



WASHOE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

350 S. CENTER STREET
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Dear Resource Family:

We are happy to announce that WCHSA has received respite funding through June 30, 2023! Each family* is now eligible for up to **7 days of paid alternative care** through June 30, 2023. The ongoing availability of this reimbursement program will be dependent on funds being available. Paid alternative care days not taken by June 30, 2023, are not carried over and will be forfeited.

Alternative care gives parents and children the chance to have short periods of time apart in which they can reset and recharge. It enhances the quality of care for the child, gives parents a deserved and necessary break, and ensures healthy and stable placements for all children by preventing parental exhaustion and burnout. Some parents also find that taking family vacations together is a means to recharge as a family. Therefore, alternative care funds may also be utilized to provide funding to include the foster children on a family vacation. WCHSA strongly discourages the use of alternative care for foster children so that families can take vacation without the foster children.

Requirements:

- **Prior approval** – The *WCHSA Paid Alternative Care Request Form* must be submitted no later than **one week** in advance. This form must be submitted to take advantage of the reimbursement.
- Use of an approved licensed foster parent or other approved provider to provide the alternative care. Enhanced/SFC+ are required to use the same level provider (ex. SFC+ to use SFC+ provider). Please review the attached Alternative Care Policy.
- Paid alternative care days can be taken in increments from 1 day to 7 days. WCHSA will track number of days used, so contact HSA-RespiteRequests@washoecounty.us to check your remaining balance.

Types of Alternative Care and Payment:

1. **Inclusive Respite:** WCHSA's Alternative Care Policy outlines the option to receive respite payments to off-set costs associated with taking the whole family, *inclusive of the foster children*, on a family vacation. These payments are paid directly to the foster parent with whom the foster child resides. Issuing respite funds as an *inclusion* is not a taxable event and therefore a 1099 tax form will not be issued. Inclusive respite reimbursement is \$40 per day per child.
2. **Paid Alternative Care:** WCHSA's Alternative Care Policy outlines the option for foster families to use funding to select and *pay an alternate licensed foster parent directly*. When an alternate caregiver is used to provide respite for a foster child and the respite payment is made directly to that alternate caregiver it is considered a taxable event, as it meets the IRS's definition of respite earnings. Therefore, a 1099 tax form will be issued to the alternate caregiver if their respite earnings for the calendar year total \$600 or more. A one-time completed W-9 must be submitted to HSA-RespiteRequests@washoecounty.us to receive payment. For a two-parent licensed foster home only one parent is required to submit a W-9 and will be the taxed individual. Upon WCHSA confirming that alternative care was provided, all alternative care respite providers will be paid at a rate of \$40 per day per child.
3. **Other Approved Alternative Care Providers:** WCHSA's Alternative Care Policy outlines the option for foster families to use other approved caregivers to provide respite, including cleared direct care staff, babysitters, and licensed childcare staff. These provider types are *eligible* for alternative care reimbursement. Providers must submit a copy of their identification, a completed Alternative Care Acknowledgement letter, and a completed W-9 to HSA-RespiteRequests@washoecounty.us to



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receive payment. Upon WCHSA confirming that alternative care was provided and the aforementioned documents are on file, all alternative care providers will be paid at a rate of \$40 per day per child. This payment is considered a taxable event by the IRS and providers will be issued a 1099 form if paid \$600 or more in a calendar year.

Use of alternative care beyond the 7 days is allowed; however, it is the responsibility of the foster parent requesting care to pay the care provider directly. If you need assistance locating a care provider or have other questions about paid alternate care, please email HSA-RespiteRequests@washoecounty.us.

*Homes licensed for adoption only are not eligible for this program.

The attached *WCHSA Paid Alternative Care Request Form* must be completed and emailed to HSA-RespiteRequests@washoecounty.us or a hard copy hand delivered to the 1st floor front desk at 350 S. Center Street.

Attachments:

1. WCHSA Paid Alternative Care Request Form
2. W-9
3. Alternative Care Acknowledgement letter
4. Letter to Foster Parents – Respite Tax Information 5.4.2021
5. Quality Parenting Standards – Paid Alternative Care Policy (07-2022)



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