

A RESPITE GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS AND PROVIDERS

*Developed by the Health and Human Services Commission in
Partnership with the Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Taskforce*

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CAREGIVERS AND PROVIDERS

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WHAT IS RESPITE?

Temporary relief for caregivers is commonly known as respite. It is defined as taking a break from the responsibilities of caring for a person with special needs. Respite support may be used by caregivers to:

- Visit with family and friends;
- Spend a leisurely evening at dinner or the movies;
- Have their loved one experience a community outing while they remain at home; or
- Take a weekend or weeklong vacation.

"Many families have forgotten what it's like to take a break. It is well-deserved time off."

Respite comes in various forms and occurs in many settings. It may take place in the caregiver's home, the home of another, in a community setting, such as a childcare center or church. A caregiver might choose to hire their own respite provider or merely exchange duties with another caregiver that has a loved one with special needs.

Respite can range from a few hours a day to a week or more. Where respite occurs, the length of time depends on the needs of the family and the availability of resources. While respite is generally planned, emergency respite is sometimes needed.

WHY USE RESPITE?

Quality respite can benefit caregivers in the following ways:

- Allows spouses to spend more time together;
- Gives caregivers a chance to spend time with their children and other family members;
- Reduces stress on the entire family and increases opportunities to relax together;
- Enables caregivers to take care of their own needs; and
- Helps the special needs person to develop leisure and social skills by meeting and spending time with others.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE RESPITE VOUCHER PROGRAM?

Targeting

The respite voucher program provides funds to families to assist in obtaining respite care for a family member who has special needs.

- In accordance with the Older Americans Act, the AAA should give priority to older persons with low incomes, who are members of a minority group, or who reside in rural areas.
- The AAA should ensure that recipients of respite vouchers are not currently receiving a similar service under another program.

Eligible Participants

- Grandparents raising grandchildren or other relative as parent (in accordance with requirements of the NFCSP – no more than 10% of an AAA's allocation may be spent on this group for all services; grandparent aged 60+; grandchild aged 18 or younger (priority given to those raising children with developmental disabilities or mental retardation);
- Spouses caring for a spouse over the age of 60 with dementia or chronic health problems who have deficits in at least two activities of daily living (ADLs);
- Adult children caring for a parent over the age of 60; or
- Other adults caring for a relative or friend over the age of 60.

Suggested Level of Service

It is recommended that respite vouchers be made available at \$300 per quarter.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR THE RESPITE VOUCHER PROGRAM?

- Persons who are receiving a similar service under another program (e.g., Medicaid waiver program such as Community Based Alternatives or Community Living Assistance and Support Services); or
- A caregiver that is paid to provide care-giving services.

WHERE DO I APPLY?

You may request an application by contacting your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA):

AAA: **Area Agency on Aging of the Concho Valley - Caregiver Coordinator**

Telephone: **(325) 223-5704 or (877) 944-9666**

Address: **2801 W. Loop 306, Suite A, P.O. Box 60050, San Angelo, TX 76906**

E-mail Address: Abigail.Perez@cvcog.org

Do not use any part of this guide as an application. You must complete the application provided by the AAA.

SUMMARY OF CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

The **caregiver** is the individual that is providing care on a regular, ongoing basis (often 7 days a week, 24 hours a day). The **care receiver** is the individual who needs respite services while the caregiver takes a break. The caregiver has the responsibility of:

- Interviewing potential respite provider(s);
- Discussing and setting an hourly, daily or weekly rate;
- Selecting and hiring the respite provider. Caregivers may choose a family member, neighbor, friend, adult care center, private agency staff, or contact the AAA for assistance. Selected providers must be 18 years of age or older;

A respite provider may not be a family member who is a spouse, legal guardian, or lives in the same house as the person needing respite services. In addition, by hiring the respite provider, the caregiver assumes all liability. The AAA will be held harmless from any problems that result from the actions of the selected respite provider.

- Asking for and checking references;
- Informing or training the provider of the specific needs of the family member;
- Ensuring proper payment for services by: keeping track of the number of hours or days of respite used and the total amount claimed against the voucher;

- Ensuring that federal tax guidelines are followed in accordance with IRS Publication 926 if:
 - ◆ The provider is not employed by a respite agency, or
 - ◆ \$1300 or more is paid to a single provider who provides services at the care receiver's home (see IRS Publication 926), or
- Accepting liability for respite care providers whom you employ. This includes:
 - ◆ Liability for negligent acts or omissions by the employee, and
 - ◆ Liability related to any employee injuries.
- Appealing any decision through the AAA who denied a respite voucher;
- Notifying the AAA of any change of address;
- Monitoring the quality of the respite services provided; and
- Notifying the AAA of any dissatisfaction with a respite provider. This will help the AAA monitor the quality of the providers listed in the Respite Provider Registry.

HOW DO I USE THE RESPITE VOUCHER?

After a caregiver has completed the application and the AAA has determined eligibility, a phone call or letter will inform them as to whether you have been approved. Applications are approved upon availability of funding and could take two months or more. The caregiver may be contacted for an appointment for the care receiver to be assessed to determine deficits in two activities of daily living. Upon approval, the caregiver may receive voucher(s) for use. The vouchers will come with instructions for how they should be used.

- The caregiver will negotiate the hourly, daily or weekly rate with the respite provider. Choose a provider and set the amount.
- The provider completes the amount claimed and signs the voucher.
- The caregiver completes all remaining information, signs the voucher and submits it to the AAA for payment.

The voucher is mailed to:
Caregiver Coordinator
P.O. Box 60050
San Angelo, TX 76906

Caregivers will be responsible for all costs above the maximum amount authorized.

Caregivers using respite vouchers are subject to random audits to ensure that funds are used for respite services and for no other purpose.

Report lost vouchers to **Caregiver Coordinator (325) 223-5704 or (877) 944-9666.**

If you need any assistance completing the application or have any questions about the respite voucher program, contact Caregiver Coordinator (325) 223-5704 or (877) 944-9666.

Most families have someone in mind to provide the respite care. If you do not, the following might be helpful.

There are a number of different ways for parents or caregivers to locate or develop respite resources.

- Contact local interest groups such as senior citizens centers, Alzheimer's Associations, churches;
- Obtain referrals from friends, relatives, associates;
- Contact **Caregiver Coordinator (325) 223-5704 or (877) 944-9666**

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Caregivers may receive a satisfaction survey about three months after they have been approved for a respite voucher. Please complete the survey and return. The information will be helpful in improving the program.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any complaints regarding the Respite Voucher Program should be directed to the AAA.

INTERVIEWING AND SELECTING RESPITE PROVIDERS

The following sections are designed to help you interview a potential respite provider. This includes tips on what to look for when you visit an out-of-home setting, what to ask and things to discuss with prospective respite providers.

QUESTIONS FOR IN-HOME RESPITE PROVIDERS

The following questions may help caregivers determine whether or not a prospective respite provider is acceptable for their loved one:

- Tell me about your training and experience as a respite provider.
- What type of care will you provide?
- What would you do if emergency care were needed?
- What would you do if you found him/her with an open bottle that you thought contained poison or medicine?
- How would you encourage him/her to cooperate with you? What would you do if he/she refused to cooperate with you?
- How should we communicate about issues? What should we do if we disagree about something?
- What hours are you available to work?
- What about holidays and weekends?
- What would you do if you had to leave because of a personal emergency?
- What would you do if you were unable to come to work?
- Are you able or willing to provide transportation?
- Can you provide references from other families with whom you have worked?
- Do you have a criminal background check and driving record available for review?

QUESTIONS FOR OUT-OF-HOME RESPITE PROVIDERS

In addition to the questions asked of in-home respite providers, the following questions may be helpful when interviewing out-of-home respite providers:

- Describe or show me your home or facility.
- What is the daily routine? Do you have planned activities?
- How many respite providers will be available to care for him/her?
- How will you communicate with him/her?
- What will he/she love about the place?
- Would there be anyone around him/her who might be sick?
- Will trips be made into the community?
- If so, how is transportation handled?

- If he/she needs assistance with toileting, how will this be handled for privacy?
- Who will be responsible?
- What is the mealtime routine?
- How will you ensure his/her safety?

Important Discussion Points

- Explain what type of duties you expect the respite provider to perform.
- Discuss the amount of respite you need.
- What type of training will the respite provider need?
- Does the provider know CPR/First Aid?
- Discuss what types of discipline are acceptable.
- Is more formal training needed? If so, contact the AAA for additional information.

ENVIRONMENTAL / SAFETY QUESTIONS FOR OUT-OF-HOME RESPITE

Mobility Issues

General

- Are doors wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair, walker or other mobility equipment? You may want to have a wheelchair with you.
- Is the house accessible by ramp or other means?
- Is there room to maneuver in all rooms and hallways?
- If positioning is required, where will it be done and is there room to do it safely?
- If positioning is done on the floor, has the provider been trained in lifting and transferring? (Transferring from the floor is difficult. Positioning tables can be built for very little money. Sidelyers can be used on a sofa, but wedges cannot.)

Bathroom

- Is it large enough to accommodate equipment? (Having the equipment with you will take the guesswork out of it.)
- Is there enough room to maneuver?
- Is there enough room for the provider to assist the person to transfer safely?
- Is there a safe way to bathe? If needed, is the bathtub adapted with handbars, a lift or other equipment? Is there room for the provider to assist with bathing? What measures will be taken to prevent scalding?
- Is the sink accessible?

Bedroom

- Is the bedroom large enough for the person to safely maneuver and transfer?
- Are rails required for the bed? If so, what needs to be done?

Kitchen

- What safeguards are in place to assure hot surfaces are not an injury risk?

Safety Issues

- Are there obvious dangers like loose carpeting, broken tiles, peeling paint or exposed wiring?
- Are there safety caps on electrical outlets?
- Does the house appear clean (carpet, furniture, floors, etc.) and free of obvious infestation (roach, mice, etc.)?
- Is there an unpleasant odor or a moldy smell? (This is important if there are respiratory related health problems or allergies.)
- Are there sharp corners on furniture, which could pose a hazard?
- Are there railings on all steps inside and outside the house?
- Are there safety gates and locked cabinets to prevent exposure to medications, harmful chemicals, and cleaning materials?
- Are fire extinguishers and smoke detectors in place and functioning properly?
- In case of an emergency, are exits conveniently located? What is the evacuation plan in case of tornado, fire, flooding, etc.?
- Are first aid supplies available?
- Are toys age-appropriate, accessible, and safe?

Health Issues

- Does the respite provider need training to give medications?
- Do treatments require a licensed nurse to administer? If so, can the licensed nurse perform these treatments in the respite provider's home?
- If respiratory issues are involved, does the respite provider smoke? Does the house smell of smoke? Has the provider recently painted or used chemicals with noxious fumes (ammonia, varnish, paint remover, etc.)?
- Is the house well ventilated?

Behavioral Issues

- Are there small objects that can be picked up and thrown? Are there plate glass windows and doors?
- Is training needed in how to work with behavioral issues?

CARE RECEIVER INFORMATION SHEET

***Please note: This is not the Respite Voucher Application.
Do not submit this information sheet with your application.***

The purpose of this information sheet is to provide valuable information to the respite provider.

Name of Person Requiring Care: _____

Caregiver Name(s): _____ Phone: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Emergency Phone: _____

Physician: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Hospital Preference: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Health Insurance Provider: _____

Phone: _____ Insurance Number: _____

Medical Information:

Allergies to Medications: _____

Other allergies: _____

List medications, dosage, and times for administering the medication and the medical condition for which the medication is prescribed/given:

MEDICATION	DOSAGE	TIME	CONDITION

Describe any medication side effects: _____

Describe any medical condition that the respite provider will need to know about, (e.g., seizures, tracheotomy care, and gastrostomy): _____

What training will the respite provider need to have in order to care for any medical condition described above? _____

How are insect bites treated? _____

Note any other medical instructions: _____

Adaptive Equipment Information:

Describe any adaptive equipment and its purpose.

Mobility: _____

Positioning: _____

Bathing: _____

Mealtime: _____

Adaptive Transportation: _____

Vision: _____

Hearing: _____

What training will the respite provider need to safely use the equipment? _____

Household Activities / Rules:

Favorite activities, hobbies or routines (list any limitations): _____

Are visitors allowed? If so, who: _____

Other information/rules? _____

Mealtime Information:

How does your family member indicate that he or she is hungry? _____

Is there any known food allergies? _____

Where are meals eaten? _____

Are there special food preparation methods to be used (e.g., puree, chop, and thicken)?

Are special dishes, spoons, or adaptive equipment used during mealtime? _____

Should your family member require assistance with eating, what training will the respite provider need? _____

Are there positioning requirements for mealtime? If so, what? _____

What are your family member's favorite foods? _____

What foods are off limits? _____

Emotional/Behavioral Information:

How does the care receiver express likes and dislikes? _____

What activities or daily routines are difficult for the care recipient? _____

What signals will indicate to the respite provider the care receiver is about to become upset? _____

What do you do to help the care receiver through a difficult situation? _____

Are there any serious emotional/behavioral issues? _____

Security and Emergency / Information:

Where is an extra key in case the respite provider is locked out? _____

