

VALLEY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL CENTER SERVICE STANDARD

RESPITE SERVICES

Purpose and Philosophy: Respite care is designed to intermittently and temporarily relieve families of the demands and constant responsibilities of caring for the consumer. This responsibility may exceed the demands and care needs of a non-disabled person his/her age in order to: 1) restore or maintain the family's well-being; 2) meet emergency needs such as after a natural disaster; 3) assist during periods of crisis such as illness or death of a family member; 4) allow parents or family members the opportunity to enjoy vacations or other activities of natural family life; 5) provide assistance at other times when the planning team, which includes the parent or family member, feels it is advisable. Respite is part of a network of support services for families. It is not meant to supplant other resources, including the parents' routine parenting responsibilities for minors.

For children ages 0-3 in the Early Start program, see section IV below.

Valley Mountain Regional Center acknowledges the family's contribution to the care and well being of their minor children who are VMRC consumers. They are also generally expected to provide the same kinds of care and supervision to them as they would for any of their other children. However, some families, because of their child's intensive needs, require additional supports and services, such as respite, which will enable them to maintain that child in their home.

VMRC recognizes the commitment of family members in maintaining their adult family member in their home. To ensure family stability additional supports and services, such as respite, may be necessary.

Assessing the need for respite is part of the planning team process of developing and monitoring a consumer's Individual Program Plan (IPP). The assessment of need will ensure that all available resources are explored and natural support systems, such as extended family, as well as generic services, are developed and utilized.

- I. Eligibility:** to determine the need, type, and amount of respite care services purchased by VMRC, the following criteria must be considered and/or met:
1. The need for the service is identified on the IPP.
 2. Take into consideration the legal responsibilities of other agencies as resources for the consumer and family in developing a respite care plan (i.e. private insurance, Medi-Cal, IHSS, DSS funding, crisis nurses, etc.).
 3. Valley Mountain Regional Center will only consider services such as IHSS and/or generic resources when approved services meet the respite needs as identified in the consumer's IPP/IFSP.
 4. Family situation, such as the number of parents available to provide care, number of other children in the home or other special circumstances.

5. Verification of family's development of natural supports to provide respite such as extended family members, participation in cooperative childcare activities, etc.
6. Medical factors.
7. Mobility skills.
8. Consumer's adaptive skills.
9. Families receiving the AFDC Foster Placement rate for a minor placed in their home are not eligible for respite as they are considered a foster home.
10. Behavioral deficits unrelated to the consumer's age.
11. Hours of attendance at school/day program depending on the consumer's age.
12. Consider what the family is doing to include consumer in routine family and community activities.
13. Is the family actively implementing the consumer's care plans identified in the IPP?
14. The Respite Assessment Tool will be completed with consumer/family members and will determine the amount of respite services through objective evaluation. Regional Center will purchase respite services accordingly. If the Planning Team determines that additional support is needed, an exceptional POS can be presented to the VMRC Review Committee.

II. Selection Considerations: Issues that should be considered in selecting the type and amount of respite care services include:

1. Has the planning team considered family/consumer choice and need?
2. Has the planning team determined if the respite option is compatible with the family's life style and commitments?
3. Have the consumer's medical and/or behavior needs been considered?
4. If there is more than one family member who needs respite, (this would necessitate a multiple consumer rate for in-home respite) has a family respite plan been developed?
.
5. Are family members given the flexibility regarding the use of respite hours? They may choose to use their out-of-home respite allocation on a dollar for dollar basis to fund camp if agreed by the planning team that camp meets their out-of-home respite needs.

6. Families have the option of banking their respite allotment for up to an entire year and redeeming it all at one time. This need must be identified in the individual's IPP per the planning team.
7. Is a family member a Valley Mountain Regional Center Board Member? If so, do they attend Board-related meetings such as:
 - a. Committees
 - b. School/Day Program visits
 - c. Conferences
 - d. Retreats
 - e. Any other VMRC meetings outside of regular Board Meetings

Given these requirements are met; parents will receive up to ten (10) additional hours per month while they are active members on VMRC's Board of Directors.

The ten (10) additional Respite hours will be contingent upon the submittal of records providing specific reasons for attendance for above-mentioned activities including, travel records, training materials, dates and times the activities were held. Board Members who require more than ten (10) additional hours per month may request an exception to obtain additional needed hours.

III. Exceptions and Appeals Process: As with all VMRC purchased services, if the Planning Team determines that sufficient support exists to request an exception to these standards, a Purchase of Service Exceptions request should be submitted.

VMRC acknowledges that each consumer is unique and it would not be possible to anticipate the supports and services needed for every individual given the complex needs of our service area. Therefore, for requests which are outside the boundaries of these guidelines, exceptions will be considered based on the specific needs of the individual consumer. The consumer's family members and/or legal representatives will request the exceptional respite service by making contact with the assigned Service Coordinator and specifying the exceptional circumstances and number of hours needed. After exploring pertinent generic resources, the Service Coordinator will complete the POS Exception Summary Form and submit the request to their assigned Program Manager. The requests for exceptional respite will be reviewed by an expanded planning team functioning as the Purchase of Service Committee made up of Program Managers and administrative staff for compliance. The distinct circumstances of each case will be considered. The assigned Program Manager will advise the assigned Service Coordinator of the decision reached by the committee, who will in turn inform the consumer's family and/or legal representative.

VMRC recognizes that there may be occasions when a decision is made by VMRC that may not satisfy the consumer or his/her legally authorized representative. When the consumer or his/her legally authorized representative believes a VMRC decision is illegal, discriminatory or not in the consumer's best interest, an appeal can be made to challenge that decision. All processes shall be in compliance with Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 4700-4730.

IV. Early Start Infant and Toddlers: Types of Early Start services are delineated in Federal regulations 303.13. Regulation 303.13(d) refers to other services not mentioned in regulations that may be needed to assist a child and family to make progress on Individual Family Service Plan outcomes. In order for a parent to develop the capacity to assist his/her child in meeting his/her developmental needs, the parent may need respite or other type of care for the child while the parent participates in appropriate early intervention activities. Families may need in-home or other care arrangements for their child in order for the family to participate in early intervention services that include a defined family component, i.e. family training or counseling services, psychological services, or social work. A family may need to participate in sign language classes in order to assist the child in developing communication skills or meet with a psychologist to design appropriate behavioral management strategies to use when the child engages in inappropriate behaviors. Although the provision of respite or other care arrangements may be necessary for some families to participate in appropriate early intervention activities, respite is not intended to serve as child-care or “baby-sitting” assistance in ordinary circumstances.