

Respite Guidebook



We're creating a more equitable world so people with developmental disabilities can choose their path. We do this by reimagining how care and support can be better connected to fill gaps in human services across an individual's lifespan.





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WELCOME

Welcome to the Easterseals Northern California In-Home Respite Program. We offer free respite care to clients through trained respite associates so caregivers can take a break and focus on their wellbeing. Research shows that clinical outcomes for children and adults are better when caregivers are less stressed, and our program aims to support busy caregivers who need to recharge.

We are providing this handbook to you as a handy resource. It gives you an overview of our program and information about your rights and responsibilities while receiving respite services from us. We believe that the partnership between you and the Easterseals Northern California team is essential to meet your needs and the needs of your loved one.

OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES

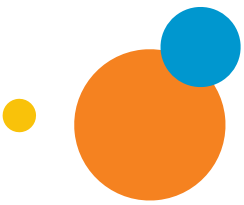
At Easterseals Northern California (ESNorCal), we're creating a more equitable world so people with developmental disabilities can choose their path. We do this by reimagining how care and support can be better connected to fill gaps in human services across an individual's lifespan.

Values shape the culture and define the character of Easterseals Northern California. Values guide how we, as an organization, behave and are the standards by which we make decisions. As an organization, our values are:

- BOLD**
- EQUITY-
INFORMED**
- COMMUNITY-
CENTERED**
- WELLBEING-
DRIVEN**

WHO IS A CAREGIVER?

We use the word "caregiver" for anyone who provides regular care to someone. For example, a caregiver might be a grandparent, aunt, legal guardian or authorized representative. At Kaleidoscope Community Adult Program, in some cases, the caregiver can also be the individual themselves.





OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We will provide exceptional, individualized, family-centered services to empower children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and children at risk for developmental delays to achieve their goals and live independent, fulfilling lives. Our services are voluntary, and you can refuse, decline or withdraw from them anytime.

ESNorCal believes that everyone should be treated equally. We provide the same level of care to our participants regardless of their race, sex, gender expression, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or any other factor that makes them uniquely themselves.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Easterseals Northern California believes that everyone should be treated equally. We provide the same level of care to our participants regardless of their race, gender expression, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or any other factor that makes them uniquely themselves.

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the supervision team. We want to ensure that all participants, caregivers and the community in a participant's life understand how ESNorCal can improve the lives of people with disabilities. Contact information is also available at the end of this handbook.

WHAT'S NEXT?

STEP 1: Review the content of this handbook.

STEP 2: Review, sign, date and return the following form(s).

- Consent for In-Home Respite Services
- General Release
- Release from Liability Form
- Receipt of this In-Home Respite Handbook



Set aside quiet time to review the handbook. It contains important information, so please take the time to read it all.

ABOUT US

WHO IS EASTERSEALS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA?

Easterseals Northern California (ESNorCal) is an affiliate of Easterseals, Inc. We have proudly served thousands of individuals and families in many Northern California counties since 1927. Our services include behavioral health, early intervention, and adult day programming. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) International has accredited all ESNorCal's service lines for our high level of quality.

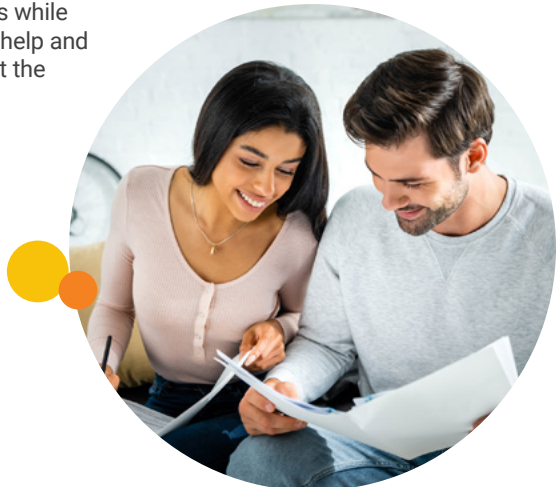
For a complete list of services that we offer, please visit esnoral.org.

OUR RESPITE SERVICES

Our focus is on not only continuing to provide high-quality care but also how to support the families caring for our valued participants. Often, families who care for individuals with disabilities report higher levels of stress than those parenting and caring for typically developing children and individuals. Through our respite program, we support those caregivers by providing a respite service that allows them to take some much-needed time away.

Our respite associates support and encourage participants to make personal choices and informed decisions that affect their lives through repetition and guidance during respite. Our program is person-centered, and during respite services, we encourage participants to engage in activities they choose and take control of their environment.

ESNorCal's Respite program's goal is to provide in-home non-medical care while relieving caregivers and allowing them time away from their loved ones while attending to and providing basic self-help and daily activities to their loved ones that the caregiver would typically do.





OUR PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH

A PARTICIPANT'S VOICE

Each participant has a unique voice. Some may be unable to say what they want and need directly. Others may communicate through their physical behavior but not with words. Listening to a participant's voice is very important regardless of how they express their wants and needs. The ESNorCal treatment team will always listen to a participant's voice as they receive care.

WHAT DOES RESPITE LOOK LIKE?

Well, it depends! For caregivers, it can be whatever you want. In its simplest definition, respite is a break from caring for your loved one. You can leave the house, run errands, spend time with your other loved ones, spend time with a significant other or even take a nap!

For the participant during their respite session, we look to you, the caregiver, to guide us in what you would like us to do during the session. We can plan structured activities or take it easy and give your loved one a break. This can look like a movie night with pizza, relaxing on the couch, playing board games, doing homework or following the participant's lead on preferred activities. During respite, there isn't an agenda or treatment plan; we are there to take care of the daily needs of your loved one, whatever that may be.

INTAKE PROCESS

Our respite program is funded by the Regional Center of the East Bay (RCEB) and Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP). If you already receive RCEB services and are interested in our Respite program, please contact your RCEB case manager for more information. If you are not receiving regional center services and are unsure how to start or if you are eligible, please get in touch with your clinical case manager or a representative at CCHP, who can help you get in contact.

Once you have received authorization for respite care, please let your case manager know that you wish to receive those services through Easterseals Northern California. We will schedule a respite intake call once we receive your authorization. During this call, we will discuss all aspects of respite care, learn more about your family through our respite questionnaire and how we can best support you, and gather all the information we need to provide you with the best possible respite care. We will also discuss scheduling and available respite times with you.

ENTRANCE CRITERIA

Participants must meet the following criteria to be admitted into the program:

1. Have an active authorization and referral for respite care.
2. Be bathroom independent. Our program will help with toileting for individuals who require assistance. We will support diapering for children. However, adolescents and adults need to be toilet-independent or only require minimal help.
3. Respite practitioners are trained to work with individuals who show some behavioral difficulties and those who may require support with basic self-care routines. However, the program is not able to assist people with high-intensity, high-frequency behaviors such as:
 - Physically aggressive behavior
 - Self-injurious behavior
 - Behavior that may be harmful to others
 - Yelling that is disruptive to a group activity
4. Although we strive to support and serve all individuals requiring care, the program is not designed to accommodate participants requiring nursing care, participants with special feeding needs (e.g., feeding tubes) or those who require frequent repositioning due to skin breakdown.

TERMINATION OF RESPITE

Participants are eligible to continue in the program until:

- The case manager has determined that it is no longer appropriate for the participant to take part in the Respite program
- The participant moves outside the service area
- The participant's home is unsafe or unsuitable to continue providing in-home services
- The participant or caregiver cannot accept respite services based on their schedule
- The participant or caregiver requests to stop services
- The participant shows high-intensity, high-frequency behaviors that are aggressive or assaultive, and the ESNorCal program is no longer the best fit for services.



SCHEDULING

COMMUNICATION

We ask that all communication regarding scheduling goes through our program manager. You can reach them by phone or email:

PHONE

510-910-3333

EMAIL

respite.referrals@familyofcompanies.org

Please do not call, text or email a practitioner directly. The only exception is if you need to contact them during the session to check on something or inform them you are running late.

SCHEDULING A SESSION

- Our program manager schedules all respite sessions.
- We do our best to accommodate your requests for changes or preferences but cannot guarantee any changes.
- You may have one consistent practitioner providing your loved one's respite care or a different practitioner each time. If it is a different practitioner, rest assured, as they will be filled in and have access to the Participant Profile to familiarize themselves with your loved one and home before the session.
- All communication regarding the schedule must go through the program manager, or service supervisor. Please do not discuss schedule or schedule changes with your practitioner(s).
- For any cancellations with less than 48 hours' notice, please call the program manager at 510-910-3333. For other questions or requests, you may call or email Respite.referrals@familyofcompanies.org.
- Please refer to the sick policy and attendance sections for more specifics regarding your respite schedule.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE TO CANCEL A SESSION

Follow these guidelines when canceling a session:

- Let us know as soon as possible about any planned absences or vacations. Our program manager will do their best to schedule make-up sessions when possible.
- Please give as much notice as possible by calling the program manager at 510-910-3333 or respite.referrals@familyofcompanies.org. Remember that 24 hours or more are needed to cancel a previously scheduled respite care session.
 - If the participant or caregiver does not notify the program, we will document that day as an unexcused cancellation.
 - Over five (5) unexcused cancellations in one (1) year or significant cancellations may lead to termination of services.
- ESNorCal's Respite Services will inform the Regional Center on or before the participant's third day of unplanned (less than 24 hours' notice) absence or cancellation of respite services within a period of three months.

PRACTITIONER ATTENDANCE

- Practitioners are expected to arrive on time for all respite sessions. If your practitioner is late, please call our program manager at 510-910-3333.
- If a practitioner must cancel a session, we will do our best to schedule an alternate practitioner. In some instances, we may need to change the time of the session based on our availability.
- When a practitioner must call out at the last minute due to illness, we will do our best to send an alternate practitioner and let you know before they arrive. Sometimes, we may need to cancel the session if a replacement isn't available.





CAREGIVER LATE/NO-SHOW/NOT ANSWERING

- If a caregiver does not return home on time at the end of the scheduled session, we will assess a fee of \$25.00 for the first 15 minutes delay and \$1.00 for every minute after that until the caregiver returns home.
 - Late caregiver arrivals require ESNorCal to pay staff for added hours.
 - If no caregiver or emergency contact can be reached within 45 minutes, we will call local law enforcement.
- If caregivers do not return home at the end of the respite session and we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contacts on file and request one of them to come to the home to take responsibility for the participant.

If caregivers are late more than two times, ESNorCal will evaluate the schedule and make updates as needed.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to the holidays listed below, the Respite program may be closed for one to two business days per year for company-wide days of engagement, learning and training. Holiday closures are subject to change; we will communicate them in advance.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day





RESPITE SESSION SETTINGS & LOCATIONS

- Respite will be scheduled for and must occur at your home address.
- If you have shared custody and your loved one lives in two homes, we will work with you to accommodate this based on capacity and if both homes are in the service area.

OUTINGS

- If you have shown on your Participant Profile that you are comfortable with respite care occurring at a nearby community location like a local park, respite care can include outings.
- With your consent, all outings are at the discretion of the practitioner. We recommend that the practitioner get to know the participant before leaving the home. We cannot take participants out of the home if there are any safety issues (elopement, bolting, not following instructions, etc.).
- We include a driving component to respite services. At the discretion of the practitioner and with guardian consent, the practitioner can take the participant to a nearby library, or park, or where the practitioner determines to be a good fit. Please keep in mind, community access must be within a reasonable distance and must support participant goals.

TREATMENT SESSION ENVIRONMENTS

We care about the safety of our participants and staff. We reserve the right to evaluate any setting before approving it and to re-evaluate if the location is suitable at any time. An ESNorCal employee can reject a setting at their sole discretion if they feel unsafe, have a health hazard or could subject the participant or staff to harassment.

ESNorCal reserves the right to discontinue providing services in a home or community environment. In these cases, a supervisor or manager will directly address the problem with the caregivers, who can help resolve the safety issue.



SAFETY COMES FIRST

We want to ensure the health and safety of all participants and practitioners. Following all policies, laws, and regulations related to health and safety, including our sick policy, is important to reducing health and safety risks during treatment.

SICK POLICY

Caregivers must notify the program if the participant shows signs of illness unless a medical provider provides documentation that the participant is well enough to attend the program. The participant should be free of symptoms for 24 hours before resuming in-person respite services.

1. In-person respite services should be canceled if a participant is sent home, stays home from school or childcare, or has signs of illness without a doctor's note.
2. If anyone else in the family or home is experiencing any signs of illness, we ask that a safe distance be kept between the individual and ESNorCal staff to prevent transmission of any illness.
3. If the participant or anyone in the participant's home has a highly contagious disease, such as, but not limited to, COVID-19, Pink Eye, Strep, Impetigo (skin infection), or Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease, in-person respite services must be canceled. ESNorCal may request a medical provider's note before resuming services.
4. If anyone in the home has head lice, please let us know, keep the individual home and cancel in-person respite services until they receive treatment and are nit-free.

IMPORTANT:

ESNorCal requires all participants and practitioners to strictly abide by the terms of our sick policy. Staff and participants should not attend in person if there is a risk of spreading illness and/or infection.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Our practitioners are trained to handle many situations. However, if a problem escalates, they will call the caregiver for support or return home before it becomes emergent if needed.

Practitioners will also follow these protocols:

1. If they feel an emergency has occurred or if the participant begins to show behavior that they cannot address, they will call 911 for help and then call the caregiver when it is safe to do so.
2. In any medical emergency, the practitioner will immediately call 911.
3. If a participant becomes sick or injured, the practitioner will call 911 and have the participant transported to the nearest hospital as advised by the first responder.

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

ESNorCal practitioners are responsible for their own transportation. Our practitioners can transport the respite participant in their vehicles to participate in community activities such as shopping at a convenience or grocery store, going to a bowling alley to bowl, or even going to a restaurant where the participant can order and pay for their own meal.

IMPORTANT:

The designated guardian must complete a Release from Liability form before any community access can be approved.





YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF OUR FAMILIES AT ALL TIMES.

YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS:

- To receive services in a manner free from abuse, retaliation, humiliation, neglect, financial exploitation or any other type of exploitation.
- To receive services voluntarily and of your own free will.
- To receive services that are sensitive to age, gender, sexual orientation, race, cultural or religious preference, health status and physical ability.
- To receive information that allows families or caregivers or any guardian to make informed consent before starting services.
- To refuse services offered after being notified of the benefits, alternatives and consequences.
- To be an informed participant by receiving information regarding services in a reasonably prompt and confidential manner.
- To access information and records in sufficient time to facilitate decision-making, as outlined in the Notice of Privacy Practices. Our Notice of Privacy Practices is maintained at all times on our website, www.esnorcal.org.
- To have your records protected as required by applicable privacy law, as described in our Notice of Privacy Practices.
- To receive relevant information regarding the individuals providing services to the extent permitted by organizational policies and applicable privacy laws.
- To be provided on request, an accurate and current set of professional credentials of practitioners working with the family.
- To be provided with information on how to lodge complaints about the professional practices of practitioners through the applicable professional licensing/credential board.
- To be provided with access to or referral to self-help support services, advocacy services, and legal entities for appropriate representation, when applicable.
- To file a complaint without fear of retaliation or the imposition of any barrier to service.

PARTICIPATION IN LEGAL MATTERS

Sometimes, families who come to ESNorCal for services are involved in legal matters such as divorce. While we understand that these situations can be stressful for families, it is important to know that we will remain neutral and not take part in any legal matters or disputes, including those involving families, unless required by law.

MANDATED REPORTING LAWS IN CALIFORNIA

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA) requires any ESNorCal practitioner to report any suspected abuse or neglect of any child. This could include a client's siblings.

The Elder Abuse and Dependent Adult Civil Protection Act requires any ESNorCal practitioner to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a dependent adult. A dependent adult is anyone who, because of their physical or mental limitations, cannot care for themselves. This includes some adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).





FILING A COMPLAINT OR GRIEVANCE

Participants and caregivers may file a complaint at any time without fear of retaliation. When we receive a complaint, our staff works to remedy the concern and prevent the issue from happening again.

STEPS TO FOLLOW IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR GRIEVANCE

Clients and caregivers may file a complaint at any time without fear of retaliation. When we receive a complaint, our staff works to remedy the concern and prevent the issue from happening again.

STEP
1

Ask to meet with a member of your loved one's supervising team to discuss your concerns. Usually this is the only step you need to take. We are committed to resolving issues quickly. If you are not satisfied after meeting with a supervisor or manager, please move on to the second step below.

STEP
2

If the discussion with a supervisor or manager does not resolve the issue, **talk to your Program Manager or a member of ESNorCal's clinical leadership team** by emailing them at [respite.referrals@familyofcompanies.org](mailto:referrals@familyofcompanies.org).

STEP
3

If the issue is not resolved by the clinical leadership team, contact our **Quality Department at Quality@catalight.org to file a complaint or grievance.** You may also bypass steps 1 and 2 above and file a grievance at any time. Our Quality Department will work with you, your treatment team, and our leadership to resolve the issue in an unbiased and ethical manner.



CALIFORNIA CONSUMER PRIVACY ACT DISCLOSURE

The California Consumer Privacy Act ("CCPA") creates privacy rights relating to the collection, sale, disclosure and deletion of consumers' personal information. The CCPA requires businesses to provide consumers, including job applicants and employees, with information about their rights, including a description of the categories of personal information to be collected and the purpose for which the information will be used. Our website provides information about the categories of information we collect and your rights as a California resident.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Will ESNorCal watch/care for siblings?

A: No. Unless they are also authorized for respite through the regional center, we only provide care for the participant. If you have other children who will be home during respite hours, you or another adult must care for them. If you wish to leave your home during respite hours and leave another loved one under 18 in the house, you must provide prior written notice (email is acceptable) to the supervisor stating that the loved one will be home, but they are independent. You must also acknowledge that ESNorCal is not responsible for their care or safety.

Q: Will ESNorCal help with toileting and toilet training?

A: Yes. We will follow your guidelines about your loved one's toileting needs. We can support children with diapering, but adolescents and adults must be toilet-independent or require minimal help.

Q: Will ESNorCal provide meals for my loved one?

A: Our practitioners can prepare easy meals (like reheating food, baking frozen pizza, cutting up fruit/veggies, etc.) and snacks for your loved one. Please plan to provide instructions about what and when your loved one should eat when the practitioner arrives and leave instructions for anything requiring cooking.





Q: Will ESNorCal staff eat food from my home?

A: No. Our practitioners cannot accept food from families. However, if the respite session is scheduled during mealtime, they may bring their own food to eat alongside the participant. We do this to provide a family feel during respite. We want the participant to feel comfortable, safe and included in daily activities. If you prefer that they do not eat together or if you have food restrictions for your home (i.e., you have a gluten-free kitchen), please let us know during your intake. We can discuss and create a plan to accommodate.

Q: Will ESNorCal help with homework?

A: Yes. Our practitioners are not trained tutors, so if they are unsure of a subject, they may be unable to help. But they can help guide the participant to the best of their abilities.

Q: Will ESNorCal help bathe my loved one?

A: No. If a bath or shower is part of a routine that occurs during respite hours, we ask that you support your loved one with that before or after scheduled respite care. If your loved one is independent, they may bathe or shower during the session but without help.

Q: Can my loved one swim during respite?

A: No. We do not allow swimming or pool activities during respite care for safety reasons.

Q: Can you take my loved one to the park or out of the house during respite?

A: Yes, however, it is at the practitioner's discretion, and the location must be within close walking distance. We recommend that the practitioner get to know the participant before leaving the home. We cannot take participants out of the home if there are any safety issues (elopement, bolting, not following instructions, etc.). We will discuss this during your intake in more detail.





GLOSSARY

CAREGIVER: Someone who provides regular parenting and care to someone; a child's parent, guardian or legal representative, for example.

FAMILY: The family of a participant who receives respite services from ESNorCal.

FUNDING SOURCE: The organization responsible for paying for respite service provided by ESNorCal.

LOVED ONE/PARTICIPANT: A person referred for and receiving respite services.

PRACTITIONER/RESPITE ASSOCIATE (RA): Trained professional focused on providing high-quality respite care. Respite associates (RAs) are practitioners.





NOTES:





esnorcal.org



CORPORATE OFFICE
2730 Shadelands Drive
Building 10
Walnut Creek, CA 94598
(925) 266-8400

HOURS

M-F 9:00am – 5:00pm

(Hours may vary by location and service)

Proud member of



CARF International has awarded Easterseals Northern California the highest level of accreditation for its Respite program.