

### September 2021

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provide answers to common questions asked about the [Family Respite Policy](#), a new policy that comes into effect October 1, 2021.

This document also has a section that provides answers to questions about the **September 30, 2021** end of the COVID-19 Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person Centred Societies and Interim Guidance Payment to Family Members.

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## Family Respite Policy

### Q: Why has CLBC created a new policy on respite?

CLBC heard directly from families that during the pandemic, the *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person Centred Societies* supported them and made them more resilient. The new [Family Respite Policy](#) makes permanent many of the features of the *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person Centred Societies* based on learnings from the last 18 months.

### Q: The COVID-19 pandemic is not over yet and case numbers are still relatively high. Why not extend the Interim Guidance: Service Provision by Family Members past September 30, 2021?

With almost 80 percent of people 12 years and older fully vaccinated in BC, and when people use recommended health measures (i.e., masks, handwashing, physical distancing), respite services can be safely delivered.

The *Interim Guidance: Service Provision by Family Members* was created before the development and distribution of vaccines to respond to concerns from families who did not want respite workers in their homes for fear of COVID-19 transmission.

### Q. Who does this new Family Respite Policy apply to?

The *Family Respite Policy* applies to individuals who live with family caregivers, including those in a Microboard, Person Centered Society and in Direct Funding (Individualized Funding) arrangement.

The [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Simplified Guide](#) and the [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Standard Guide](#) have been updated to reflect the new *Family Respite Policy*, which is applicable under Direct Funding Standard and Direct Funding Simplified arrangements.

### Q: Does this policy cover home sharing providers?

No. Respite services for home sharing providers are governed by the [Respite Guidelines Policy](#). This policy is being reviewed as part of CLBC's work to improve home sharing services.

**Q: Are we allowed to use respite funds for recreational, social, or educational programs?**

Yes, respite funds can be used for recreational, social or educational programs. The intent is to provide a break for the family caregiver during a time where they may typically provide support to help sustain them in their caregiving role. For example, an individual could attend a swimming class while the family caregiver goes to the gym or has coffee with a friend.

**Q: Can I use this to pay for a vacation for myself or my loved one?**

No. Respite funds may not be used to pay for vacations (i.e., plane tickets, cruises, hotels, etc.).

**Q: I would like to pay my 17-year-old son to provide respite services for his brother. Can I do that?**

No. CLBC's *Family Respite Policy* requires that people providing support to individuals CLBC serves be at least 19 years of age and meet other requirements as outlined in the policy (see section 3.7).

**Q: I was hoping to get contracted respite so a service provider can coordinate my respite services, but there is no contracted agency in my area. Why not and could that change?**

Some communities do not have a contracted respite agency due to smaller populations and fewer service requests. Direct funded respite provides families with the flexibility to find respite workers in more remote areas. If you are interested in contracted respite, please let your CLBC Facilitator know so that the local CLBC office can monitor the need for contracted respite in your community.

**Q: Are we still allowed to order food and use food delivery services (i.e., Skip-the-Dishes, UberEats) as we did under the *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person Centred Societies*?**

No, CLBC's new *Family Respite Policy* does not allow respite funding to be used for payment for meals and meal delivery. The *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person Centred Societies* was developed during a period when families could not access respite services due to the fear of transmitting COVID-19, so alternative ways were needed to help people get breaks.

**Q: The new respite policy allows people to use direct-funded respite for learning and connecting opportunities such as workshops and support groups. Is this new?**

Yes. Research shows that families benefit from learning and connecting opportunities such as parent-to-parent programs, support groups, workshops, and other educational and support activities. Such activities provide both knowledge and emotional support that supports families in their caregiving roles.

**Q: I see we can use respite for professional counselling. What is considered a "professional"?**

Professional counselling includes counselling provided by a registered or licensed professional.

**Q: As an Indigenous family, can we use our direct funded respite to have respite from people who understand our cultural traditions, including seeking support from knowledge keepers, elders, and others?**

Yes, the *Family Respite Policy* provides opportunities for families to draw strength from their cultural traditions and resources. For example, if your family would be better served by consulting an Elder rather than a professional counsellor, respite funding can be used.

**Q: With contracted respite, can I have the service provider agency purchase all the available uses of direct-funded respite?**

No. Contracted agency-coordinated respite provides and schedules respite workers on behalf of family caregivers who need short breaks. Direct funded respite provides families with the most flexibility in using funds and gives families the most control over their respite funding. Some families, however, prefer to use contracted respite if it is available in their area.

**Q: Under the new *Family Respite Policy*, can I use respite funding to purchase a space in an existing CLBC- funded service?**

No. Respite funding is designed to support family caregivers and is available for new supports or as an alternative to existing contracted services. It cannot be used to purchase spaces in or to expand existing group programs that are already paid for by CLBC.

**Q: I have found being able to use funding flexibly helpful. How does CLBC's new policy on respite allow families to use their funding flexibly?**

CLBC's new policy includes more flexibility than previously allowed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic on the type of activities and costs that individuals and families can use respite funding for.

**Q: Can I pay myself or another immediate family member for respite?**

No. The *Interim Guidance: Service Provision by Family Members* will no longer be in effect after September 30, 2021 and standard practices, guided by CLBC's *Service Provision by Family Members Policy*, come back into effect.

Under CLBC's [Service Provision by Family Members Policy](#) immediate family members (spouse, parent, children) may not be paid, while extended family members (siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc.) may be paid to provide respite services. Any exceptions to pay immediate family members under the *Service Provision by Family Members Policy* must meet specific criteria and be approved by the CLBC Integrated Services Manager.

**Q: My aunt is willing to provide respite services. Am I still required to get a criminal record check for her?**

Yes. Under BC's *Criminal Records Review Act* and CLBC's *Criminal Record Check Policy: Service Delivery*, all persons providing support to CLBC- eligible individuals must have a Criminal Record Check completed through the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General's Criminal Records Review Program. This includes extended family members.

Criminal record checks are legally required in B.C. for anyone who works or volunteers with vulnerable adults directly, or who has, or may have, unsupervised access to vulnerable adults through work, to be cleared for work based on a criminal record check. This process is required regardless of the amount of funding CLBC provides, the type of service purchased with funding, or whether the person delivering the service is a family member. BC's *Criminal Records Review Act* and CLBC's *Criminal Record Check Policy: Service Delivery* do not exempt anyone who works with vulnerable adults from the criminal record check process.

More information about the criminal record check process can be found in CLBC's [Criminal Record Check Policy: Service Delivery](#) and [CLBC's Brochure: CRCs and Working with People CLBC Services](#). These materials can be found CLBC's website [here](#).

**Q: My daughter's home sharing broke down and she has had to move home. CLBC has provided us with short-term emergency respite of \$12,000 while they and the service provider work to find her a potential new home sharing provider. Under the new *Family Respite Policy*, are we able to use all emergency respite funds flexibly?**

This amount of respite is generally only provided to a family in emergency circumstances.

To ensure equity, the *Family Respite Policy* enables families to use up to a maximum of \$10,000 per year in respite flexibly. This means that any amount over this maximum can only be used for:

- Support workers (e.g., contractors or employees) who provide care and/or support to the individual
- Banking fees, if a family chooses to open a separate bank account, including costs for ordering cheques
- Any costs associated with contracting or hiring respite support workers e.g. WorkSafe BC costs, criminal record checks, etc.

## Interim Guidance Ending on September 30, 2021

**Q: What is the deadline for the interim guidance for flexible use of funding and service provision by family members?**

These two pieces of interim guidance are no longer be in effect as of September 30, 2021. On October 1, 2021, the new *Family Respite Policy* will be in effect.

In June 2021, CLBC gave over 90-day notice to Direct Funded (Individualized Funding) Agents, Person-Centered Societies and Microboards that they have the option to continue to use *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies*, and *Interim Guidance Service Provision by Family Members* until September 30, 2021 (the documents are posted [here](#)).

**Q: Can an immediate family member continue to be paid for providing respite after September 30, 2021?**

No. As of October 1, CLBC's new *Family Respite Policy* will guide the spending of respite funding, and immediate family members (parent, child, spouse) can no longer be paid to provide services unless they have an exception under CLBC's [Service Provision by Family Member Policy](#) (see section 3.4 for criteria).

**Q: I have Direct Funding; can I carry over unspent funds after September 30, 2021?**

In January 2021, CLBC paused invoicing for unspent funds to give agents flexibility to use funding under the interim policy above. With the end of the *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies*, invoicing for unspent funds will resume as of November 1, 2021 for contracts that ended before October 2021. If you have questions about invoicing, please contact [CLBCAccounts@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CLBCAccounts@gov.bc.ca).

**Q: As a Direct Funding Agent, will I be invoiced for unspent funds after September 30, 2021?**

If your contract ended before October 2021 and you still have unspent funds, CLBC will begin invoicing again in November 2021. If you have questions about invoicing, please contact [CLBCAccounts@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CLBCAccounts@gov.bc.ca).

**Q: I understand that reporting requirements and invoicing for direct funding continues. Is that correct?**

Yes. Reporting on use of direct-funded respite continues as normal (i.e., reporting every 6 months for Direct Funding Simplified).

If you have questions about reporting, please review [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Simplified Guide](#) if your Direct Funding is under and including \$10,000 annually or [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Standard Guide](#) if your Direct Funding is an amount over \$10,000 annually.

**Q: Can I use my current unspent funding (prior to September 30th, 2021) to pay for respite supports I will be receiving after September 30, 2021?**

It depends if the funding is from an expired agreement, from a current agreement and is specifically for respite, or if funds from a current agreement are being used for respite but were allocated for a different service in the agreement.

- If the funding is from an expired agreement, as of November 1, 2021, CLBC may invoice agents for any unspent funding from this agreement
- If it is funding specifically for respite and is from a current agreement, these funds can be carried over and used until the expiry of the term of the current agreement
- If the funds are being used for respite but were not allocated for this purpose in the agreement, they can no longer be used for respite after September 30, 2021. This is because the ability to use these funds flexibly falls under the *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies*, which ends on September 30, 2021

**Q. If I haven't been able to use my contracted funding on the services it is designated for, what can I do?**

Until September 30, 2021 any Direct Funding Agent, Person-Centred Society, or Microboard can decide to redirect funding between any of the services included in their contract to best meet the individual's needs. *After September 30<sup>th</sup>, funding must be directed to the service for which it was allocated.*

**Q. I receive Direct Funding, but my contract does not have respite. Can I use my direct funding for respite?**

Yes, under the *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies*, if your contract **does not include** residential support (staffed residential, home sharing, live-in support, outreach support, cluster living), you can use the direct funding for respite until September 30<sup>th</sup>. *After this date, funding must be directed to the service for which it was allocated.*