

OVERVIEW

Respite is available to provide temporary and occasional relief to the child and the child's current placement caregiver, legal parent, or legal guardian to maintain the ability to meet the needs of the child and to support the well-being of the current placement caregiver. Caring for the needs of children who have experienced the trauma of neglect and/or abuse requires intensive time, effort, and skill.

Providing support through respite plays a crucial role in maintaining the stability and continuity of placements and promotes the well-being of children in care.

Note: Respite services can be provided by licensed or unlicensed providers.

DEFINITIONS

Current Placement Caregiver

A current placement caregiver is considered an individual(s) providing care in a licensed foster home, relative caregiver home, adoptive home, or court ordered placements. Current placement caregiver also includes children placed with their legal parent(s) or guardian(s).

Respite Provider

A respite provider is a licensed or unlicensed individual(s) providing temporary and occasional relief to children and caregivers selected by the current placement caregiver.

Quarter

For the purposes of this policy, quarters are the three-month portions of the fiscal year which begins in October. For example, October 1st to December 31st equals one quarter.

ELIGIBILITY

A child who is an abuse and/or neglect ward, including dual wards, and juvenile justice wards in any of the following placements are eligible to receive 12 days of respite per quarter:

- Licensed foster home.

- Relative caregivers.
- Adoptive placements.
- Legal parent(s) or guardian(s).
- Court ordered placements.

Children who are a part of the Serious Emotional Disturbances Waiver (SEDW) and referred by Community Mental Health (CMH), whether they are placed in foster care or not, qualify for respite.

Children who are in an adoptive placement or who have finalized their adoption may be eligible for respite; see [AAM 640, Post Placement- Use of the Adoption/Guardianship Medical Subsidy Program](#).

Note: For legal parents or guardians to qualify for respite, the child must be under the care and supervision of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

RESPITE CRITERIA

The following criteria must be met while a child is receiving respite services:

- Current placement caregivers must not arrange or use more than five consecutive days of respite unless an exception is approved; see *Exceptions* below.
- During a respite event, it is expected the current placement caregiver will check in with the respite provider daily.
- Respite providers must make efforts to maintain the child's normal schedule and provide enriching activities for the child during the respite.
- A plan must be developed between the respite provider and the child's current placement caregiver to ensure any activities related to the child's basic needs and the child's case service plan occur.
 - The respite provider should have knowledge of and some level of involvement in the child's case service plan as well as a familiarity with the child themselves, their needs, and personality.

- The respite provider will provide transportation to meet the child's basic physical, educational, and psychological needs, such as, transportation to school, parenting time, and any necessary medical and behavioral health care appointments.
- A plan for continued education must be developed. The child cannot miss school because they are receiving respite services.
- The use of respite for holiday breaks and current placement family vacations should be discouraged and carefully considered. Circumstances regarding the need for respite in these instances must be discussed with the current placement caregiver and the supervisor in accordance with the child's best interest and child's case service plan.
- In all instances, current placement caregivers and case managers must make every effort to familiarize the respite provider with the child's case service plan and needs. The MDHHS-6072, Respite Child Information and Case Plan, must be used to share pertinent information and the current placement caregiver(s) must present it to and review it with the respite provider prior to a respite event occurring. The current placement caregiver must provide a copy of the MDHHS-6072 to the case manager to be maintained in the child's file.
- A respite provider must be equipped to handle emergencies and unplanned circumstances by taking necessary action and notifying the current placement caregiver as soon as possible.
- The current placement caregiver(s) must make the respite providers aware of the reporting protocols and the agency's unusual incident policy and procedures.

In situations of emergency respite where planning may have been compromised, the child's case manager will be responsible for developing a plan, sharing the plan, and working with the respite provider to ensure all respite criteria is followed as much as possible.

Note: Respite provider homes are **not** to be used as emergency placements under any circumstances. Respite is only to be used for children with an established placement.

EXCEPTIONS

The MDHHS-6071, Respite Services Exception, must be completed and approved by the local office/agency director for the following types of respite:

- Additional days over the quarterly allotment of 12 days.
- Respite needed for more than five consecutive days.

CONTACT REQUIREMENTS

The assigned case manager must be able to provide support to the respite providers, as needed.

The respite providers must be provided with the primary case manager and supervisor's contact information, in addition to the agency's after-hours contact information in the event of an emergency.

Licensed Respite Provider

In the event the current placement caregiver fails to accept the child back into their home at the agreed upon time, per the contract the respite provider will contact the assigned case manager and agree to maintain the child in their respite home until the next business day. In such an event, the licensed respite provider will be eligible for an incentive stipend.

Unlicensed Respite Provider

In the event the current placement caregiver fails to accept the child back into their home at the agreed upon time, the respite provider will contact the assigned case manager or supervisor.

If an emergency occurs outside of normal business hours, respite providers should contact the agency's after-hours emergency contact.

CLEARANCES

Clearances must be completed upon identification of the respite caregiver and no more than 30-days calendar prior to any respite stay on the MDHHS-6070, Unlicensed Respite Provider Clearances. For unlicensed respite providers, the following clearances must be completed prior to respite services being provided:

Children's Protective Services (CPS) Investigations

- Central Registry.
- Children's Protective Services history.
- Criminal history:
 - Internet criminal history access tool (ICHAT).
 - Public sex offender registry (PSOR).

Prior children's protective services (CPS) history must be reviewed for all prospective respite providers and adult household members prior to respite services being provided. **If the respite provider or any adult household member is a confirmed perpetrator of child abuse and/or neglect of the following maltreatment types, the respite provider is not eligible to provide respite services;** see [PSM 711-2, Definitions, Responsibilities and Maltreatment Types](#):

- Physical injury.
- Mental injury.
- Sexual abuse.
- Sexual exploitation.
- Labor trafficking (includes sex trafficking).
- Physical neglect.
- Placing a child at unreasonable risk.
- Medical neglect.
- Threatened harm of physical injury.
- Threatened harm of sexual abuse.
- Threatened harm of sexual exploitation.
- Threatened harm of labor trafficking.
- Threatened harm of mental injury.
- Threatened harm of physical neglect.
- Physical abuse.
- Child maltreatment.
- Failure to protect.
- Improper supervision.
- Abandonment.
- Threatened harm.

Individuals placed on Central Registry for Confirmed Serious Abuse and/or Neglect, Confirmed Sexual Abuse, Confirmed Sexual

Exploitation, or Confirmed Methamphetamine Production are prohibited from providing respite services.

County Director Approval

County director approval is required for a respite home in which a respite provider or adult household member was confirmed as a perpetrator of child abuse and/or neglect in a CPS investigation for threatened harm of placing child at unreasonable risk and threatened harm of medical neglect. For unlicensed respite providers document how the child is safe in the MDHHS-6070, Unlicensed Respite Provider Clearances, form.

Criminal History

All adult household members must have a state criminal history background check completed prior to a respite event. The following sources should be utilized to run the required background checks, [Internet Criminal History Access Tool \(ICHAT\)](#), [Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry \(MPSOR\)](#), the [U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website \(NSOPW\)](#), and police or court records/personnel. The date and results of all criminal history background checks must be documented on the MDHHS-6070, Unlicensed Respite Provider Clearances.

Prohibited Felony Convictions

Respite is prohibited if anyone residing in the home has a **felony** conviction for one of the following crimes:

- Child abuse/neglect.
- Spousal abuse.
- Crimes against children (including pornography).
- Crimes involving violence, including rape, sexual assault, or homicide but not including other physical assault or battery.
- Physical assault, battery, or drug related felony offense within the last five years.

Convictions

Any misdemeanor or felony convictions must be evaluated by the assigned supervisor to determine respite suitability.

If respite occurs, the assessment of the conviction(s) must support the basis for the respite and describe how the child is safe in the respite provider's home. For unlicensed respite providers document how the child is safe in the MDHHS-6070, Unlicensed Respite Provider Clearances, form.

Registered Sex Offender

All respite providers and adult household members must have their name **and** address searched on the [Michigan Public Sex Offender Registry \(MPSOR\)](#) prior to respite services being provided.

Note: Minor household members are not required to be checked on the MPSOR; however, this information may be obtained through family self-report or through the address search.

Respite is prohibited if anyone residing in the home has been convicted of a sexual offense **and** is required to register as a sex offender.

Expiration Date

If the date of the first respite event is more than 30 calendar days after the date the clearances were completed, new clearances must be completed. Clearances must be completed annually from the date of the first respite event.

Note: If a new household member moves into the respite home, clearances on the new household member must be completed as soon as possible.

Documentation

Clearances must be documented within the MDHHS-6070, Unlicensed Respite Provider Clearances. MPSOR, I-CHAT, and central registry documents must be uploaded to the documents section of the current placement caregiver's record in the electronic case management system.

Note: Memos and emails do not serve as MPSOR, I-CHAT, and central registry verification.

**PAYMENT
PROCEDURES**

There will be 12 days of respite available for each eligible child, per quarter. If a child changes placements, the number of respite days can be replenished to provide the new placement caregiver with adequate options for respite use, complete the MDHHS-6071, Respite Services Exception, when respite services are requested. For respite payments, see [FOM 903-09, Case Service Payments](#).

POLICY CONTACT

Questions about this policy item may be directed to the [Child Welfare Policy Mailbox \(Child-Welfare-Policy@michigan.gov\)](mailto:Child-Welfare-Policy@michigan.gov).