

**PROVIDING AND RECEIVING  
RESPIRE CARE SAFELY**  
DURING THE  
**COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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**Voluntary National Guidelines  
for Respite Care Agencies, Providers,  
Family Caregivers, and Respite Care Recipients**

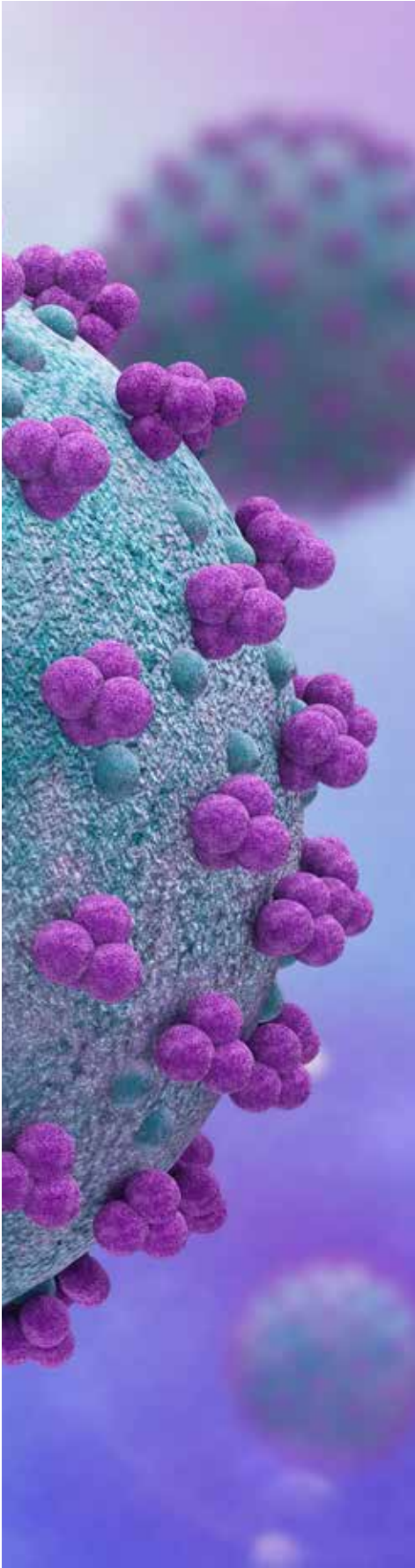
Principal Author:  
*Kim E. Whitmore, PhD, RN, CPN*



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Frontline Workers and Family Caregivers

We want to acknowledge all the frontline workers, including public health professionals, doctors, nurses, and other essential workers, who are working tirelessly to help keep our communities safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. We also want to thank all those who are continuing to support family caregivers and individuals with special needs during these challenging and uncertain times, including direct support professionals, personal care workers, home care and home health aides, and respite providers. To family caregivers – your dedication to caring for your loved ones is what inspired and motivated the creation of these guidelines. Our wish for you is that you can safely receive the breaks you deserve and need so you can continue to provide care for your loved ones who need you now more than ever!

### About the Principal Author

Kim Whitmore, PhD, RN, CPN has more than 20 years of progressive leadership experience working with communities as a personal care worker, home-care nurse manager, private duty nurse, Local Health Officer, Policy Section Chief and State Health Plan Officer for the Wisconsin Division of Public Health, educator and research scientist. Currently, Dr. Whitmore is an Assistant Professor in the [School of Nursing at the University of Wisconsin – Madison](#)<sup>1</sup> where her research focuses on understanding and supporting the respite care needs of families of children with special healthcare needs. Dr. Whitmore is also the Founder and Chief Change Officer of [Ujima United, LLC](#)<sup>2</sup> – a public health consulting agency that works to plant seeds of change, nurture sustainable partnerships, and grow happy, healthy, harmonious communities. Dr. Whitmore’s experience as a nurse, public health professional, and respite care expert make her uniquely qualified to lead the development of these guidelines.

### Layout

ARCH wishes to thank Norma McReynolds for her beautiful and compelling design and layout of the guidelines.

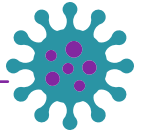
### Workgroup Members

A workgroup convened by the [ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center](#) (ARCH)<sup>3</sup> helped inform the development of this document. ARCH is grateful for their expertise and valuable input. Members of the workgroup included:

- Meghan Baskett Kluth, Vice President, Colorado Respite Coalition, a program of Easterseals Colorado, Lakewood, CO
- Geene Delaplane, Lifespan Respite Program Manager, Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
- Jill Kagan, Director, ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center
- Sherrie Kizer, RN, Executive Director, Agape Respite Care, Inc., Berne, IN
- Tricia Lazare, Community Resources Manager, Self-Directed Supports Department, Inclusive, Inc., Merrill, WI
- Jennifer Sanchez, Sr. Social Services Program Director, YMCA of San Diego County, San Diego, CA
- Lisa Schneider, Executive Director, Respite Care Association of Wisconsin; and Family Caregiver, Appleton, WI

### ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center

The mission of the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center is to assist and promote the development of quality respite and crisis care programs, to help families locate respite and crisis care services in their communities, and to serve as a strong voice for respite in all forums. ARCH consists of the training and technical assistance division, which provides support to government agencies, national and state organizations, service providers and families through consultation, training, evaluation, and research; the National Respite Locator that helps family caregivers and professionals locate respite services and funding sources in their community; the National Respite Coalition, the policy division; and the Lifespan Respite Technical Assistance Center which is funded by the Administration for Community Living in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Lifespan Respite TA Center provides training and technical assistance to state Lifespan Respite grantees, their State Respite Coalition partners, and others interested in building statewide coordinated systems of respite services for all family caregivers.



## INTRODUCTION

### What is Respite Care?

Respite is planned or emergency care provided to a child or adult with special needs in order to provide temporary relief to family caregivers who are caring for that child or adult. Caregivers not only get a much-needed break from the demands of caregiving, but respite care also has been shown to have a positive impact on many individual and family outcomes, including: reduced stress, decreased fatigue, increased family quality of life, reduced social isolation, and improved relationships. Respite care can be provided across the lifespan to individuals with a variety of special needs. Respite care is funded by multiple sources and can take place in a variety of settings, including facilities, community settings, and in the homes of individuals with special needs.

### The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Respite Care

The global COVID-19 pandemic began at the end of 2019 and has continued to impact our lives in many ways. To help reduce the spread of this highly contagious and potentially life-threatening virus, most communities closed non-essential businesses and encouraged people to stay home. As a result, many families have been quarantined for months without access to respite care and other supportive services. Additionally, the closure of day programs, childcare centers, and schools has increased the amount of time family caregivers are providing care for their loved ones. The pandemic has greatly increased demands on family caregivers while at the same time reduced the amount of respite care available at a time when it is needed more than ever.

### Purpose of the Guidelines

As more communities across the country begin to re-open in the midst of the ongoing pandemic, many respite care agencies and other respite providers are also planning to resume services. The guidelines provided in this document are designed to assist you with careful and thoughtful planning and implementation strategies to provide and receive respite care as safely as possible during the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to emphasize that information from the [World Health Organization](#),<sup>4</sup> [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC),<sup>5</sup> and [Local Public Health Departments](#)<sup>6</sup> should be your primary source for guidance on COVID-19 and other health-related issues. It is important to closely monitor local guidance and consult with your healthcare professional to ensure your health and safety.



*“COVID-19 has shut down most of the [state]. Some respite services are continuing but all on a limited scale. Many agencies have stopped respite services entirely, either due to the shelter in place order, lack of available providers, limited access to Personal Protective Equipment and/or families not feeling comfortable using services.”*

*[Quote from the Supporting Caregivers During the COVID-19 Pandemic Survey](#)<sup>7</sup>*





Information about COVID-19 continues to evolve rapidly as we learn more about this emerging disease, so not all information in this guide may be relevant by the time you read this. As new information and resources become available, we will continue to update this guide on the [ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center website](#).<sup>8</sup> If you have any questions, additional ideas, resources, or examples of success stories, please email Jill Kagan at [JKagan@archrespite.org](mailto:JKagan@archrespite.org).

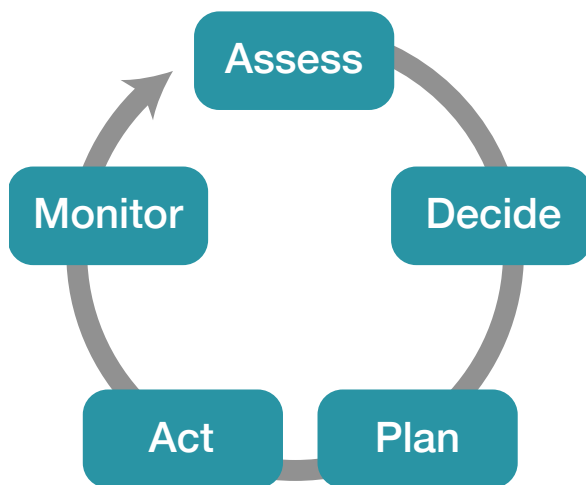
Note: All references are hyperlinked to the website of the source of information. The full URLs are also listed in **References** on page 20 in numbered order as they appear in the document.

### Target Audiences

These guidelines were developed specifically for Lifespan Respite grantees, State Respite Coalitions and other partners, respite care agencies, respite providers, family caregivers, and respite care recipients. However, we recognize and hope that this information may be useful for other individuals or organizations.

For the purpose of this document, the term “respite care agencies” refers to both community-based agencies and consumer-directed respite voucher or reimbursement programs. The term “respite providers” refers to paid staff hired by respite care agencies or family caregivers, unpaid volunteers, or friends and family who provide respite care.

## DECIDING WHEN IT IS SAFE TO PROVIDE OR RECEIVE RESPITE CARE

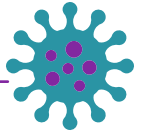


### The Decision-Making Process

The decision to resume respite services is a continuous process that involves thorough assessment, detailed planning, ongoing monitoring, and regular reassessment. Individuals and agencies must carefully consider all potential risks, benefits, and barriers before making an informed decision. It is important to remember that information and guidance related to COVID-19 is evolving rapidly. Additionally, depending on where you are located, the risk for exposure may vary and change over time. As a result, it is important to continually monitor and regularly reassess the safety of providing and receiving respite care. You may need to resume services in a step-wise or phased approach and you should be prepared to stop providing or receiving respite care services as the situation changes. It is important that all individuals involved in providing and receiving respite care feel comfortable with the decision and are kept in close communication regarding any changes.

### Decision Guides

To help respite agencies and families decide when to resume respite services, we developed a **Respite Agency Decision Guide** (“Appendix A”) and a **Family Decision Guide** (“Appendix B”) that can be used along with the information in this document to help inform the decision-making process. You can download fillable PDF forms of the **Respite Agency Decision Guide** and **Family Decision Guide** on the [ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center website](#).<sup>9</sup>



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19

## What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus – commonly referred to as COVID-19 – is an illness caused by a virus that is thought to spread very easily through close contact from person-to-person. We are still learning about how the virus spreads and the severity of the illness it causes. The World Health Organization (WHO) offers answers to common questions about COVID-19 on their [Myth Busters](#)<sup>10</sup> webpage. Important considerations about the spread of COVID-19 from the CDC include:

- The virus spreads between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet)
- The virus travels in respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled by the lungs.
- Respiratory aerosols (produced from activities such as exercise, singing, and shouting) can potentially spread the virus even further than 6 feet.
- It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes.
- Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus

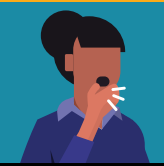
## Symptoms of COVID-19

The CDC has created an infographic that describes the common symptoms of COVID-19. However, it is important to remember that some people with COVID-19 have no symptoms.


The CDC has developed a [Coronavirus Self-Checker](#)<sup>11</sup> to help make decisions about seeking appropriate medical care. If you or someone you care for develop symptoms, it is important to contact a healthcare professional and get tested, if available. For information on community-based testing locations near you, visit the [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#)<sup>12</sup> website.

## Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

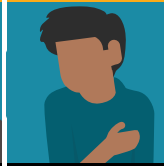
Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:




**Cough**



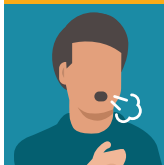
**Fever**



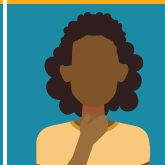
**Chills**



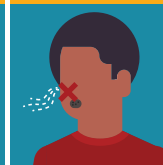
**Muscle pain**



**Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing\***



**Sore throat**




**New loss of taste or smell**

Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

\*Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.

- Trouble breathing
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Bluish lips or face
- New confusion

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

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## Who's at Risk?

While COVID-19 can impact anyone, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness. Many individuals who are respite care recipients may be at higher risk. Recent [research](#)<sup>13</sup> suggests that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities may be at greater risk for poorer COVID-19 outcomes. It is important for people to consult their healthcare professional to discuss their individual risk.



## Providing and Receiving Respite Care Safely During the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to the CDC, those at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:
  - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - People who have serious heart conditions
  - People who are immunocompromised (many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of

corticosteroids and other immune weakening medicines)

- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

For additional information on extra precautions based on specific conditions and risk factors, visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov).<sup>14</sup>

### Preventing Illness

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus by taking the following steps recommended by the CDC to slow the spread:

- Maintain at least 6 feet of social distance from other people
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol
- Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering or mask when around others
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and then immediately wash your hands
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19, stay home if you are sick, and contact your healthcare professional

The CDC has developed a [Stop the Spread of Germs](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s110520-stop-the-spread-of-germs.html)<sup>15</sup> poster (available in several languages) that can be downloaded, printed, and posted as an important reminder about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Stop the Spread of Germs**

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

### Emergency Preparedness Plans

Respite care agencies should develop and regularly update their emergency preparedness plans. The [Emergency Preparedness Packet for Home Health Agencies](#)<sup>16</sup> provides templates and tools that could easily be adapted for respite care agencies.

Disability Voices United developed a [Webinar and Resources](#)<sup>17</sup> on Coronavirus Emergency Preparedness Planning for People with Disabilities and Their Families. Family caregivers can use the [What is Your Plan? Worksheet](#)<sup>18</sup> developed by the Respite Care Association of Wisconsin to help develop an emergency plan for their family during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDC website also has information about [Disability & Health Emergency Preparedness Tools & Resources](#).<sup>19</sup>

Additionally, the American Red Cross has information and resources on [How to Prepare for Emergencies](#)<sup>20</sup> that can help everyone during a public health emergency, like a pandemic.

### Monitoring and Screening for COVID-19 Symptoms

Even though some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus, it is important for everyone to regularly self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. The CDC also recommends businesses establish screening methods. Respite agencies should carefully consider feasibility and potential liability issues related to establishing screening of staff and/or clients. The following are important considerations related to monitoring and screening for COVID-19 symptoms:

- Screening methods should occur regularly (prior to providing/receiving respite services) and should inquire about any symptoms or possible exposure to COVID-19 in the past 14 days
- Document results of screenings and store information in a way that protects confidentiality
- Encourage family caregivers, care recipients, and respite providers to self-monitor for symptoms and call-in/stay home versus wait to be screened on-site

- Respite agencies should contact clients to screen for symptoms prior to having respite providers travel to the homes of care recipients
- Respite care providers or staff who have a fever of 100.4° F (38.0° C) or above (without medication) or other signs of illness should not enter respite care facilities or the homes of care recipients
- If respite care recipients or other members of their household have a fever of 100.4° F (38.0° C) or above (without medication) or other signs of illness, respite care should not be provided in-home
- Screening methods should incorporate social distancing or social barriers to eliminate or minimize exposures due to close contact with someone who has symptoms during screening

**Feeling Sick?**  
Stay home when you are sick!

If you feel unwell or have the following symptoms  
**please leave the building and contact your health care provider.**  
Then follow-up with your supervisor.

**DO NOT ENTER if you have:**

**FEVER**

**COUGH**

**SHORTNESS OF BREATH**

[cdc.gov/CORONAVIRUS](https://www.cdc.gov/CORONAVIRUS)

CS 116129-A March 22, 2020 5:14 PM



- Use disposable or non-contact (temporal) thermometers, if possible
- If performing a temperature check on multiple individuals, use a clean pair of gloves for each person and ensure that the thermometer has been cleaned thoroughly with an alcohol wipe between each check

Respite agencies, respite providers, family caregivers and care recipients should consider implementing the following to monitor and screen for COVID-19.

### *Respite Agencies*

- ✓ Develop/revise health screening policies and procedures (See “**Appendix C**” for a **Health Screening Policy and Procedure**)
- ✓ Communicate screening policies and procedures with respite providers, family caregivers, and care recipients
- ✓ Review your sick leave policies to more easily enable staff to stay home from work, if needed
- ✓ Post signage at entrances to remind people to avoid entering if they have symptoms

### *Respite Providers*

- ✓ Review and follow health screening policies and procedures
- ✓ Self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19
- ✓ Do NOT provide respite care if you are sick or develop symptoms of COVID-19
- ✓ If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, contact your healthcare professional and follow recommended guidance related to self-isolation and symptom management

### *Family Caregivers and Care Recipients*

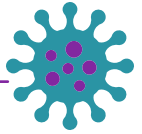
- ✓ Review and follow health screening policies and procedures
- ✓ Self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19
- ✓ Post signage at entrances to remind people to avoid entering if they have symptoms
- ✓ Do NOT receive respite care if you or anyone in your household are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19
- ✓ If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, contact your healthcare professional and follow recommended guidance related to self-isolation and symptom management

## *Social Distancing Activities*

Although it may be difficult to do some activities, there are many fun and creative ways for respite providers to interact with care recipients while still maintaining social distancing, including:

- Go for a walk
- Bike ride
- Enjoy time in nature
- Read a book or listen to an audiobook
- Garden
- Get and care for a virtual pet
- Host a talent show
- Cooking and baking
- Play sports that do not involve contact or sharing equipment, such as football toss, soccer, golf, and obstacle courses
- Exercise or practice yoga
- Play video games, online games, virtual card games, or virtual board games
- Watch TV or movies
- Play trivia
- Go on virtual fieldtrips
- Take a virtual vacation
- Write letters, poetry or journal
- Photography
- Make a music video or short film
- Knit, croquet, or sew
- Learn a new language
- Color or draw together
- Listen to or play music, dance, or participate in karaoke or a singalong
- Make crafts, origami, scrapbook, or create sidewalk chalk art
- Make a time capsule
- Build with Legos
- Work on a puzzle (online or in-person)
- Have a scavenger hunt
- Call, video chat, or have a virtual get-together with friends and family
- Sit around a bonfire
- Play charades

Remember to wear face coverings and don't forget to properly clean and disinfect all items used for activities!

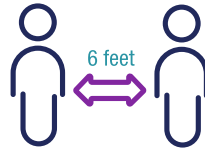


## Social Distancing

Social distancing, also called “physical distancing,” means keeping space between yourself and other people. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the CDC recommends staying at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people. However, it may be challenging for respite care recipients who have limited mobility or trouble understanding information to practice social distancing. Additionally, respite providers often cannot avoid coming into close contact with care recipients. In these cases, it is important to practice social distancing, as much as possible. Social distancing may also be difficult in shared living spaces and facility-based respite agencies. We recommend the following:

- Limit nonessential visitors and staff
- Consider limiting the number of people involved in transitions, such as drop-off and pick-up
- Consider expanding shifts to limit the number of people in the facility at a time
- Use signs, floor markings, and physical barriers to help promote social distancing
- Close common areas or limit the number of people allowed at one time
- Adjust and stagger activities to limit the number of people in the same area at a time
- For in-home respite, try to keep the respite provider and care recipient separate from other family members as much as possible, consider limiting the number of areas in the house that respite care services are provided, and use outdoor spaces, if available
- Exercise, singing, chanting, or shouting activities can increase the distance the virus spreads in respiratory aerosols. Consider temporarily suspending these types of activities or increase distance between people to greater than 6 feet and encourage the use of cloth face coverings.
- Keep track of all visitors and staff who enter the facility using a sign in/out log that records the day, time, name, and contact information. This log can be very helpful for contact tracing purposes should someone in the facility be diagnosed with COVID-19.

- Provide easy to understand information about the importance of social distancing to clients, such as this [Social Distancing Social Story](#)<sup>21</sup> developed by the Autism Society



*According to the CDC, social distancing is the most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19.*

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) creates a physical barrier to help prevent the spread of germs. The type of PPE that may be most helpful to providing respite care safely during the COVID-19 pandemic includes disposable gloves and cloth face coverings. If care recipients receive respiratory treatments, additional PPE, such as gowns and face shields, may be needed.

### Where to Get PPE

PPE is available without a prescription but may be difficult to obtain due to the high demand during the pandemic. Most retail pharmacies (i.e. Walgreens, CVS, etc.) and general merchandise retailers (i.e. Costco, Walmart, Target, etc.) sell PPE but supplies may be redirected to hospitals and healthcare professionals. You can purchase PPE online (i.e. Amazon, eBay) but supplies are often limited and prices may be inflated. Medical supply companies are another potential source for PPE. Community based-organizations, including respite care agencies, can request cartons of 500 cloth face coverings for free, while supplies last, through the [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#).<sup>22</sup>

If you are having difficulty obtaining PPE, contact your Local Health Department to inquire about possible solutions. Many State and Local Health Departments have developed programs that allow respite agencies and families to request PPE. You can also contact your [state respite coalition](#)<sup>23</sup> to see if they can help you obtain PPE.



### Conserving PPE

Due to shortages of PPE, respite care agencies should consider taking steps to conserve the supply of PPE. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services has developed additional guidance on the use and conservation of PPE for [Home and Community Based Service Providers](#)<sup>24</sup> and for [Recipients of Home and Community Based Services](#).<sup>25</sup>

In order to conserve the supply of PPE, there have been numerous creative solutions proposed, such as using raincoats, plastic garbage bags, or graduation gowns. However, these alternatives have not been approved by the CDC and should be avoided or used only in an emergency situation when PPE is not available.

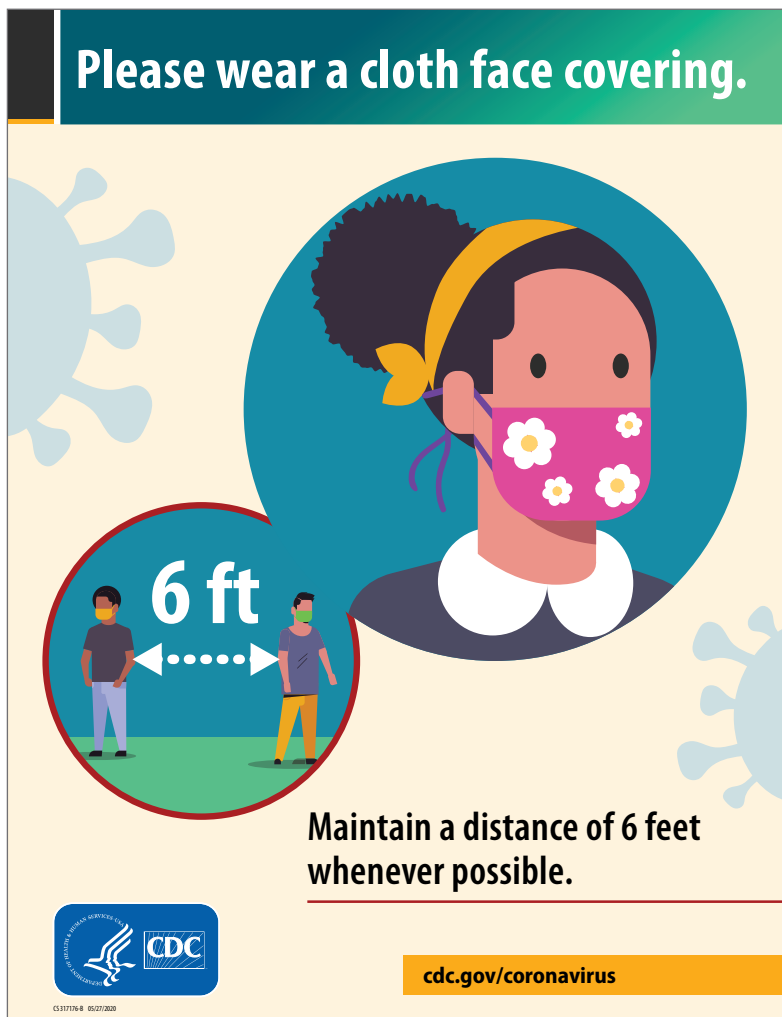
### Masks and Cloth Face Coverings

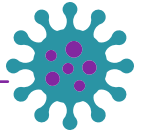
The CDC recommends that the general public wears cloth face coverings and provides guidance on [How to Make Cloth Face Coverings](#).<sup>26</sup> Surgical masks, N-95 respirators, or other PPE intended for healthcare workers are not required unless instructed otherwise by healthcare professionals. It is important to note that cloth face coverings may not protect the wearer; however, they may keep the wearer from spreading the virus to others.

The following are important considerations when wearing a cloth face covering:

- Make sure you can breathe through it.
- Wear it whenever going out in public or when unable to practice social distancing.
- Make sure it covers your nose and mouth.
- Wash after using.
- Keep clean, unused cloth face coverings separate from dirty, used cloth face coverings to avoid cross-contamination (consider having two plastic baggies labelled “Clean” and “Dirty”).
- Do not use with children under two years old.
- Do not use with individuals who experience anxiety or confusion when wearing.
- Consider wearing a cloth face covering with a [clear window](#)<sup>27</sup> if working with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and rely on lip-reading.
- [Public health experts](#)<sup>28</sup> highly recommend but do not require people wear face coverings outside of certain employment spaces. Health conditions, past traumatic experiences, and fear of racial profiling or discrimination may be some of the reasons people aren’t able to wear a cloth face covering.
- [Researchers](#)<sup>29</sup> suggest plastic face shields may be an effective alternative to cloth face coverings. There are many [online videos](#)<sup>30</sup> showing how to make your own face shield.

The CDC has developed posters (available in several languages) that can be downloaded, printed, and posted as important reminders.





## Disposable Gloves

The CDC recommends wearing disposable gloves:

- When you are routinely cleaning and disinfecting
- When caring for someone who is sick
- When touching or having contact with blood, stool, or body fluids such as saliva, mucus, vomit, and urine

In most other situations, wearing gloves is not necessary. After using disposable gloves, throw them out and wash your hands. Never reuse disposable gloves.

## Handwashing

Handwashing is one of the best ways to protect yourself and your family from getting sick. For handwashing to be effective, it is important to follow the steps recommended by the CDC.

- **WET** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **LATHER** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **SCRUB** your hands for at least 20 seconds (Tip: Sing “Happy Birthday” twice).
- **RINSE** hands well under clean, running water.
- **DRY** hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. However, if soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. It is important to rub hand sanitizer over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry (which takes around 20 seconds). Keep in mind that young children, as well children and adults with disabilities, may need additional supervisor or assistance with handwashing.

For more information on handwashing and to download printable posters (available in English and Spanish) that can be displayed near sinks, visit the [CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing).<sup>31</sup> There are also many great [online videos](#)<sup>32</sup> that demonstrate proper handwashing technique.

**Stop Germs! Wash Your Hands.**

**When?**

- After using the bathroom
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

**How?**

**Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

**Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

**Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.

**Rinse** hands well under clean, running water.

**Dry** hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

**Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things we can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.**

**LIFE IS BETTER WITH CLEAN HANDS**

[www.cdc.gov/handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)

This material was developed by CDC. The Life is Better with Clean Hands Campaign is made possible by a partnership between the CDC Foundation, GDOJO, and Staples. HHSC/CDC does not endorse commercial products, services, or companies. CS110027-A

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

Cleaning and disinfecting are important ways to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. The CDC has developed the following guidance for cleaning and disinfecting.

Consider the following:

- Develop/revise policies and procedures, as needed, to increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting.
- Ensure respite providers, family caregivers, and care recipients receive proper training and education about how, what, and when to clean and disinfect.
- Wear gloves for routine cleaning and disinfecting.
- Cleaning with soap and water reduces the number of germs, dirt and impurities on surfaces; and disinfecting kills germs on surfaces.



# GUIDANCE FOR CLEANING & DISINFECTING

## PUBLIC SPACES, WORKPLACES, BUSINESSES, SCHOOLS, AND HOMES



SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

### 1 DEVELOP YOUR PLAN

**DETERMINE WHAT NEEDS TO BE CLEANED.** Areas unoccupied for 7 or more days need only routine cleaning. Maintain existing cleaning practices for outdoor areas.

**DETERMINE HOW AREAS WILL BE DISINFECTED.** Consider the type of surface and how often the surface is touched. Prioritize disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

**CONSIDER THE RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED.** Keep in mind the availability of cleaning products and personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for cleaners and disinfectants.

Follow guidance from state, tribal, local, and territorial authorities.

### 2 IMPLEMENT

**CLEAN VISIBLY DIRTY SURFACES WITH SOAP AND WATER** prior to disinfection.

**USE THE APPROPRIATE CLEANING OR DISINFECTANT PRODUCT.** Use an EPA-approved disinfectant against COVID-19, and read the label to make sure it meets your needs.

**ALWAYS FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS ON THE LABEL.** The label will include safety information and application instructions. Keep disinfectants out of the reach of children.

### 3 MAINTAIN AND REVISE

**CONTINUE ROUTINE CLEANING AND DISINFECTION.** Continue or revise your plan based upon appropriate disinfectant and PPE availability. Dirty surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. Routinely disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily.

**MAINTAIN SAFE PRACTICES** such as frequent handwashing, using cloth face coverings, and staying home if you are sick.

**CONTINUE PRACTICES THAT REDUCE THE POTENTIAL FOR EXPOSURE.** Maintain social distancing, staying six feet away from others. Reduce sharing of common spaces and frequently touched objects.

For more information, please visit [CORONAVIRUS.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



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for a long time to prevent the spread of Legionnaire’s disease, see the CDC guidance on [Maintaining Healthy Environments](#).<sup>34</sup>

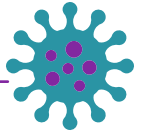
For more information on how to clean and disinfect, visit the [CDC website](#).<sup>35</sup>

## Food Safety

Although COVID-19 is not a food-borne illness, there are still important considerations related to storing, preparing, and serving food that should be followed to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. Whether you are in a facility, at home, or in the community, we recommend the following food safety tips:

- Clean frequently touched surfaces more often, including: tables, countertops, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, phones, remote controls, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- Wheelchairs and other assistive devices should be cleaned and disinfected regularly.
- When arriving home, respite providers should immediately remove their clothes and place them in a plastic bag for laundering and take a shower or bath.
- Download, print, and follow the [EPA’s 6 Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use](#).<sup>33</sup>
- Always read and follow the direction on the label of cleaning and disinfectant products to ensure safe use.
- Diluted household bleach solutions can be used and should be prepared by mixing 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water. Bleach solutions will only be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.
- For additional guidance on topics such as cleaning of restrooms; ventilation issues; and checking the water system in buildings that have been closed
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize all food prep, storage and serving areas regularly.
- Avoid communal/shared food, potlucks, and self-service.
- Ensure social distancing of at least 6-feet while eating, when possible.
- Remove food from carry-out containers before eating.
- While heat can kill the virus, there is limited evidence about the effectiveness of microwaving carry-out food and it is not generally required.
- Carefully label leftovers or avoid saving leftovers to prevent cross-contamination.

For more information on Food Safety and COVID-19, visit the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) website](#).<sup>36</sup>



## Caring for People with Dementia or Developmental and Behavioral Disorders

Special considerations may be needed for people with dementia or developmental and behavioral disorders who have difficulty accessing information, have trouble understanding information, have difficulties with changes in routine, or sensory issues. The CDC suggests the following considerations:

- Social distancing and isolating may be difficult and reminders or supervision may be needed.
- Wearing cloth face coverings may be difficult for people with sensory, cognitive, or behavioral issues. Cloth face coverings are not recommended for children under 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing, is incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the covering without assistance.
- Cleaning and disinfecting may affect those with sensory or respiratory issues.
- Handwashing or using hand sanitizer may require assistance or supervision.
- Cleaning and disinfecting may require assistance or supervision.
- Consider using social stories, video modeling, picture schedules, and visual cues to help develop new routines and follow recommendations.

If a respite care recipient cannot tolerate wearing a cloth face covering, consider using a face shield instead. If neither can be tolerated, we recommend limiting respite services to in-home with a consistent provider, preferably a friend or family member. Social distancing should be maintained as much as possible to help reduce the risk of spreading the virus. However, respite care agencies and respite providers need to carefully weigh the risks and liability concerns before agreeing to provide respite services to someone who cannot wear a cloth face covering or face shield.

For additional information, visit the CDC’s webpage on [Caring for People with Developmental & Behavioral Disorders](#).<sup>37</sup> The following organizations provide additional condition-specific resources related to COVID-19:

- [Alzheimer’s Association](#)<sup>38</sup>
- [Autism Speaks](#)<sup>39</sup>

- [Autism Society](#)<sup>40</sup>
- [Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(CHADD\)](#)<sup>41</sup>
- [Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health \(Children with Special Healthcare Needs\)](#)<sup>42</sup>
- [Positive Approach to Care \(Dementia Care Videos\)](#)<sup>43</sup>
- [Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities](#)<sup>44</sup> ([Wearing a Face Mask Social Story](#)<sup>45</sup> and [Helping Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Become Comfortable with Face Masks](#)<sup>46</sup>)



## Legal and Ethical Considerations

The following are important legal and ethical considerations for respite care agencies, respite providers, family caregivers, and care recipients.

- Family caregivers and care recipients have a right to choose if they want to receive or refuse respite care services.
- Local, state, and national guidance related to COVID-19 are changing frequently as the situation evolves. Closely monitor messaging and consult with your [Local Public Health Department](#)<sup>47</sup> for updated guidance.
- Respite care agencies should notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of any possible case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the [Americans with](#)



- [Disabilities Act](#) (ADA),<sup>48</sup> the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act](#) (HIPAA),<sup>49</sup> and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Respite care agencies and respite providers should familiarize themselves with the provisions in the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) (FFCRA),<sup>50</sup> which requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specific reasons related to COVID-19.
- Respite care agencies should discuss potential liability issues with their insurance agency and/or legal team, including:
  - Ensuring screening protocols are not illegal or discriminatory
  - Legal issues related to requiring use and provision of PPE and cleaning and disinfecting supplies



- Respite care agencies should develop/revise policies and procedures to enhance safety and ensure staff receive the proper training and demonstrate competency. Respite providers and families have the right to ask for information about policies and procedures.
- Respite care agencies should ensure they are following guidance from the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) (OSHA)<sup>51</sup> to protect the health and safety of their staff.

- It is important to maintain documentation, including:
  - Training and competency of staff and clients on policies and procedures
  - Screening logs, including name, date, time, temperature and symptom checklist
  - Attendance logs including day, time in/out, name, and contact information

### Training Respite Care Providers

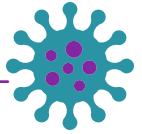
Respite care agencies are responsible for ensuring that all respite care providers receive the proper training related to all safety policies and procedures, including the following:

- Sick leave policies
- Screening protocols, including taking temperatures
- Hand hygiene
- Proper use of PPE, including gloves and cloth face coverings
- Social distancing
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Supporting people with developmental or behavioral disorders, or certain medical conditions, that may impede a person's ability to wear a mask or engage in social distancing

Agape Respite Care, Inc. has developed several [reopening policies and procedures](#)<sup>52</sup> that may serve as helpful examples for respite care agencies. Training materials should include written tests and return demonstration of skills to ensure understanding and competency. A **Competency Validation Checklist** can be found in "Appendix D".

The World Health Organization has a variety of online [COVID-19 Trainings](#)<sup>53</sup> that are available in multiple languages. For a small cost, you can also complete the online [National COVID-Ready Caregiving Certification](#)<sup>54</sup> course that was designed for CNAs, home care workers, family caregivers, and other healthcare professionals. ARCH is making this training available at no charge for a limited time. Contact [ARCH](#)<sup>55</sup> for more information.





## SUPPORTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

It is important to support positive mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and stressful. The social isolation from months of quarantine has the potential to increase feelings of loneliness. Additionally, many families are facing increased financial stress due to unemployment or reduced work hours. As a result, there is an increased risk of substance abuse, self-harm and suicide, domestic violence, and abuse and neglect of children, older adults, and individuals with special needs. If you recognize any of the following signs and symptoms in yourself or others, it is important to know you are not alone and there is help available.

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on
- Lack of interest in doing things you normally enjoy
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or others
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Sudden changes in behavior or acting out
- Unexplained injuries or bruises
- Untreated medical problems
- Coercive or threatening behavior
- Increased use of tobacco, and/or alcohol and other substances

### *Ways to Support Positive Mental Health and Well-Being*

- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals
- Exercise regularly
- Get plenty of sleep
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Take deep breaths or meditate
- Take time to relax and engage in activities you enjoy

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories that may increase anxiety
- Connect with friends and family (maintaining social distancing)

### *Helpful Resources*

- The [Respite Care Association of Wisconsin](#)<sup>56</sup> developed a free course [Finding Your NEW NORMAL during COVID-19](#),<sup>57</sup> which covers a variety of topics, including links to activities for children and adults and self-care resources
- The [National Association of Direct Service Providers](#) (NADSP)<sup>58</sup> developed the [COVID-19 Toolkit for DSPs](#),<sup>59</sup> which has several resources on self-care for providers
- The World Health Organization offers tips on [Coping with Stress](#)<sup>60</sup> and [Helping Children Cope with Stress](#)<sup>61</sup>
- The [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)<sup>62</sup> has a [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)<sup>63</sup>

### *Important Resources*

- If you or someone you know is in immediately danger, **CALL 911!**
- [Disaster Distress Helpline](#)<sup>64</sup> 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)<sup>65</sup> 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or [Lifeline Crisis Chat](#)<sup>66</sup>
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#)<sup>67</sup> 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522
- [National Child Abuse Hotline](#)<sup>68</sup> 1-800-4AChild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- [National Sexual Assault Hotline](#)<sup>69</sup> 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or [Online Chat](#)<sup>70</sup>
- [The Eldercare Locator](#)<sup>71</sup> 1-800-677-1116 [TTY Instructions](#)<sup>72</sup>
- [Veteran's Crisis Line](#)<sup>73</sup> 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or [Crisis Chat](#)<sup>74</sup> or text: 8388255
- [SAMHSA's National Helpline](#)<sup>75</sup> 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889
- [Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator](#)<sup>76</sup>



## REDEFINING RESPITE CARE

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many respite care agencies to close or temporarily discontinue providing respite care services. However, some respite care agencies have used this opportunity to redefine respite care. The [Building Respite Evidence and Knowledge \(BREAK\) Exchange](#)<sup>77</sup> conducted a global survey to better understand how respite care agencies have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key challenges that respite agencies described were related to:

- **Safety**, including lack of clear guidelines and limited access to PPE
- **Technology**, including limited access to internet and computers, poor computer literacy, and the impersonal nature of virtual interactions



*“The pandemic is terrible for our clients... We call to check on them weekly. We have received a couple of different COVID-19 grants to help with food and gas costs. We know it takes more food during this time to feed our families because the children are home. We are providing gas cards to help them go pick up free lunches and breakfast at the school for children. Our families are more isolated than they ever have been and they have the stress of homeschooling the children.”*

[Quote from the Supporting Caregivers During the COVID-19 Pandemic Survey](#)<sup>78</sup>

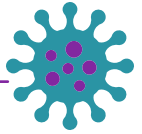


- **Difficult Life Circumstances** experienced by both providers and families, including high levels of stress and anxiety and difficulty meeting basic needs
- **Organizational and Bureaucratic Barriers** such as inflexibility and time-consuming red tape in using funds for alternative services

Despite these challenges, many respite care agencies were able to adapt their services or create new services to continue to support family caregivers, including:

- Increased communication, check-in calls, and case management services
- Providing virtual support groups and video calls
- Changing the location of services to in-home or online
- Offering online activities to help support self-care and stress management
- Changes or flexibility in funding, such as providing grants for families
- Delivery of groceries, medications, supplies, meals, and care packages
- Connecting and sharing information via social media, websites and online videos
- Providing electronic pets to help with isolation

ARCH has found that many of these same activities are being provided by Lifespan Respite grantees, state respite coalitions, and providers in the Lifespan Respite Network. ARCH also has a resource list of [informal respite options and opportunities](#)<sup>79</sup> with more ideas. In addition, some state Medicaid waiver programs, Lifespan Respite Care grantees and their state respite coalition partners have adapted self-directed respite or voucher services by easing restrictions on provider eligibility to include other family members in the home, increasing the number of respite hours or funds for respite vouchers, extending the number of months over which respite vouchers could be used, and permitting alternative respite settings. Some Lifespan Respite programs also lifted income eligibility restrictions.



## A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Ensuring the safety of respite care services during the COVID-19 pandemic is a shared responsibility. Respite care agencies, providers, family caregivers, and care recipients all play important roles in helping to keep everyone safe and healthy. We recommend that you discuss and agree on your shared responsibilities and consider signing an **Oath of Responsibility** like the one provided in “**Appendix E**”. The following provides a summary of key responsibilities by role.

### *Respite Care Agencies*

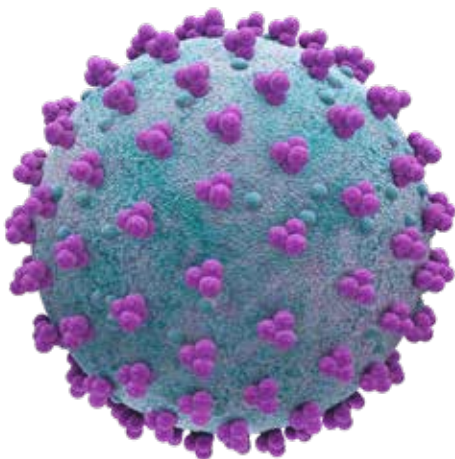
- ✓ Monitor local guidelines carefully and adapt services, as needed
- ✓ Develop/revise policies and procedures to enhance safety
- ✓ Ensure respite care providers receive the proper training and demonstrate competency
- ✓ Adopt and implement enhanced hand hygiene practices and procedures to clean and disinfect surfaces
- ✓ Limit in-person contact and encourage social distancing among staff and clients
- ✓ Educate both staff and clients about their shared responsibility to help protect each other
- ✓ Provide PPE and other supplies, as needed
- ✓ Regularly monitor compliance and provide ongoing support, as needed

### *Respite Care Providers*

- ✓ Do not provide respite care if you develop symptoms or have recently been exposed to someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- ✓ Carefully follow recommended guidelines, policies, and procedures
- ✓ Engage in social distancing by staying at least 6-feet away from others, as much as possible
- ✓ Wear cloth face coverings and use other PPE, as needed
- ✓ Wash hands regularly and practice good hygiene
- ✓ Clean and disinfect surfaces regularly

### *Family Caregivers and Respite Care Recipients*

- ✓ Let your respite care providers/agency know if you or any household members develops symptoms or have recently been exposed to someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- ✓ Carefully follow recommended guidelines, policies, and procedures
- ✓ Engage in social distancing by staying at least 6-feet away from others, as much as possible
- ✓ Wear cloth face coverings and use other PPE, as needed
- ✓ Wash hands regularly and practice good hygiene
- ✓ Clean and disinfect surfaces regularly



## SUMMARY

We hope that you found the information provided in this guide helpful as you consider ways to provide and receive respite care safely during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate that these are unprecedented and uncertain times for everyone. Working together, with careful planning and consideration, we believe that respite care can be provided safely to families who need respite care now more than ever.



### RESOURCES

The following is a list of resources that were used to help develop these guidelines that you may find helpful, as well. We also encourage you to explore your state and local resources that support family caregivers and individuals with special needs.

#### AARP Caregiver Resource Center

- [Family Caregiving](#)<sup>80</sup>

#### Administration for Community Living (ACL)

- [General COVID-19 Information](#)<sup>81</sup>

#### Agape Respite Care, Inc.

- [Reopening Policies and Procedures](#),<sup>82</sup> including:
  - Letter to Families
  - Competency Validation Checklists (Donning and Duffing Gloves, Putting on and Taking Off Face Masks, Taking Temperature with No-Contact Forehead Thermometer
  - Infection Control Log
  - Staff Temperature Log
  - Mask Sign for Front Door
  - Permission for Travel for Essential Workers
  - Infection Prevention Policy and Procedures
  - Temporary COVID-19 Check-In Process Policy and Procedures
  - Temporary COVID-19 Policy and Procedures for Guest Scheduling
  - Staff Training Presentation Slides

#### American Association on Health and Disability

- [Resources for People with Disabilities on COVID-19](#)<sup>83</sup>
- Video Series on COVID-19 & Disability
  - [COVID-19 & Disability: Who's at Risk for Complications?](#)<sup>84</sup>
  - [COVID-19 & Disability: Social Distancing](#)<sup>85</sup>
  - [COVID-19 & Disability: Precautions for People in Wheelchairs](#)<sup>86</sup>
  - [COVID-19 & Disability: Keeping Wheelchairs Clean](#)<sup>87</sup>

- [COVID 19 & Disability: Being a Self Advocate](#)<sup>88</sup>
- [COVID-19 & Disability: Knowing Your Legal Rights](#)<sup>89</sup>

#### ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center

- [COVID-19 Respite and Caregiving Resources](#)<sup>90</sup>

#### Autism Society

- [Download Toolkit: Strategies to Successfully Transition to the "New Normal" Due to Covid-19](#)<sup>91</sup>
- [Social Distancing Social Story](#)<sup>92</sup>
- [Wearing Masks Social Story](#)<sup>93</sup>

#### Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities

- [Helping Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Become Comfortable with Face Masks](#)<sup>94</sup>
- [Wearing a Face Mask Social Story](#)<sup>95</sup>

#### Building Respite Evidence and Knowledge (BREAK) Exchange

- [Preliminary Results of the Supporting Family Caregivers During the COVID-19 Pandemic Survey](#)<sup>96</sup>

#### Care Academy

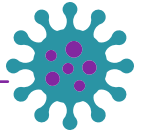
- Free online training [COVID-19: A Guide for Direct Care Workers](#)<sup>97</sup>

#### Caregiver Action Network

- [COVID-19 and Family Caregiving](#)<sup>98</sup>

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs](#)<sup>99</sup>
- [Considerations for Community-based Organizations](#)<sup>100</sup>
- [Downloadable Materials](#)<sup>101</sup> (available in several languages) to support COVID-19 recommendations, including:
  - [Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)<sup>102</sup>
  - [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)<sup>103</sup>
  - [Please Wear a Cloth Face Covering](#)<sup>104</sup>



- [How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering](#)<sup>105</sup>
- [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)<sup>106</sup>
- [Stay Home When You are Sick](#)<sup>107</sup>
- [Stop Germs! Wash Your Hands](#)<sup>108</sup>
- [Putting on PPE](#)<sup>109</sup>
- [General COVID-19 Information People with Disabilities](#)<sup>110</sup>
- [People with Developmental & Behavioral Disorders](#)<sup>111</sup>
- [What do Direct Service Providers for people with disabilities need to know about COVID-19?](#)<sup>112</sup>
- [What you should know about COVID-19 to protect yourself and others](#)<sup>113</sup>

### Family Caregiver Alliance

- [COVID-19 Resources for Family Caregivers](#)<sup>114</sup>

### Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

- [Food Safety Resources](#)<sup>115</sup>

### National Alliance for Caregiving

- [COVID-19 Resources for Families Caregiving-Specific Information](#)<sup>116</sup>

### National Association of City and County Health Officials

- [Directory of Local Health Departments](#)<sup>117</sup>

### National Association of Direct Service Providers (NADSP)

- [COVID-19 Toolkit for DSPs](#)<sup>118</sup>

### National Child Traumatic Stress Network

- [Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with the Coronavirus Disease 2019](#)<sup>119</sup>

### NextStep

- [National COVID-Ready Caregiving Certification](#)<sup>120</sup>

### Respite Care Association of Wisconsin

- [COVID-19 Resources](#)<sup>121</sup>
- [Finding Your “NEW NORMAL” During COVID-19](#)<sup>122</sup>
- [What is Your Plan? Worksheet](#)<sup>123</sup>

### Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving

- [Caregiving During COVID-19](#)<sup>124</sup>

### Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care Videos

- [How to Reduce Risks When You Must Be Closer Than 6 Feet](#)<sup>125</sup>
- [How to Talk to Your Family Member Who is Locked In and Living with Dementia](#)<sup>126</sup>
- [Managing Dementia Care in the Time of COVID-19](#)<sup>127</sup>
- [Using Positive Physical Approach When a Face Mask is Necessary](#)<sup>128</sup>
- [Wash Your Hands! Tips for Dementia Care Partners](#)<sup>129</sup>

### U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

- [General COVID-19 Information](#)<sup>130</sup>

### U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

- [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)<sup>131</sup>

### Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council

- [COVID-19 Information By and For People with Disabilities](#)<sup>132</sup>

### Washington State Department of Health

- [Novel Coronavirus Outbreak Frequently Asked Questions](#)<sup>133</sup>

### Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

- [COVID-19 Resource Toolkit](#)<sup>134</sup>

### Wisconsin Department of Health Services

- [COVID-19 Information](#)<sup>135</sup>
- [Protecting yourself during a home visit](#)<sup>136</sup>

### World Health Organization

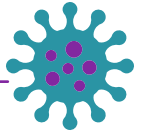
- [General COVID-19 Information](#)<sup>137</sup>
- [Getting Your Workplace Ready for COVID-19](#)<sup>138</sup>
- [COVID-19 Myth Busters](#)<sup>139</sup>
- [Additional Downloadable Materials](#)<sup>140</sup>



## REFERENCES

The resources referenced throughout this document and listed below are not specifically endorsed by ARCH and are provided only as a source of information. References to Internet websites (URLs) were accurate at the time the guidelines were written. Neither ARCH nor the author is responsible for URLs that may have expired or changed since the document was prepared.

1. <https://nursing.wisc.edu/staff/whitmore-kim/>
2. <https://www.ujimaunited.com/>
3. <https://archrespite.org/>
4. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
6. <https://www.naccho.org/membership/lhd-directory>
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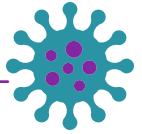


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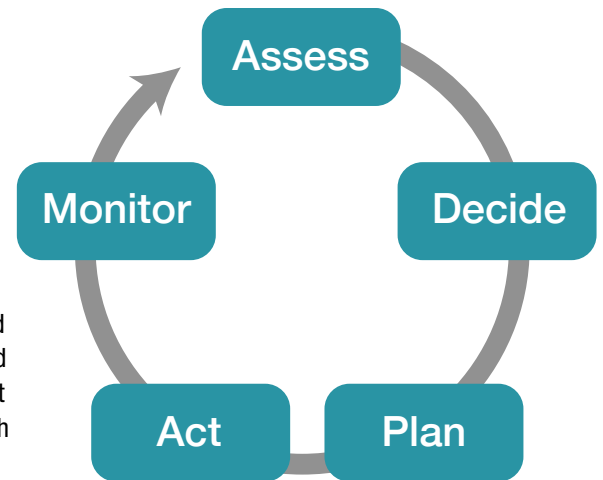
# RESPIRE AGENCY DECISION GUIDE

*Deciding when it's safe to resume respite care services during the COVID-19 pandemic*

*Developed by the ARCH Workgroup*

## The Decision-Making Process

The decision to resume respite services is a continuous process that involves thorough assessment, detailed planning, ongoing monitoring, and regular reassessment. Respite care agencies must carefully consider all potential risks, benefits, and barriers before making an informed decision. It is important to remember that information and guidance related to COVID-19 is evolving rapidly. Additionally, depending on where you are located, the risk for exposure may vary and change over time. As a result, it is important to continually monitor and regularly reassess the safety of providing and receiving respite care. You may need to resume services in a step-wise or phased approach and you should be prepared to stop providing respite care services as the situation changes. It is important that all individuals involved in providing and receiving respite care feel comfortable with the decision and are kept in close communication regarding any changes.



- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 1. Is there sufficient client interest in resuming respite services?  
If not now, when are your clients interested in resuming respite care services? DATE:
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 2. Will resuming respite care services be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 3. Is the number of new cases of COVID-19 going up, down, or holding steady in your area?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 4. Have there been any recent outbreaks or surges in the number of cases of COVID-19?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 5. Have there been any high-risk events in the past two weeks, such as large gatherings in the community, that could result in an outbreak or surge in cases of COVID-19?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 6. Have you discussed and resolved any liability concerns with your insurance provider and/or legal team?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 7. Is it possible to follow the recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including: screening for symptoms, social distancing, handwashing, PPE, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 8. Do you have a sustainable way to obtain the necessary PPE and cleaning and disinfecting supplies?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 9. Are you able to adjust your budget and/or staffing to meet enhanced safety recommendations?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 10. Do you have the capacity and the information to provide training and support to staff on safety precautions and in dealing with behavioral issues that may place someone at higher risk because of difficulty wearing a mask or social distancing?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 11. Do you have a system in place to ensure regular and timely communication with staff and clients?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 12. Does anyone involved have an underlying health condition or other risk factors that make them more likely to become seriously ill or hospitalized?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 13. Does anyone involved have other high-risk exposures (i.e. exposure from being or living with an essential worker, recent travel, etc.)
- 14. What are the possible risks and benefits of resuming services for everyone involved? Consider social, emotional, mental, social, financial, and spiritual needs.



## RESPIRE AGENCY DECISION GUIDE

### Decide

1. Who is impacted by the decision?
2. Who should be involved in the decision?
3. Who should be informed about the decision?
4. Can the decision wait? How long is the current situation sustainable?
5. Do the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks?
6. Are there any other barriers or concerns to consider?
7. Should respite services resume as normal or are there ways to adapt respite services to enhance safety?
8. What is the BEST decision at this time?  Resume respite services  Not resume, and continue to assess the situation

### Plan

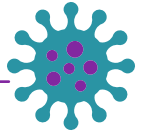
- 1. Ensure there are policies and procedures in place related to the recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including: screening for symptoms, social distancing, handwashing, PPE, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting.
- 2. Ensure there are policies and procedures in place related to staff travel including limiting travel to hot-spots and measures to take once they return back to work.
- 3. Train and verify competency of all staff on health and safety procedures, including how to support people with developmental and behavioral disorders, dementia, and other high-risk individuals.
- 4. Plan how to adjust the time, frequency, environment, or type of activities to minimize risk.
- 5. Create an emergency plan if staff or clients get sick.
- 6. Identify and share resources and strategies for self-care and stress management with staff and clients.
- 7. Notify clients of policies and procedures and ensure understanding of expectations.

### Act

- 1. After thoughtful assessment and detailed planning, ACT on the best decision at this time.

### Monitor

- 1. Regularly monitor developments with local authorities.
- 2. Monitor staff absences and have flexible leave policies and practices.
- 3. Monitor stock and distribution of cleaning and disinfecting supplies and PPE.
- 4. Monitor daily and consult with local health authorities if there are cases in program or an increase in cases in the local area and adjust operations, as needed.
- 5. Keep track of all visitors and staff who enter the facility using a sign in/out log that records the day, time, name, and contact information.
- 6. Monitor staff travel to help avoid visiting hot-spots.
- 7. Continue to monitor the situation and reassess decision regularly.



## FAMILY DECISION GUIDE

Adapted from the [Moving Forward Decision Guide](#)<sup>141</sup> developed by the University of Wisconsin Division of Extension

### The Decision-Making Process

This decision guide was developed for family caregivers and care recipients. Whenever possible, the decision to receive respite care should be made together as a family. Families must carefully consider all potential risks, benefits, and barriers before making an informed decision about whether to resume respite care services. It is important to remember that information and guidance related to COVID-19 is evolving rapidly. Additionally, depending on where you live, the risk for exposure may vary and change over time. As a

result, it is important to continually monitor and regularly reassess the safety of receiving respite care. You may need to resume services in a step-wise or phased approach and you should be prepared to stop receiving respite care services as the situation changes. It is important that all individuals involved in providing and receiving respite care feel comfortable with the decision and are kept in close communication of any changes.

#### WHO should be involved in the decision-making process?

1. Who is impacted by the decision?	2. Who should be informed about the decision?	3. Consider other family members, friends, and other providers.
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#### What is the LOCAL context?

- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 1. Are there any local or national guidelines that need to be considered?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 2. Is the number of new cases of COVID-19 going up, down, or holding steady in your area?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 3. Have there been any recent outbreaks or surges in the number of cases of COVID-19?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 4. Have there been any high-risk events in the past two weeks, such as large gatherings in the community, that could result in an outbreak or surge in cases of COVID-19?

#### What are the possible RISKS?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. What are the possible risks for everyone involved? Consider social, emotional, mental, social, financial, or spiritual needs. | 2. What would happen if no respite care was provided (i.e. job loss, impact on mental health of caregiver, out-of-home placement of care-recipient, etc.)? |
|--|--|
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 3. Has there been any impact on the family caregivers' ability to provide quality care?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 4. Does anyone involved have an underlying condition or other risk factors that make them more likely to become seriously ill or hospitalized?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 5. Does anyone involved have other high-risk exposures (i.e. exposure from being or living with an essential worker, recent travel, etc.)?
- YES  NO  UNKNOWN 6. Do you have a plan for what to do if someone gets sick?



**What are the possible BENEFITS?**

1. What are the possible benefits for everyone involved? Consider social, emotional, mental, financial, or spiritual needs.	2. How would respite care benefit family caregivers?	3. How would respite care benefit care recipients?
4. What is the current stress level of family caregivers? (Highlight number to indicate level.)		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>1</span> <span>2</span> <span>3</span> <span>4</span> <span>5</span> <span>6</span> <span>7</span> <span>8</span> <span>9</span> <span>10</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <span>Little stress</span> <span>High Stress</span> </div>		

**How can risks be MINIMIZED?**

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 1. Are there policies and procedures in place related to the recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including: screening for symptoms, social distancing, handwashing, PPE, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 2. Can you adapt the time, frequency, environment, or types of activities to minimize risk?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 3. Do you have access to PPE (i.e. gloves and face coverings)?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 4. Do you have access to cleaning and disinfecting supplies?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 5. Is social distancing (at least 6-feet apart) possible?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 6. Can everyone involved tolerate wearing masks or other PPE?

**What are the possible ALTERNATIVES to respite care?**

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 1. Does the family caregiver have friends or family members who can provide short breaks?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 2. Are there other respite options that would help reduce the risks (i.e. virtual respite, outdoor respite, in-home respite, etc.)?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 3. Can family caregivers wait a little longer to receive respite care? If so, how long could family caregivers continue to provide quality care without respite care?

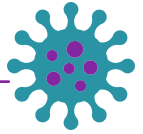
**Making the DECISION.**

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 1. Does anyone involved have additional or ongoing concerns you should talk about more?

YES  NO  UNKNOWN 2. Do the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks?

3. What is the BEST decision at this time?  Resume respite care  Not resume – continue to assess the situation

4. How will you continue to monitor the situation in order to re-evaluate your decision regularly?



# HEALTH SCREENING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Adapted from guidelines developed by the [YMCA of San Diego County](#)<sup>142</sup>

## Health Screening

Before conducting any respite service, a health screening will be completed based on the county health department recommendations for safe reopening. This screening will occur anytime a provider, client, or any other person enters into the space where respite care is occurring.

- Respite providers must complete their own self-checks 24-hours before a respite appointment so they can cancel in advance if necessary. Providers should re-check on the day of service before entering the space where respite care will occur – typically the client's home.
- Clients and any other individuals in the space where respite is provided must also submit to a health screening. If any individual refuses to answer or to participate in the health screening, respite care shall not be provided.
- Social distance must be maintained while completing the health screening questionnaire.
- Respite providers should clock in before completing health screenings as this time is compensable.

## Health Screening Questionnaire

Ask the following questions:

YES  NO Have you traveled out of the country in the last 14 days?

Do you have any of the following symptoms?

*(This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.)*

YES  NO Cough

YES  NO Sore throat

YES  NO Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

YES  NO New loss of smell or taste

YES  NO Fever over 100° F

YES  NO Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

YES  NO Chills

YES  NO Headache

YES  NO Muscle pain

YES  NO Congestion or runny nose

YES  NO Have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for more than 10 minutes) with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 14 days?

If a **RESPITE PROVIDER** answers **YES** to any of the screening questions, they should:

- Isolate themselves from others.
- Call their supervisor and provide the information needed for a report.
- Call their respite client(s) to let them know they must cancel until further notice.
- Contact their medical provider. If they don't have medical insurance call 211 to connect with the COVID-19 nurse line to receive guidance on how to be tested and when it will be safe to return to work.
- Notify their supervisor and client(s) when a medical provider gives them a safe expected return-to-work date.

If a respite provider has been in close contact with a confirmed case, they cannot provide respite for 14 days from the point of contact and should follow their medical provider's or health officer's recommendations.

If a **CLIENT** or other **HOUSEHOLD MEMBER** answers **YES** to any of the screening questions, the **RESPITE PROVIDER** should:

- Cancel the appointment.
- Notify their supervisor of the cancellation and the reason for the cancellation.
- Ask the client/household member to contact their medical provider and notify them when their medical provider deems it safe to resume services.
- Notify their supervisor with any updates to the situation, especially including the date for resumption of services.



**Reporting Symptoms, Exposure, or Confirmed Case**

**RESPITE PROVIDERS** should report information about their **OWN** symptoms, exposure, or confirmed case to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include the following:

- Name
- Age
- Symptoms, exposure, and/or confirmed case?
- If symptoms: what symptoms and when did you notice them?
- If exposure: how, when, where, and by whom were you exposed?
- Did you self isolate? If yes, include date.
- Were you tested? If yes, include date.
- Test results
- Management plan per your medical provider (e.g room isolation, home isolation, hospitalization)

This information will be kept confidential at the respite agency to only the respite program directors and will not be added to staff's personnel file. It will also be reported to the county health department as per reporting requirements.

**RESPITE PROVIDERS** should report information about a **CLIENT** or other **HOUSEHOLD MEMBER'S** symptoms, exposure, or confirmed case to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include the following:

- Client's name
- Date by which a medical provider indicates it is safe to resume services

This information will be kept confidential at the respite agency to only the respite program directors. It will also be reported to the county health department as per reporting requirements.

# COMPETENCY VALIDATION CHECKLIST

Adapted from a checklist developed by [Agape Respite Care, Inc.](#) <sup>143</sup>

<b>TASK:</b> (name of product or skill being observed)  _____  _____  Date: _____  DSP Name: _____  DSP Signature: _____	<b>LEGEND</b> (check those that apply)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Review Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Observation <input type="checkbox"/> Skills/Lab Testing <input type="checkbox"/> Written Exam <input type="checkbox"/> Video Review/Testing <input type="checkbox"/> Chart Review <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> New Employee <input type="checkbox"/> Annual <input type="checkbox"/> All Age Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

### PERFORMANCE LEVEL GUIDE

- 1 – INSTRUCT (able to train others)
- 2 – COMPETENT (performs independently)
- 3 – CANNOT PERFORM INDEPENDENTLY (requires practice and supervision)

STANDARD	PERFORMANCE LEVEL	EVALUATOR'S SIGNATURE (on every line)
Type in the step-by-step procedures of the standard to be evaluated and signed off by a competent staff person.	Using the guide above, check off the DSP based on demonstrated skill level.	Competent staff evaluating the DSP will sign off on each standard performance.
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3	

Evaluator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator's Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed/Revised \_\_\_\_\_



## OATH OF PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Adapted from the [Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits](#)<sup>144</sup>

We have composed a simple “Oath of Personal Responsibility” that all respite agency staff, respite providers, family caregivers, and care recipients should adhere to. While not legally binding, it does remind all of us of our responsibilities to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and ensure that respite care services can be provided safely.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am aware of the potential spread of COVID-19 that could result in severe illness and potential death. Therefore, I will, to the best of my ability, follow the recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including: screening for symptoms, social distancing, handwashing, wearing face coverings, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting. Should I develop symptoms or if I am exposed to someone with COVID-19, I promise to contact the respite agency to let them know. I will work with my healthcare provider and follow current recommendations related to testing and quarantine.

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PRINT NAME

---

SIGN NAME

---

DATE





**ARCH**  
**National  
Respite  
Network**  
*And Resource Center*

[archrespite.org](http://archrespite.org)

