

## **Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) Respite Care**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **QUESTION 1: What is EFMP respite care?**

**A:** EFMP respite care is a program that provides a temporary rest period for Family members responsible for regular care of persons with disabilities. Care may be provided in the EFMP respite care user's home or other settings such as special needs camps and enrichment programs. It is time limited based on the exceptional Family member (EFM) medical condition and availability of funding.

#### **QUESTION 2: Is EFMP respite care at no cost to the Soldier an entitlement/a guaranteed benefit?**

**A:** No. EFMP respite care is not an entitlement or a guaranteed benefit. It is based on EFMP enrollment, medical condition and availability of funding.

#### **QUESTION 3: Are Families guaranteed continuation of respite care when relocating from one installation to another?**

**A:** No. Families are not guaranteed continuation of respite care upon relocation.

#### **QUESTION 4: If Families receive respite care funds from another source, do they qualify for EFMP respite care funds for that month?**

**A:** No. Families do not qualify for EFMP respite care funds for the same month in which respite care funds are received from another source.

#### **QUESTION 5: Do the AR 608-75 requirements for EFMP respite care providers apply for execution of EFMP respite care funding?**

**A:** Yes. The AR 608-75 requirements for background screening and training apply when Army Community Service (ACS) certifies EFMP respite care providers.

#### **QUESTION 6: Does ACS EFMP certification apply when a Family selects a neighbor or friend as a respite care provider?**

**A:** Yes. Certification is required for EFMP respite care providers to receive payment.

#### **QUESTION 7: Does ACS EFMP certification apply when a Family selects an adult Family member of EFM's Family as a respite care provider?**

**A:** No. Families are granted a waiver when selecting an adult Family member as respite care provider. An adult Family member is defined as "an individual 18 and over and includes brothers, sisters, grandparents, uncles, aunts and in-laws."

**QUESTION 8: Can an adult Family member (as defined in Question 7) be a respite care provider to an EFM when residing in the same household?**

**A:** No. The adult Family member must reside outside the home to be a respite care provider to the EFM.

**QUESTION 9: Can an adult Family member (as defined in Question 7) residing outside the household and providing regular care for an EFM when the Soldier is deployed receive respite care?**

**A:** Yes, if the adult Family member has custody of the EFM and the Soldier is enrolled in EFMP and the EFM has an eligible medical condition.

**QUESTION 10: Are Survivors of the Fallen eligible for EFMP respite care if they had a Family member enrolled in EFMP at the time of the sponsor's death?**

**A:** Yes. Survivors of the Fallen are eligible for EFMP respite care in the circumstances described for three years after the death of the sponsor provided there is a documented medical condition. EFMP will work with survivors and their Survivor Outreach Services (SOS) Coordinator on a case-by-case basis. Survivors should contact their local EFMP and SOS Coordinator for more information.

**QUESTION 11: As a recipient of transitional compensation, is a Family also eligible to receive respite care services under the EFMP?**

**A:** Yes. The Family is eligible assuming they meet all the other requirements. When a Family is receiving transitional compensation, they are ID card holders and, therefore, eligible for commissary, exchange and medical benefits as a TRICARE beneficiary. Respite care is one of the benefits that the Family receives if the sponsor is still active duty. Respite care eligibility terminates upon termination of the transitional compensation benefits. EFMP will work with Families and their transitional compensation point of contact on a case-by-case basis. Families should contact their local EFMP and transitional compensation point of contact for more information.

**QUESTION 12: What is the EFMP Respite Care Panel?**

**A:** The EFMP Respite Care Panel consists of the installation EFMP manager, Systems Navigator (if available) and at least one of the following: ACS Director or designee, Family Life Chaplain or garrison chaplain representative, or garrison commander appointee. The military treatment facility (MTF) EFMP physician or appropriate health care provider designated by the MTF commander serves as technical consultant to the panel. The panel reviews and recommends approval or disapproval of all submissions for respite care to the garrison commander.

**QUESTION 13: How does installation Army Community Service (ACS) staff determine allowable respite care hours and cost per month?**

**A:** The installation ACS staff uses the Family Services Needs Matrix to determine respite care hours and cost per month. The EFMP Respite Care Panel validates the number of hour per month, per certified EFM.

**QUESTION 14: How frequently should the Family Services Needs Matrix be updated for each EFMP Family?**

**A:** The Family Services Needs Matrix should be updated as the EFM condition changes or at least annually, whichever comes first.

**QUESTION 15: What is the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) time frame for processing EFMP respite care vouchers?**

**A:** Respite care payments are on a 30-day pay in accordance with the Prompt Payment Act. DFAS tries to pay these types of miscellaneous payment as soon as possible upon receipt of a valid Standard Form 1034 (Public Voucher for Purchases and Services Other Than Personal). Average time for processing is approximately seven days. However, there is no regulatory guidance for this only the 30-day requirement by the Prompt Payment Act. The 30-day count starts at the date invoice received or merchandised received and accepted date, whichever is the later.

**QUESTION 16: How long after DFAS processes the voucher will EFMP respite care provider be paid?**

**A:** For electronic funds transfer (EFT), up to three working days for payment. If a check is issued, it can take seven working days.

**QUESTION 17: Are EFMP Families from other military services eligible for the Army EFMP respite care program?**

**A:** The EFMP Families from other military services are eligible for the Army EFMP respite care program when memorandum of reciprocity exists. Only U.S. Marine Corps Families are currently eligible.

**QUESTION 18: Are Families of deployed or mobilized Reservists and National Guard Soldiers eligible for the Army respite care program?**

**A:** No, currently the program is only open to Active Army, Active Guard Reserve (AGR) National Guard and AGR Reservists. Mobilized or deployed National Guard members and Reservists who are not in the AGR program are not eligible for the respite care program.

**QUESTION 19: Can EFMP respite care funds be used to provide child care for siblings of an EFM or child of an adult EFM as in the examples shown below?**

**EXAMPLE: A:** Younger sibling of an EFM child undergoing brain surgery (or chemotherapy, physical therapy, or any treatment for serious medical condition).

**EXAMPLE B:** EFM mother with chronic fatigue syndrome or depression requests respite care for her two preschoolers to relieve stress and promote healing.

**A:** Yes. An installation can use EFMP respite care funds, with approval of the ACS Director on a case-by-case basis, to provide child care for siblings of an EFM undergoing surgery or treatment for serious medical condition. Also, they can be used to give the EFM mother a break in the situation described.

**QUESTION 20: Can EFMP respite care funds be used to meet Individualized Education Program/Individualized Family Service Plan requirements?**

**A:** No. Provision of educational and allied health services are the responsibility of local education and/or state government agencies. Educationally related or medical therapies, e.g., speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy or applied behavior analysis cannot be met using respite care funds.

**QUESTION 21: Can respite care funds be used to pay for an individual who will do housework while caring for the EFM?**

**A:** No. The provider should be selected based on his/her capability to care for the EFM. Expecting the provider to pursue other activities during the respite period is not consistent with the Army respite care program.

**QUESTION 22: Can respite care funds be used to hire a tutor or support a live-in nanny?**

**A:** No. The use of respite care funds for these services is not consistent with the Army respite care program.

**QUESTION 23: Can a live-in nanny be a respite care provider to an EFM while residing in the same household?**

**A:** No. The respite care provider must reside outside the home of the EFM.

**QUESTION 24: Are EFMP Families eligible for respite child care as part of the Army Child, Youth and School Services (CYSS) “Give Parents a Break” Program?**

**A:** Yes. Check with your local CYSS to determine what CYSS respite child care options are available for Families/guardians caring for children of deployed Soldiers.

**QUESTION 25: Can EFMP respite care be used for an adult EFM who needs help getting to/from his or her medical appointments if the sponsor releases liability?**

**A:** No. The use of EFMP respite care funds for transportation is not consistent with the Army respite care program.

**QUESTION 26: Can EFMP respite care be used for an adult EFM who needs help with his or her activities of daily living such as cooking, cleaning, bathing and dressing?**

**A:** Yes, if EFMP respite care is providing a temporary rest period for the Family member responsible for regular care of the adult EFM. If this is not the case, it is not respite care and assistance with activities of daily living would need to be obtained from another source, such as a home health agency. EFMP respite care funds could not be used to pay for this assistance.

**QUESTION 27: Is the respite care provider for an adult EFM (spouse) required to come to the home after the Soldier's duty day or can they come during the day when the Soldier is at work?**

**A:** The respite care provider's role is to give the Family member responsible for regular care a break from the care of the EFM. Therefore, the provider should be scheduled in the evenings/weekends when the Soldier is typically home and caring for the EFM. It is not designed to be a daytime companion to ensure the safety of the EFM while the Soldier is at work.

**QUESTION 28: Are EFMP Families required to use all of their allotted respite care hours each month?**

**A:** Yes. Monthly respite care hours cannot be "banked," rolled over for later use or combined to increase the number of hours during subsequent months.

**QUESTION 29: Can EFMP respite care funds be used to pay for an EFM's child care while parents work?**

**A:** No. The use of EFMP respite care funds for this purpose is not consistent with the Army respite care program.

**QUESTION 30: Can Army CYSS programs be used for EFMP respite care?**

**A:** Yes.

a. Army Child Development Centers, School-Age Programs, certified Family Child Care (FCC) providers and Youth Centers may be used for hourly/drop-in care or evenings and weekend care for children 6 weeks to 18 years when EFM children/youth are enrolled in CYSS programs. All CYSS and ACS regulatory requirements and procedures apply.

b. In addition, EFM children 6 weeks to 18 years not enrolled in CYSS programs may participate in CYSS sponsored EFMP evening and weekend care or events when accompanied by their EFMP respite care provider. Under these circumstances, CYSS and ACS policies and procedures do not apply, including the requirement to be screened through an individualized child assessment process.

**QUESTION 31: Can CYSS programs provide one-on-one respite care for EFM children?**

**A:** No. Specialized “one-on-one care” is not provided by CYSS. CYSS programs staffed by Child and Youth Program Assistants and Family Child Care Providers provide group care/supervision options according to prescribed child/staff ratios.

**QUESTION 32: Are there options for CYSS and ACS to work together to provide EFMP respite care?**

**A:** Yes.

a. Group EFMP respite care can be provided in CYSS settings on a space available basis; for example, special needs blocks in CYSS facility classrooms, CYSS multi-purpose rooms/gyms, permanent Kids on Site locations using a combination of CYSS staff and EFMP respite care providers.

b. CYSS programs may identify EFMP respite care FCC homes in coordination with ACS/EFMP staff.

c. CYSS programs may establish child development homes in coordination with ACS/EFMP staff.

**QUESTION 33: Are there restrictions on the number of hours of EFMP respite care that can be provided by individuals in their government owned or leased quarters (including RCI)?**

**A:** Yes. Individuals providing EFMP respite care or other child care more than:

a. Ten child hours per week in their government owned or leased housing (including RCI) must be certified as Army FCC providers. This restriction does not apply to individuals caring for one child for 10 hours per week or two children for five hours per week and so forth. Multiple children from the same Family count as one child.

b. If a Family uses a friend or neighbor to provide 10 hours of EFMP respite care per week in the individual's government owned or leased home, that individual cannot accept children from other Families while providing such care.

c. EFMP and FCC staff must work cooperatively to ensure that individuals residing in government quarters do not establish small businesses for the purpose of providing EFMP respite care, that is, one individual caring for five EFM children for 10 hours per week for a total of 50 child care hours unless they become a certified FCC provider.

**QUESTION 34: Can a Family receiving EFMP respite care also serve as a respite care provider and be paid for taking care of a disabled child that is not a Family member?**

**A:** No. Respite care provides a temporary rest period for Family members responsible for regular care of persons with disabilities. It does not provide an opportunity to work.

**QUESTION 35: Can a neighbor provide EFMP respite care services in the child's government owned or leased home without being FCC certified?**

**A:** Yes. Care provided in the EFM child's own home is not regulated by CYSS when the children in care are limited to EFM child and siblings and the children of the individual providing services. However, if children other than the EFM child, siblings and the children of the individual providing EFMP respite care are also receiving EFMP respite care or other child care, the "10 hour rule" applies.

**QUESTION 36: Can certified FCC providers provide respite care in their "off duty" hours?**

**A:** a. Certified FCC providers may provide EFMP respite care in an EFM child's home, following guidance as outlined in Question 33. Under such circumstances, those individuals are not considered to be FCC providers and, therefore, may provide care authorized by EFMP respite care guidelines.

**A:** b. Certified FCC providers may provide EFMP respite care in their government quarters during evening and weekends as Special Needs Extended Hours FCC homes.

**QUESTION 37: Can a CYSS program assistant provide EFMP respite care in their “off duty” hours?**

**A:** Yes, when:

- a. EFMP respite care occurs in the EFM child’s home per guidance outlined in Question 33 and
- b. CYSS employees providing these services in government owned or leased housing do not exceed the “10 hour rule.”