



Division of Provider Services and Quality Assurance

## Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### What is the Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program?

The *Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program* is funded through a federal grant awarded to the Arkansas Department of Human Services- Division of Provider Services and Quality Assurance (DHS-DPSQA) from the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL). The *Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program* provides reimbursement vouchers to home-based caregivers for the cost of temporary, short-term respite care provided to individuals of any age with a disability or special need (children and adults, including elderly persons).

Individuals eligible to apply for voucher funding through the *Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program* include Arkansas caregivers of children or adults who reside in the same household as the person receiving care. Voucher funding is limited to a total of \$300 per family, no more than 4 times per year. All funds must be expended within its 90-day voucher term limit.

Respite funds must be requested by the primary caregivers who resides full time in the same household. Funds may not be used to reimburse household expenses or daycare; funds must be used to reimburse an individual respite care provider or an organization that provides respite. Due to limited funds, not all eligible applications will be approved. Please continue to read below for information on how to apply and what happens next if you are approved for funding through the *Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program*.

### Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is Respite?** The Lifespan Respite Care Act of 2006 defines respite care as “planned or emergency care provided to a child or adult with special need in order to provide temporary relief to the family caregiver of that child or adult.”
- 2. Who is the Primary Family Caregiver?** The Primary Family Caregiver is the family member or other adult providing ongoing unpaid care for an adult or child with a disability.
- 3. Who is the Care Recipient or Disabled Family Member?** The Care Recipient or Disabled Family Member can be a person of any age with any type(s) of disability or chronic condition.
- 4. Who is the Respite Provider?** The respite provider is an individual or agency selected by a family or caregiver to provide respite to an individual with special needs.
- 5. Where can Respite Services be Provided?** Respite Services can be provided in the family home; the home of a neighbor, friend, or family member; adult day centers; respite centers; residential care facilities; group homes; recreational settings; community-based programs; hospitals, etc.

Voucher funding made available through the Lifespan Respite Program Grant initiative awarded to Arkansas Department of Human Services - Division of Provider Services and Quality Assurance by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Grant # 90LRLI0045.



**17. How will I receive the funding?** Once you have been approved, you will receive an award letter with additional information. Our staff will coordinate with the Department of Finance and Administration to issue you a check in the award amount identified. This process typically takes up to 7 days after the funding has been awarded. **NOTE:** If you have an existing government debt, it may impact your voucher.

**18. Will the Check be sent to the Respite Provider?** No. Voucher checks will be made out and sent directly to you, the primary caregiver, and not to the respite provider. YOU are responsible for payment to your respite care provider. The voucher check will be mailed to the address you indicate on the W-9 form you submitted with your application.

**19. What is the rate of pay for respite when using the voucher?** There is no rate of pay requirement within the Lifespan Respite Voucher Program. The Lifespan Respite vouchers allow caregivers to set the rate of pay that best fits their need. Rate of pay should be negotiated between the caregiver and the respite provider. Caregivers may choose to set rate of pay based on the method of respite they intend to use or the functions or services the caregiver chooses the respite provider to provide.

**20. Can I pay the Respite Provider more than \$300?** The DPSQA *Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program* will send a check to you, the primary caregiver, to use as payment to the selected respite care provider, not to exceed \$300/household. Any unused funds at the end of your award term must be returned. You may pay more than the voucher amount you received from DPSQA, but YOU will be responsible for making up the difference between the amount approved through the *Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program* and what you have agreed to pay the provider.

**21. What if I have Multiple Disabled Family Members Living in my Home?** Even if you have more than one person in your home who will receive respite services, the maximum amount for reimbursement is \$300 per family.

**22. Can I use this Program if I have Medicaid or Medicare?** You will not be disqualified for this program if you receive Medicaid or Medicare. We encourage individuals to seek out other resources for help with their disabled family member. Use of respite services allows the family caregiver to provide better care for longer periods of time if needed.

**23. If I Receive Services through Another Program, am I Still Eligible?** You will not be disqualified for this program if you receive respite services through another program. We encourage individuals to seek out other resources for help with their disabled family member. Use of respite services allows the family caregiver to provide better care for longer periods of time if needed. If the family currently receives respite services, funds cannot be used to provide services that allow the caregiver to take a break from caregiving duties: it must go "above and beyond" what is currently being received.

**24. Does the W-9 Form mean that I have to pay taxes on the money I receive?** The voucher check will be sent to the address you indicate on the W-9 Form. The W-9 form is required by the State of Arkansas in order to issue the voucher check; it is not sent to the IRS or any other entity for tax purposes.

**25. What if I benefited from this Program in the Past?** You may be eligible to receive a \$300 voucher up to four times a year. You will be required to reapply each time; however, priority will be given to applications for families who have not yet received a voucher in the past.

**26. Can I use the respite voucher to offset nursing home costs?** No. Respite Services can be provided in the family home; the home of a neighbor, friend, or family member; adult day centers; respite centers; residential care facilities; group homes; recreational settings; community-based programs; hospitals, etc., on a temporary basis for caregiver relief. This voucher is not to supplement any permanent placing costs.

27. **Can I use the respite voucher to pay other bills?** No. The \$300 voucher can only be used for respite services. Using the voucher funding for any service other than respite, including payment of bills, may result in a 100% repayment of the voucher to DPSQA.

28. **What if my chosen provider wants payment before providing services?** If a provider, individual or agency, will not agree to wait for payment, then you will need to either find another provider, or find another program to pay for these services.

29. **What should I do if I lose my voucher award letter?** Report lost vouchers to Choices in Living Resource Center, Attention: Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program at (866) 801-3435 or via email at [ARLifespan.Respite@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:ARLifespan.Respite@dhs.arkansas.gov).

If you have questions about the ***Arkansas Lifespan Respite Voucher Program***, you can contact the Choices in Living Resource Center at our toll-free number 866-801-3435 or e-mail at [ARLifespan.Respite@dhs.arkansas.gov](mailto:ARLifespan.Respite@dhs.arkansas.gov).