

The DDS QA Review Self-Audit Kit

Run a mock Title 17 quality-assurance review on your own records — and fix the findings before a Regional Center reviewer ever sees them.

A QA review is just someone pulling your records and asking, “Can you prove this?” You can ask yourself the same questions first. This kit walks you through a 30-minute self-audit: pull a small random sample, score each record against what reviewers actually check, and tally where you stand. Do it once a quarter and an audit stops being an event.

How to run the self-audit (about 30 minutes)

1. Pick a recent billing period.
2. Pull a **random** sample — 5 consumers, 1–2 service notes each. Random matters; don't grade your best work.
3. Score each record against the six domains below. Mark **P** (pass) or **F** (fail) per domain in the grid.
4. Tally your score, then read the interpretation. Fix the *pattern*, not just the record.

1 Identification

- Consumer name + UCI/consistent ID
- Service name and DDS service code
- Vending Regional Center
- POS authorization is referenceable from the record

2 The service event

- Date, start & end time (not just duration)
- Units/hours consistent with the time recorded
- Location/setting of service
- Staff name, title, and qualifications for this service

3 Content & goal linkage

- Specific description of what was actually done (not boilerplate)
- Ties to an IPP/ISP goal or objective
- Consumer participation, response, or progress recorded
- Activity fits the scope of the service code billed

4 Authorization & units reconciliation

- Units documented = units logged = units billed
- Service falls within the authorized amount remaining
- Service date inside the authorization's effective dates

5 Signatures & attestation

- Attributable signature (electronic OK), dated and timestamped
- Consumer/representative signature where required
- Signatures locked — can't be silently altered

6 Recordkeeping & defensibility

- Documented contemporaneously, not reconstructed later
- Legible; corrections dated/attributed, original still readable
- Retained 5+ years and producible on request (§54326)

Your scorecard

Mark P or F for each domain, per record. Six domains × five records = 30 possible passes.

Scoring domain	Rec 1	Rec 2	Rec 3	Rec 4	Rec 5
1. Identification					
2. Service event					
3. Content & goal linkage					
4. Authorization & units					
5. Signatures					
6. Recordkeeping					

27-30 passes — Audit-ready.
Keep sampling quarterly.

21-26 — Gaps to close. Fix the failing domain across the board.

Under 21 — Address now. A real review would likely produce findings.

What reviewers check beyond the note

A QA review isn't only your service notes. Regional Centers review vendor files too — Title 17 §54332(b) requires a biennial vendor-file review. Confirm these are current:

- DS 1891 Disclosure Statement on file and renewed (every 2 years)
- Liability insurance current, Regional Center named as additional insured where required

- Zero Tolerance Policy acknowledged by staff (and reviewed annually)
- Approved Program Design on file and being followed
- Staff qualifications/credentials documented for each service

The findings that hurt most are the avoidable ones: notes that don't tie to a goal, units that don't reconcile to the authorization, missing signatures, and reconstructed (not contemporaneous) documentation. If your fails cluster in one domain, that's your fix — it's almost never random.

Make the self-audit unnecessary.

CareAutomate builds these checks into the work itself — notes tied to IPP/ISP goals, units drawn against the POS authorization, locked timestamped signatures, and five-year-retained records you can export in seconds for any review.

[Book a 20-minute walkthrough →](#)

A practical field guide, not legal advice. Title 17 documentation, retention, and vendor-file requirements are updated periodically and vary by service and Regional Center. Verify the current text of the relevant sections (including §54326 and §54332) and your own Program Design and Regional Center guidance before relying on any point above. © CareAutomate — Regional Center vendor software for California DDS providers.