



**Effective April 15, 2021**

## **Resource Family Homes**

*(Resource Families, Relative and Non-Extended Relative Family Members)*

**The Respite Care  
Program Coordinator:  
Robin Cairns**

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**Mailing Address:**

**County of Santa Clara  
SSA/DFCS  
Family Support Bureau  
353 West Julian Street,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
San Jose CA 95110  
Attn: Respite Care  
Program**

### **What is the Respite Care Program?**

According to California State Department of Social Services (CDSS), Written Directives (WD), "Respite Care" means temporary care for periods not to exceed 72 hours, and, in order to preserve the placement, may be extended up to 14 days in any one month, as defined in Welfare and Institutions Code section 16501(b), in the home of a RFA approved Resource Family, certified family, approved relative/NREFM, or certified respite care provider. Respite care shall not be provided for the purposes of routine, ongoing childcare.

Respite Care may include family, medical and/or unforeseen emergencies.

### **Examples of Respite Care include:**

- Time off for self-care
- Time off to go to dinner and a movie
- Getting away for the weekend
- Attending a funeral
- Caring for a sick family member
- Surgery

### **Who is eligible for the Respite Care Program?**

Resource Family Homes (RFA) approved by Santa Clara County and who are taking care of children under the supervision of DFCS and relative/NREFM families caring for a child approved under an emergency placement and are going through the RFA approval process and residing in Santa Clara County. The respite care program includes foster, adopted, guardianship, and birth children under the age of 18 years. In order to utilize respite, you must be caring for a foster child in your home. If the foster child is temporarily away from your home, the Resource Family is not eligible to utilize respite during this time for any other child in their home.

### **1. Who is not eligible for the Respite Care Program?**

Children who are dependents of other counties and placed in Santa Clara County RFA homes, DO NOT QUALIFY for the respite care program.

### **2. Respite Care Funding Limits/Availability:**

Respite care is not to exceed 72 hours per session. Respite care is not intended for the purpose of routine, ongoing childcare. Each qualifying caregiver receives a maximum of 300 respite hours per fiscal year. The maximum payment rate by DFCS is \$24.56 per hour for 1 child and \$7.00 per hour for each additional child, up to the maximum of 6 children. For overnight respite, the maximum hours will be 16 hours per day. The hours of 10pm to 6am will be excluded from payment requests.

Timely submission for payment is very important. Funding must be paid during the fiscal year in which the respite care took place. Santa Clara County's fiscal year is July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Funding is renewed each year at the discretion of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

### **3. Can the Respite Care Program pay for long term Day Care or Child Care?**

Respite care cannot be used to cover day care or child care costs. A caregiver's employment hours are excluded from The National Foster Parent Association and the California Welfare and Institutions Code specifically definition of respite care.

### **4. Respite Care beyond 72 hours:**

Family emergencies such as illness, death and other unforeseen occurrences happen. In such instances, please contact the Respite Care Coordinator to discuss your needs. It is possible that additional hours (above your allotted 300) can be made available, and must be preapproved by the RFA Division Manager. A child can't be away from their placement longer than 14 days, as federal funding will no longer be available.

In order to utilize different respite care providers for the children in your home, the request must be preapproved by the RFA Division Manager.

If the child/ren needs to be in respite care longer than the 72 hours, please contact the Respite Coordinator to assist with authorization. The

child's social worker should be notified at a minimum of three weeks in advance. The RFA Division Manager will need to authorize the time.

This program is not intended to pay for respite care for long absences or vacations. If this is the circumstance, please consult with the child's social worker or the respite care coordinator as the children may need a placement change.

During long absences or vacations beyond 14 days:

- Discuss alternative placement plans with the child's social worker, if appropriate.
- If you have plans for an extended vacation, consult with the child's social worker regarding the placement.
- Ask the social worker if it is appropriate for the child to accompany you on the trip. DFCS may be able to assist with some of the costs of bringing the child/ren with you.
- If necessary, take a break from accepting placements for a short time to be sure you can go on your planned vacation or attend to family matters.

### **5. Where can Respite Care take place?**

- In the Resource Home -The respite provider comes to the resource home to care for the child/ren.
- In another resource home if capacity is available.
- Licensed Child Care Facilities (Kids Park may be a good choice).
- Other Locations -The children may go to the park, or on fieldtrips like the zoo, movies etc.

### **6. Who can provide Respite Care?**

Resource Families can provide respite care. However, always keep in mind that their capacity limit must be observed at all times.

We highly recommend using Resource Families for respite care since that family is familiar with all the relevant DFCS policies and procedures.

Certified respite providers - There are people who want to be involved with foster children but choose not to be RFA approved. These families have completed CPR and first aid training, Livescan.

Licensed Day Care Provider

Any individual over age 18 who has the following:

- Criminal background check (Live Scan)
- CPR and First Aid training

These documents must be on file with the RFA social worker.

### 7. Who cannot Provide Respite Care?

A Resource Family cannot be utilized for respite care when there is a placement hold, active complaint investigation, or the resource family is on an inactive status.

A Resource Family home cannot be utilized for respite care if the home is at their capacity. If you do not know your RFA capacity, check with your RFA social worker or Respite Care Coordinator.

A Resource Family cannot be utilized for respite if the children (placed in their home) are temporarily away from the resource home and the resource family is still being reimbursed for placement as the capacity limit still applies. Capacity is the number of children you are approved to provide care and supervision.

When Resource Parents have extra adults that live in the same household (such as a partner, spouse, significant other, domestic partner, etc.), the use of respite payment will not be allowed. If the approved resource parent has adult children who reside in the home, payment for respite will only be allowable for foster children.

Approval for any exceptions needs to be obtained prior to doing respite and will be given on a case by case basis by the RFA Social Work Supervisor. All of the above must be cleared before providing respite care. The RASS Team or Respite Care Coordinator will assist the resource parent in identifying a respite care provider. Children in respite care need to have their own bed for overnight respite.

### 8. Overnight Respite and Slumber Parties:

For overnight respite, the resource parent must inform the child's social worker where the child will be staying before the overnight takes place.

“Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard” means careful and sensible parental decisions that maintain the child’s health, safety, and best

interests. (Welfare & Institution Code Section 362.04 and 362.05).

When utilizing the **Prudent Parent Standard**, payment **WILL NOT** be available to the respite provider. In order to submit a payment reimbursement form, the respite care provider needs to be approved through the RFA program.

### 9. Respite Care Program Payments:

In order to qualify for the payment, all the guidelines contained herein must be adhere to. There is one method of payment:

- a) DFCS pays the respite care provider
- b) Respite provider will need to provide a Social Security Number or Tax ID #
- c) If respite provider is unable to provide SS# or Tax ID, they WILL NOT receive payment and resource parent cannot be reimbursed
- d) Consult Respite Coordinator to ensure you have sufficient hours for each respite episode
- e) Respite Care Coordinator can assist you to obtain these forms

Respite care payments takes up to 72 hours for processing once the completed and corrected Respite Care Payment Request is approved by fiscal.

DFCS will only pay up to the 300 hours allotted, unless preapproval by the RFA Division Manager was obtained.

Requests for payment must be submitted within 15 days of the date the respite care took place.

Payments are mailed out or automatically deposited by Santa Clara County's Controllers Office.

#### **Please note:**

**The money paid to the respite care provider by DFCS is considered taxable income and will be reported as income to the State and Federal government. Respite care provider will need to consult with their tax preparer regarding the 1099.**

**The Respite Care Program Statement of Understanding is required in order to access payment for the Respite Care Program.**

# THE RESPITE CARE PROGRAM

## Statement of Understanding

I \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree with the Respite  
(Print Name) Care Guidelines and understand the  
process. If I request respite care from a provider, I am responsible for  
ensuring they are able to provide a social security number or tax ID number  
in order for the County to issue payment. I understand that without this  
documentation, the County will NOT be able to issue payment.

RFA Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Resource Parent 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Resource Parent 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

In order for payment to be made, this form must be signed and on file with the  
Respite Care Coordinator.

Please sign and return this page to:

**County of Santa Clara/SSA/DFCS  
Family Support Bureau  
353 West Julian Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
San Jose CA 95110**

**Attn: Respite Care Program**

You can also email your signed and completed form to [Rass@senecacenter.org](mailto:Rass@senecacenter.org)