



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Family Support Services/Respite and COVID-19

Based on COVID-19 operational guidance from the State of New Jersey, certain Children's System of Care (CSOC) Respite services have been suspended effective **April 20, 2020**. These programs will **remain suspended** until the state requirements for school closure and social distancing are no longer in effect.

CSOC Respite services are a part of Family Support Services (FSS). The following Respite services are suspended:

- Agency Afterschool Respite (AAS)
- Agency Weekend Respite (AWR)
- Overnight Respite (OVR)

Why is this happening?

The Department of Children and Families had to adjust usual operating requirements to preserve quality of service for CSOC-involved youth. This promotes the ability of both youth and service providers to adhere to necessary social distancing practices for everyone's safety. Circumstances are changing rapidly, and additional guidance will be released as needed.

My child is in one of these programs. What should my provider do?

Providers of these services must transition (discharge) all youth in these service programs effective April 20, 2020. They should also have advised you that they discharged your child.

If my child was discharged, what are my next steps?

Families should contact PerformCare at **1-877-652-7624** for assistance with the suspension of these services. Families will need to update their Family Support Services applications over the phone to access other Respite services. The telephone application takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please note that only the parent or legal guardian can apply for Family Support Services.

PerformCare is still available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What CSOC Respite Services are currently available as part of Family Support Services?

Both Agency Hired Respite (AHR) and Self-Hired Respite (SHR) are currently available.

Agency Hired Respite is a service provided to families who want a respite worker who is recruited, trained and employed by the qualified agency to provide social and recreational experiences to children in or out of their homes. Agency Hired Respite is limited to 60 hours of service (billed in 15-minute

increments) per 90-day authorization. Families have the flexibility to utilize the 60 hours as needed within the 90-day authorization.

Self-Hired Respite is a service provided to families who want to recruit their respite worker of choice. The family pays the worker directly and sends the paperwork in support of reimbursement to the provider agency on a monthly basis. Self-Hired Respite is limited to 60 hours of service (billed in 15-minute increments) per 90-day authorization. Families have the flexibility to utilize the 60 hours as needed within the 90-day authorization.

Please note that uncompensated caregivers who reside with the eligible youth receiving services may not be reimbursed for CSOC Self-Hired Respite Services. Uncompensated caregivers (as defined at NJAC 10:46A) include, but are not limited to, a parent, sibling, spouse, child, grandparent, step family member, aunt, uncle, cousin or legal guardian.

What if my child was not discharged from the suspended programs?

If your child is still currently admitted to a suspended program, your provider will need to discharge your child from the suspended program before AHR or SHR services can be accessed, even if the AHR or SHR services are with the same provider. **PerformCare associates cannot discharge youth from Respite.**

We are a resource family. How is our eligibility for Family Support Services impacted?

A resource parent (foster, adoption, and kinship) is **considered an uncompensated caregiver** under the Family Support Act, N.J.S.A. 30:6D-35. Resource families may apply for **FSS respite services only**. Access to other FSS services for resource families is currently under consideration.

Please contact PerformCare for more information regarding eligibility for Family Support Services.

What happens when the suspension of services has ended?

Once the suspension has been removed, families can contact PerformCare again to update their FSS application and re-access their preferred respite service.

PerformCare evaluates for Family Support Services based on individual need, caregiver need, current services utilized/available, and the availability of resources. We will assist you in identifying appropriate services by asking you specific questions about you and your child's current needs and abilities, income, and medical insurance. During the phone call, if other needs are identified, you can be connected to other services, including behavioral health referrals and other community resources.

Please be advised that Family Support Services are not entitled or guaranteed and the ability to provide services to your child is contingent upon the availability of New Jersey Children's System of Care (CSOC) resources.

Where can I find more information from PerformCare and CSOC about COVID-19?

More links and trusted resources are available here: www.performcarenj.org/families/covid-19.aspx.

If you have any questions about these changes or need more information about CSOC's Family Support Services and Respite, please contact PerformCare at **1-877-652-7624**. PerformCare is fully staffed and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.