

Respite Service

IF you participate in the Lehigh County FD/FSS program:



We are working to establish a useful e-mail distribution list. If you or your family member have an FSS allocation and you want to be on the distribution list, contact Bob Madden at The Arc. Phone: 610-849-8076 (ext. 17) or e-mail: bmadden@thearcofl-n.org.

Your personal information won't be shared with anyone else or used for any purpose except to send news and communication for your family member in the FD/FSS program. Please consider joining the e-mail list!

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How do I know if I am using Respite Service when someone stays with my family member?

A: Respite is a service that lasts between 16 and 24 hours at one time. Respite is paid at a flat rate, so there is no need to set an hourly rate. The maximum a person can be paid for a session of respite is \$125, unless you get an approved innovative service request from your supports coordinator.

Q: What is the difference between family aide and companion services?

A: Family aide services usually involve someone staying with your family member at home (could be your home or the caregiver's home). Activity Companion services involve the person doing an activity at home or going into the community for an outing or event. Community access can include things like (but not limited to): a movie, walk in the park, playground, religious services, errands, etc.

Q: How are family aide and activity companion services alike?

A: Both services are paid at an hourly rate, up to 16 hours a day (session). Aide and companion services are limited to a total of 4 sessions every month. You can contact your supports coordinator and complete a request for innovative service for more than 4 sessions of aide or companion service in a month. Be sure your request is approved before paying someone for more than 4 aide or companion sessions in a month.

Q: Can a member of my family be paid for providing a service?

A: Yes. Family members, including siblings, can be paid to provide respite, family aide or activity companion service. In order to be paid, the family member providing the service cannot live full time in the same house with the person receiving services.

**BI-COUNTY
OBSERVER:**
Lehigh County Edition



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- Q: Is there a limit to how much I can pay someone for respite, aide or companion service?
- A: Yes. The maximum a person can be paid to provide any service is \$125 per session (without an approved innovative service request), regardless of the number of hours worked. Memberships, camps and therapies are not limited to \$125. Those activities are in separate categories, not related to "sessions".
- Q: What is a service "session"?
- A: A "session" is any time period a person is with a respite provider, activity companion or family aide.
- Q: Can Easter Seals pay for an activity or membership directly?
- A: Yes. Some activities and memberships (like gym memberships) accept payments directly from Easter Seals. In order for Easter Seals to pay for an activity directly, you need a bill or other document from the business stating the activity, how long activity will be (ex: 1 year membership, 6 week dance class, etc.) and how much it costs, in addition to your completed invoice.
- Q: Can Easter Seals pay the person who provides respite, family aide, companion service directly?
- A: Yes People (the provider on invoices) must sign the invoice and give their social security number in order for Easter Seals to pay them directly. Easter Seals must keep track of the amount they pay all providers. If an individual provider earns more than \$600 in a calendar year, Easter Seals will send a tax form; the provider must declare the money earned as income.
- Q: Can I use an invoice to get reimbursed for a trip or activity my family member will take in the future?
- A: Yes. As long as you have already bought the ticket, paid for or received a bill for an activity like camp, horseback riding, gym, etc., you can use FSS funds. You have the option to pay the bill and FSS will reimburse you, or submit the bill directly to Easter Seals for payment. Either way, you need to complete an invoice and send it in with the bill/receipt.
- Q: Can I send an invoice to get money in advance to pay for an activity?
- A: No. Families cannot submit invoices for things you will purchase in the future. FD/FSS is a reimbursement program. Therefore, you can only submit invoices for a purchase you already made, a bill you already have, or a service that has already taken place. We regret the inconvenience but this is a necessary restriction required by the Department of Public Welfare.

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Email bmadden@arcofl-n.org.

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