PETE CERVINKA
DIRECTOR

CALIFORNIA HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
1215 O Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.dds.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

September 30, 2026

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: 95TH ANNUAL CAPITOL TREE LIGHTING – REQUEST FOR LARGE, OUTDOOR ORNAMENTS

Continuing a decades-long tradition, the Department of Developmental Services (Department) has once again been asked to help gather ornaments made by Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities for placement and display on the Capitol Tree. This is the large, outdoor tree featured near the west steps of the State Capitol building in Sacramento. We encourage all regional centers to work with their provider communities to create and send ornaments.

This request for large, outdoor-friendly ornaments *is separate from* the annual request for decorating 21 individual regional center trees. The decoration date and rules for the small, individual regional center trees will be sent in a separate letter once we receive those details from the Governor's Office.

All large ornaments for the outdoor Capitol Tree must be received at the Department's Sacramento office **BY 5:00 PM ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026:**

Department of Developmental Services
Attn: CAPITOL TREE ORNAMENTS
1215 O Street, MS 9-10
Sacramento, CA 95814

Please complete and include the attached shipping form with your ornaments, even if you are delivering ornaments and not mailing them.

Please have your providers review the following guidelines and suggestions before creating and/or submitting ornaments for the Capitol Tree:

- **Dimensions: Ornaments should be big – at least 10 inches wide, but no more than 3 feet wide.** The tree is more than 40 feet tall, and the public is not allowed within 10 feet of the tree. Larger ornaments are much easier to see from this distance. Ornaments smaller than 10 inches will not be put on the tree.

- **Colors & Materials: Glass, clay, or other materials that could hurt someone if they fall off the tree are not allowed.**
  - Windproof and waterproof materials like, for example, plastic, laminated cardstock, Styrofoam, tinfoil, or wood are best.
  - Bright colors and reflective materials are encouraged because they are more visible from far away.

- **Privacy Protections: Please do not include any group or individual photos of people receiving regional center services as part of your ornament(s).**
  - If artists want to sign their name, please use only their first name. We can't display any personally identifiable information on the Capitol Tree.

- **Number of Ornaments:** We ask that individuals and programs send a minimum of one ornament, and a maximum of 100 ornaments per program.

If you have questions or would like to schedule a time to drop off ornaments in Sacramento, please contact Amy Wall at (916) 869-8833 (text or call) or email Amy.Wall@dds.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

Michi A. Gates, Ph.D.
Chief Deputy Director, Program Services

Attachment

cc: Regional Center Administrators
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services
Regional Center Community Services Directors
Association of Regional Center Agencies