center might need to use the operations budget money differently.

Regional Center Operations Budget

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Core Staffing Formula:

- The operations budget includes money for employee salaries. The amount of money is based on the "**Core Staffing Formula.**" The Core Staffing Formula has not been updated **since the 1990's.**
- **This means that regional centers do not get enough money in their operations budget for Service Coordinator salaries and benefits based on today's hiring costs.**

Funding Challenges – Operations Budget Reduction

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Operations Budget Reduction:

- NLACRC's Operations Budget is reduced by nearly \$3.5 million (4%)
- Nearly \$2.0 million of the \$3.5 million reduction is unallocated reductions (going back to FY 2002-2012) – which have never been restored by the States Legislators.

Funding Challenges – Money Allocation

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Money Given For Service Coordinator Positions:



- For every **5** Service Coordinator positions funded in the Operations Budget based on the Core Staffing Funding, **the money only actually funds 3 positions.**
- This is because the average monthly salary for a Service Coordinator is **higher** than the money given to NLACRC for that position.
- NLACRC receives funds for 291 out of the 486 Service Coordinators needed to meet caseload ratios. This is the number of CSCs needed as of February 2023.
- NLACRC would need **\$14.9 million** more to hire all 486 Service Coordinators to meet the caseload ratios.

Regional Center Operations Budget – Additional Funding

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- Effective in FY2019-2020, Senate Bill 81 provided money to regional centers to hire more Service Coordinators to establish 1:25 service coordinator-to-consumer caseload ratio for Consumers with complex needs.
 - Consumers with complex needs are those Consumers who reside in or are at risk of residing in one of the following places:
 - ✦ Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMD);
 - ✦ Community Crisis Homes;
 - ✦ State-Operated Acute Crisis Homes;
 - ✦ Out-Of-State Placement; or
 - ✦ Admitted into a psychiatric hospital several times during the preceding six months
- This funding is called “**Specialized Caseload.**”
- The “Specialized Caseload” funding is in addition to the “Core Staffing” funding.

Regional Center Operations Budget – Additional Funding

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- In FY2022-2023, the state budget provided money to regional centers to hire more Service Coordinators to reduce service coordinator-to-consumer caseloads to 1:40 for a specific number of consumers per regional center; NLACRC is authorized to serve 240 families at the 1:40 ratio.
- This funding is called “**Enhanced Service Coordination**”
- The “Enhanced Service Coordination” funding is in addition to the “core staffing” funding.
- Enhanced Service Coordination prioritizes individuals or families who are monolingual and have low purchase of services expenditures or no purchase of services expenditures in accessing services and supports and to continue accessing needed services once transitioned back to a non-specialized service coordinator ratio.

Regional Center Operations Budget – Additional Funding

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- The FY 2022-23 state budget included \$61.8 Million of funding for to increase the number of service coordinators by 921 statewide. This is specifically to reduce service coordinator-to-consumer caseload ratios overall.
- This funding is called “Caseload Ratio Relief.”
- The “Caseload Ratio Relief” funding is in addition to the “core staffing” funding.
- NLACRC has been working to hire service coordinators

What are the Highest Caseload Ratios Allowed?

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The Lanterman Act sets the following caseload ratios for different types of residences and programs:

Residence/Program	Caseload Ratio
Consumers on Medicaid Waiver who do not fall in any other category here	1:62
Consumers under 3 on the Medicaid Waiver	1:62
Consumers who moved from a Developmental Center to the community for more than 24 months	1:62
Consumers who moved from a Developmental Center to the community between 12 and 24 month	1:45
Consumers who moved from a Developmental Center to the community within the last 12 months	1:45
Complex needs	1:25
Low/no purchase of service (This is enhanced service coordination. (Under the DDS contract, this category has a total of 240 individuals.)	1:40
All others	1:66

NLACRC's Caseload Ratios – Chart

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Caseload Ratio Measures	# of Consumers	# of Service Coordinators Assigned	NLACRC Caseload Ratio	# of Service Coordinators Required	# of Service Coordinators Needed
Early Start (1:62) This does not include Early Start intake applicants	7,933	65	1:57	60	0
Medicaid Waiver (1:62)	10,120	118	1:85	161	44
Moved from DC in the community for over 24 months (1:62)	91	1	1:62	1	0
Moved from DC in the community between 12 and 24 months (1:45)	8	1	1:36	1	0
Moved from DC in the community within the last 12 months (1:45)	3	1	1:36	1	0
All Others (1:66)	14,770	169	1:88	224	55
Complex Needs (1:25)	194	10	1:19	8	0
Low or No Purchase of Service (1:40)	240	6	1:40	6	0

This chart is based on a point in time on 2/28/23.

Staff included in the caseload ratio count

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Regional Centers may include non-service coordinator staff in the caseload ratio count:

- DDS' formula for establishing caseload ratios seeks to capture all positions that perform case management, which includes activities ensuring health & safety, care and supervision, person centered services and self-determination service delivery.
- When the regional center temporarily assigns an active Consumer Caseload due to service coordinator vacancies or leave of absence.

How Does NLACRC Compare?

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Description	Required Caseload Ratio	NLACRC Caseload Ratio	Statewide Caseload Ratio	Comments
Early Start	1:62	1:66	1:65	NLACRC did not meet required ratio.
Medicaid Waiver	1:40	1:90	1:78	NLACRC did not meet required ratio
Moved from DC in the community for over 24 months	1:62	1:74	1:60	NLACRC did not meet required ratio
Moved from DC in the community between 12 and 24 months	1:45	1:36	1:52	NLACRC is under the caseload ratio and statewide average
Moved from DC – in the community within the last 12 months	1:45	1:36	1:45	NLACRC is under the caseload ratio and statewide average
All Others	1:66	1:83	1:76	NLACRC did not meet required ratio
Complex Needs	1:25	1:21	1:24	NLACRC is under the caseload ratio and statewide average
Low or No Purchase of Service	1:40	1:40	1:33	NLACRC met required ratio

Staff included in the caseload ratio count - Continue

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Staff included in the caseload ratio count include:

- Service Coordinators with an active consumer caseload, and complex needs caseloads
- Other staff assigned to active consumer caseload:
 - Case Management Supervisors
 - Floaters
- Other staff not assigned directly to cases but perform activities tied to case management
 - Specialists (Floater, Self-Determination Program (SDP), OD, QA)
 - Service Coordinators hired on March 1, 2023 - who were not yet assigned a specific caseload

NLACRC's Caseload Ratios - Unmet

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NLACRC **did not meet** these Service Coordinator-to-consumer ratios:

- Early Start
- Medicaid Waiver
- DC movers in the community over 24 months
- DC movers in the community between 12 to 24 months
- DC movers in the community at least 12 months
- All others

NLACRC's Caseload Ratios - Met

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NLACRC **met** these Service Coordinator-to-consumer ratios:

- Complex needs
- Low or no Purchase of Service

Current Status of Caseload Ratios

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The ratios stated in the table reviewed previously on slide 17 are an *average* of the positions within the Regional Center that are funded for case management, which include additional positions (specialist) to support case management.

- The actual caseload ratios for a **service coordinator**, across the Case Management Department at NLACRC, are between the range of high 90s to 114.

Community Recommendations

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NLACRC received recommendations last year from the community (individuals served, families, vendors, staff, other individuals) about caseload ratios. Recommendations are included on this slide and the next few slides. This list includes those recommendations that NLACRC is able to assess for potential changes in outcome. NLACRC is also asking for more recommendations this year on our survey.

Recommendation	Outcome
Hire more Service Coordinators.	NLACRC is hiring additional service coordinators, including service coordinators for enhanced service coordination. Hiring additional service coordinators is a priority! NLACRC is conducting job fairs in both the San Fernando Valley and the Antelope Valley to recruit CSCs (and other positions); the Center is also attending job fairs at local colleges and universities to recruit. NLACRC is partnering with the American Job Centers of California (AJCC) to recruit in the Antelope Valley and is expanding that effort to the San Fernando Valley. We are also exploring the use of temp-to-hire staff for the CSC position and implementing a tuition reimbursement program which may help recruit and retain staff. We are implementing a decrease in education and experience requirement once the Lead Trainer positions are filled to facilitate more recruitment efforts.

Community Recommendations

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Recommendation	Outcome
Create positions that will support the role of Service Coordinators, e.g., the Quality Assurance team that oversees and provides guidance to vendors.	NLACRC is releasing a Quality Improvement and Outcomes Manager position to help support quality assurance efforts.
Hire more employees that are qualified e.g., assistants/secretaries, supervisors to meet the needs of families.	The hiring process requires rigorous assessments and interviews that result in hiring qualified applicants who then are provided with hands-on training in their first six months.
Smaller caseloads for families that aren't accessing services	NLACRC has specialized Case Management unit for individuals we service with no services to low funded services. We currently have 6 CSCs and 240 consumers in the enhanced unit that receive enhanced coordination to assist with service provision and to meet consumer/family's needs.

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
Offer part-time positions for highly qualified staff	NLARC does not offer part-time positions at this time. This recommendation is under consideration.
Higher wages for Service Coordinators to be competitive and attract more qualified candidates	Higher wages has attracted more qualified candidates and increased job satisfaction, improved performance, and better service delivery for the organization.
Have Supervisors fill in when there is no assigned CSC.	Supervisors will often help support uncovered cases in their unit, as they are able. NLACRC is expanding on the CSC Floater and OD positions to support cases that do not have an assigned CSC.

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
Something needs to be done to bring in more employees	Hiring efforts have expanded to not only advertise openings but to also reach out to our community to provide them with information on the job opportunities available at NLACRC to include City's; Economic Alliance Agencies; Universities; Colleges and during outreach community events, AJCC events.

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
<p>Streamline training and provide CSCs with tools needed (time management) to succeed and be more empathetic and understanding with people with special needs.</p>	<p>NLACRC's training for new service coordinators is being revised and improvements in training are underway to implement virtual training that can be reviewed by CSCs as needed. Additionally, Person-Centered Planning (PCP) training will be provided by certified trainers.</p>
<p>Provide list of services</p>	<p>We have printed brochures that provide a list of available services, called Common Services Brochure (by age). This information is provided to all new consumers, families, and at regularly scheduled meetings. It is also available on our website, and by request.</p>
<p>Assign a single CSC to consumers that are part of the same family that are receiving similar services.</p>	<p>It is a practice at NLACRC to assign family members to the same Consumer Services Coordinator, though there are times when it is not possible.</p>

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
Provide clients & caregivers with specific information to encourage political and budgetary changes to improve services.	NLACRC and its Board of Trustees is actively involved in legislative advocacy, hosts an annual legislative event, and reviews potential legislation that impacts our community. Information regarding opportunities to advocate will be provided in our News You Can Use email letters, on our FaceBook and Instagram pages and on our website.
Create self-service options for searching for service providers	NLACRC's website provides a list of vendors available to the community to identify vendors as needed.
Provide more self-serve tools on regional center's website	NLACRC currently has the tools Case Management uses to assess services such as family support/respice available on our website and by request.

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
<p>Service Coordinator caseloads should include cases from each age group (School Age, Transition, and Adult).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each age group has different needs, potentially different public benefits, and are in different stages in life. Service coordinators in each age group have a unique skill set to serve their assigned age group. In an effort for effective service coordination, NLACRC organizes its caseloads by age group.• NLACRC's Consumer Services Directors routinely review caseload equity. Consumer Services Directors and Supervisors receive monthly caseload status reports.

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
To reduce CSC caseload, obtain copies of consumer's reports e.g., Annual, Semi-Annual from providers	NLACRC requires that vendors provide reports to individuals we serve and the CSC. For convenience, NLACRC has dedicated email boxes for the provision of specific types of reports.
Include Early Start as part of Intake department to ensure families and children served are eligible for services vs. opening and closing cases for applications that are incomplete.	An Early Start Intake Department was created with a group of intake coordinators to assist families with applications, and coordination of clinical evaluations to determine eligibility under the Lanterman Act.
Assess cause of high staff turnover	NLACRC is consistently conducting exit interviews to gather information regarding staff turnover and receives information from current staff regarding their understanding of turnover.

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
<p>Provide better training by more experienced case coordinators to new coordinators.</p>	<p>NLACRC has established 15 Lead Trainer CSC positions to train new CSC staff and support the onboarding and training a new CSC receives when joining the organization; we are currently recruiting for these positions.</p> <p>Additionally, NLACRC trains Service Coordinators (and other staff) on important topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) foundational training• Notice of Proposed Actions• Self Determination Program• Adult Protective Services• IHSS <p>We also routinely assess additional training needs.</p>

Community Recommendations - Continued

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Recommendation	Outcome
Provide more information about services on your website.	<p>Some of the useful information on NLACRC's website includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide for Consumers and Families• Common Services brochures and supplement with regional center services and descriptions• Updated service standards• Assessment tools• Emergency preparedness• NLACRC's town halls• Information about COVID-19

Legislative and Community Engagement

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Legislative and Community Engagement

- NLACRC works with its legislators and the community to try to find ways to help solve the problems that create high caseloads. These include:

Efforts

- We work with a Legislative Educator Consultant to assist us with legislative activities and engagement.
- Each year we provide legislative advocacy training for Board members and management staff. We have recorded a legislative advocacy training in English and Spanish, which are available on NLACRC's YouTube page and website.
- Board members and staff also participate in Legislative Academies.

Legislative and Community Engagement - continued

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Effort

- Individuals served, their families, vendors, and NLACRC staff met with legislators throughout the year at their local district offices to keep them informed about our most critical issues.
- Individuals served, their families, vendors, and NLACRC staff met with legislators as part of Grass Roots Day through the Association of Regional Center Agencies (ARCA).
- ARCA advocates for guaranteed funding required for compliance with federal, state, and local mandates.
- Festival Educacional will be held on August 12, 2023.
- We hold quarterly town hall meetings about important and useful topics, including services available at NLACRC, and changes in the Lanterman Act, including how services are provided by NLACRC.

Legislative and Community Engagement - continued

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Efforts

- We conduct local grassroots outreach regarding the services available through NLACRC. Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Supervisor conducts “meet and greets” with local agencies to share information about NLACRC and build relationships in the community.
- We held public meetings on topics including:
 - Purchase of Service disparity data (held March 16, 2023, in English, and March 21, 2023, in Spanish);
 - Caseload ratios (held May 3, 2022);
 - NCI Public Meeting (held March 8, 2023)
 - NLACRC’s Performance Contract (held September 20, 2022, in English, and September 22, 2022, in Spanish)
- We have several forums for families to discuss ideas, share concerns, ask questions and get information. These groups include:
 - Cafecito Entre Nos (“Coffee Amongst Us”)
 - Aprendiendo Entre Nos (“Learning Between Us”)
 - Alianza de Hombres (“Men’s Alliance”)
 - Black/African American Support Group
 - Filipino Support Group

NLACRC's Commitment to our Community

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NLACRC is committed to meeting the needs of the individuals we serve regardless of:

- age,
- race or ethnicity,
- diagnosis, or
- where people live



NLACRC Wants to Hear From You

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We want your feedback and suggestions on how to address caseload ratios.

Follow the links below to complete our brief online survey by **August 9, 2023**.

The survey is available in English and Spanish.

- English version: <https://rebrand.ly/CLRatioSurvey2023>
- Spanish version: <https://rebrand.ly/CLRatioSurvey2023SP>



Thank you!

Appendix

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Requirements Related to Caseload Ratio

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Welfare & Institutions Code, §4640.6

- Establishes service coordinator-to-consumer ratios to ensure that regional center staffing patterns demonstrate direct service coordination are the highest priority.
- Regional centers must report to the Department of Developmental Services ("DDS") on service coordinator-to-consumer ratios in March of each fiscal year
- Regional center to post notice at least ten (10) days prior to the public meeting.
 - Information about the Caseload Ratio public meeting was shared through these platforms:
 - Emails were sent to over 22,000 individuals once each week beginning on 7/18/23.
 - ✦ Information was also included in NLACRC's weekly News You Can Use newsletter that is emailed to over 22,000 individuals
 - ✦ Information was posted on the NLACRC website calendar and home page.
 - ✦ Social media posts on NLACRC's Facebook (English and Spanish), Instagram (English and Spanish) and Twitter every other day beginning on 7/21/23.
 - ✦ A mailer was sent to over 30,000 consumers and families.

Requirements Related to Caseload Ratio

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Welfare & Institutions Code, §4640.6 - continued

- DDS shall provide technical assistance and require a plan of correction when the required service coordinator-to-consumer ratios are not maintained by the regional center for two consecutive reporting periods.
- Plans of correction must be developed following input from the state council, local organizations representing consumers, family members, regional center employees, including recognized labor organizations, service providers and other interested parties.

Unassigned Reductions FY2022-2023

Description	General Operations	ABX2-1 Direct	ABX2-1 Admin	Reduce Caseload Ratio 1:40	Reduce Caseload Ratio	Language Access & Cultural Competency	Part C American Rescue Plan Act	Tuition Reimb. Program	SDP Participant Support	Community Placement Plan Staffing	Family Resource Center Activities	Total Operations Budget
Operations Budget Before Reductions	\$70,087,067	\$3,115,547	\$141,404	\$3,855,603	\$5,928,483	\$533,908	\$794,155	\$1,156,771	\$127,699	\$997,630	\$207,187	\$86,945,454
Staff Turnover Savings	\$ (873,077)											\$ (873,077)
Intake & Assessment 60 to 120 days	\$ (666,999)											\$ (666,999)
Unallocated Reductions	\$ (1,921,897)											\$ (1,921,897)
Total Reductions	\$ (3,461,973)											\$ (3,461,973)
Net Operations Budget	\$66,625,094	\$3,115,547	\$141,404	\$3,855,603	\$5,928,483	\$533,908	\$794,155	\$1,156,771	\$127,699	\$997,630	\$207,187	\$83,483,481

Note 1: "ABX2-1 direct" means Assembly Bill X2-1 that amended WIC 4639.5(c) effective June 9, 2016 to provide funding for regional center operations that may only be used for salary and/or benefit increases for regional center staff. Regional center executive staff are excluded from ABX2-1 funding.

Note 2: "ABX2-1 admin" means Assembly Bill X2-1 that amended WIC 4639.5(c) effective June 9, 2016 to provide funding for regional center operations that may only be for administrative costs.

Note 3: "SDP" means Self Determination Program

Unassigned Reductions FY2022-2023

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A Description (D-1 Allocation)	B General Operations	C % Reduction General Operations
Operations Budget Before Reductions	\$86,945,454	
Staff Turnover Savings	(\$873,077)	-1.00%
Intake & Assessment 60 to 120 days	(\$666,999)	-0.77%
Unallocated Reductions	(\$1,921,897)	-2.21%
Total Reductions	(\$3,461,973)	-3.98%
Net Operations Budget	\$83,483,481	