



## ***Respite Provider Guide***

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Attachments:

- Photo Video Consent Form
- Current Phone List and Emergency Phone List Form
- Current Policy & Procedure Manual
- First Aid Checklist

# Respite Caregiver Guide

## **1. Welcome!**

Welcome to the HOME Society Respite Guide! We believe adults with developmental disabilities and children with special needs have a right to live full lives in our community. We help them do this by providing services like Respite. Respite gives families/caregivers a break from their care giving responsibilities and provides opportunities for individuals to grow, make friends, participate, learn, have fun and make choices for themselves. We believe this helps create a more welcoming and inclusive community that can see beyond disability to ability. And that benefits us all.

Respite is intended to give a break to the people who care for adults with developmental disabilities on a day-to-day basis. This is usually their families, but may be other primary caregivers such as guardians, Supported Living caregivers, foster parents or a representative under Adult Guardianship legislation. In this guide, we call all of these people the families. Successful respite experiences enable families to increase their community networks, have time for personal and emotional maintenance, and maintain or improve their capacity to care for the individual.

Respite arrangements vary widely – depending on the unique needs of the family and individuals you are working with. It can be for an overnight or a few days at a time. It can be on a regular basis such as every other weekend or every Saturday morning, or just occasionally. It is based on the needs of the family. Most respite contracts are funded through CLBC.

## **2. Why this Guide?**

The Respite Program only works because of you. You provide the actual respite care. Our partnership with you is what makes this program a success for the individuals and families it serves.

One of the ways we support our partnership with you is with this guide. It is for you – read it carefully and keep it somewhere where you can refer to it when you need to, and add things to it. It summarizes your obligations, gives practical suggestions and guidelines for a successful respite experience, and includes copies of documents you need to be familiar with. There are also important contact numbers listed on the inside cover, along with space to write in your own. We hope you find it useful, and welcome your suggestions for improving it.

## **3. Being a Respite Caregiver**

Respite caregivers are very special people. You open your home and life to include an individual and their family. In doing so, you get to know this person, and likely their family and/or support network. You will also learn something about yourself. You need to be adaptable, flexible, organized and accepting. You need to be a good problem-solver and communicator who has a sense of humour and likes to learn new things. You also need to take care of yourself, so you do not burn out.

Your role is to provide safe care for the individual, in an accepting, inclusive environment. You are responsible for the safety, health and well-being of the individual while he or she is in your care, and for making sure that he or she has opportunities to improve social and recreational skills. You are also responsible for communicating with the H.O.M.E Society, the individual and their family.

Individuals enjoy rights that are to be upheld and respected by everyone involved with them. These are set out in the H.O.M.E Society's Rights Handbook which is included as part of your Respite Package. Every individual has the right to a physically and emotionally safe environment that supports his or her dignity and privacy. The welfare of individuals is of the utmost concern and abuse, neglect or disrespect of any kind is not tolerated. You are expected to dress, speak and act in ways that are respectful and appropriate.

#### **4. Substance Use (& Abuse)**

*The H.O.M.E. Society* supports a healthy, smoke-free environment. You should use common courtesy around people they live with. Specific guidelines for smoking or vaporizing of any kind should be mutually agreed upon between you and the individual/family before service begins. These include refraining from smoking in the same room or vehicle as the person being cared for, or smoking only outside or in a designated room.

Safety is paramount for supported individuals. Your judgement or ability to provide support must not be impaired by alcohol, cannabis, medication or any other substance while providing support to the individual. You should get professional advice and must be aware of the impairing effects of any drug or medication you consume. Specific guidelines for alcohol or cannabis should be mutually agreed upon between you and the individual/family before service begins. It is unacceptable for you to be under the influence of illegal drugs.

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The H.O.M.E Society understands that social drinking is a part of the culture and a commonly accepted practice among many individuals and families. The legal use of recreational cannabis may also be accepted by certain individuals and families, but may not be a commonly accepted practice.

It is our expectation that Home Share providers will always conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates positive role modelling, and that they will exercise good judgement and use common sense. This expectation extends to the Homeshare

provider's decision to consume alcohol, cannabis or another substance impairs your capacity to provide this, and to respond appropriately to any emergency that might arise. On these occasions, it is your responsibility to provide pre-arranged, alternate support for the person in your care, thereby ensuring responsible and competent support at all times.

## **5. Our H.O.M.E.S Philosophy**

H.O.M.E.S also welcomes the families and other significant persons in the lives of disabled persons be they former staff, friends or professionals. It is hoped that their experience and caring will assist the men and women we serve to live in the community as dignified and valued citizens. Furthermore, their participation will enable people to live richer and more satisfying lives and will assist H.O.M.E.S in ensuring a good quality of care.

The H.O.M.E. Society has adopted a philosophy of Gentleness as advocated by Dr. John McGee Ph.D. The goal of Gentle Teaching is companionship. Rather than try to change those we serve we seek to change ourselves and the environment to allow those we serve to feel safe, loved, loving and engaged. John McGee has trained many of our key staff as mentors. John has done many hands-on sessions in our homes and has completed training across the province that involved 250 staff.

## **6. Requirements of a Respite Care Provider**

For the purposes of the actual provision of respite care; the following is a summary of the key obligations that you **must** follow:

- Participate in the application, interview and orientation process, as defined The H.O.M.E Society, including a criminal record check for yourself and anyone over the age of 19 who is either a frequent visitor or lives/stays in the home. These must be done every five years.
- Maintain current CPR and First Aid certification.
- Provide proof of COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Sign a confidentiality agreement and a video/photo release form.
- If you will be providing transportation for the individual, a drivers' abstract is required, as well as a copy of your vehicle insurance.
- Participate in orientation and/or training related to the needs of the individual you will be caring for.
- Adhere to routines, goals and specific care standards as set out in the individual's care plan and health care plans/protocols as applicable.
- Follow the critical incident reporting requirements of the H.O.M.E Society.
- Communicate regarding the individual's needs and interests; involve the individual/family in decision-making affecting the individual; and promote ongoing relationships with the individual's family/friends/support network.
- Document any medical emergencies or critical incidents pertaining to the individual.
- Actively promote community and neighbourhood support and involvement.
- Provide transportation to activities.

- Notify H.O.M.E.S of any change in circumstance that would affect the individual's safety or well-being.
- Treat all information about the individual/family as confidential.
- Participate in annual PATHs and ISPs (whenever possible).
- Invoice H.O.M.E.S regularly for services provided.
- Submit detailed monthly reports in a timely fashion.
- Facilitate an annual home study.
- All sub-contracts to be approved through H.O.M.E.S.

### **6.1 Mandatory WorkSafe BC Coverage**

As a respite provider, you are required to purchase and maintain coverage under Work Safe BC. The Workers Compensation Act establishes a no-fault workplace accident insurance plan. Respite Service Providers qualify for coverage through the **Personal Optional Protection (POP)** option. For further information regarding coverage, we recommend contacting Work Safe BC directly to determine the appropriate coverage required.

You are required to confirm your coverage with the Workers Compensation Board by providing your registration number to **The H.O.M.E. Society** liaison. Following your registration, **The H.O.M.E. Society** will obtain updated clearance letters as part of our ongoing monitoring process to ensure your premiums have been paid and are up to date.

Be sure to consult with Work Safe BC prior to making a decision on how you arrange your workers' compensation coverage. If you have any questions about the content of the agreement, you should clarify these before signing. Discuss this either with **The H.O.M.E. Society** liaison, and/or through independent legal advice.

The H.O.M.E Society is obligated to:

- Provide you with support, assistance, training and advice on matters such as personal care, health, conflict resolution and gentle teaching.
- Provide up to date policies and procedures.
- Act as a liaison between the family, CLBC and the caregiver.
- Monitor the service provided, ensuring that H.O.M.E.S guidelines are followed.

### **7. Supporting Individuals**

The whole point of respite is to give families and the person served a break, while promoting community and relationship opportunities for the individual. The expected outcomes of the program are:

- Families will be satisfied with the respite service;
- Individuals will be satisfied with the respite service;
- Caregivers will be available to families;
- Newly-served families will receive respite in a timely manner; and
- Families will receive an adequate amount of respite based on the contract.

We are committed to developing and nurturing long term, supportive relationships between caregivers and the persons served and families you work with. The following guidelines will help you in developing these relationships, and in meeting your obligations under the contract.

### **7.1 Communications**

Open and regular communication is the key to a successful family-caregiver relationship. You should communicate with the family about changes in the needs of the individual, (physical, emotional etc.) If you provide overnight respite, you should also communicate about changes in your family or household that could affect the individual. You should discuss how things are going in person and/or by phone or written notes, exchanging information about successes, challenges and incidents. You must be familiar with the individual's care plan, and communicate about updates and changes to it.

Families are responsible for arranging specific respite times and pick-up/drop-off routines with you, and for giving reasonable notice of any changes. You are also expected to give reasonable notice of any changes. We suggest that you keep a record book showing all bookings and cancellations and the dates and times of care provided.

The H.O.M.E Society facilitates and supports communication in many ways, including offering training and providing conflict resolution or facilitation if communications have become difficult or there is an issue to be resolved. The H.O.M.E Society also distributes information on a regular basis to both families and caregivers, including program/activity updates, newsletters, and information on professional development and training opportunities.

### **7.2 Language**

The language you use is important. The perceived value or worth of an individual can be affected by the language used by those around them.

It is important to use language, both written and verbal, that enhances dignity and enhances respect for all individuals.

### **7.3 Confidentiality & Privacy**

Each individual receiving service has the right to have personal information about them treated in confidence. This includes medical, psychological, financial, employment and educational information. This obligation continues indefinitely, even after the respite relationship is over.

In keeping with confidentiality expectations, you should not provide personal or sensitive information about the person you are caring for to people outside their family or H.O.M.E.S, without written consent. In the case of an adult who is not making his/her own decisions, this consent must come from the family or legal representative. This



includes photos and names, as well as written reports or other information. Keep such information in a private and secure place in your home. Video/Photo Consent Forms are available at the main office.

There may be some circumstances in which you have to release information, such as a medical emergency. Ideally, the individual or family should provide the information directly.

#### **7.4 Conflict Resolution**

Sometimes differences of opinion or other conflicts arise. The best way to prevent them is through frequent and frank communications. Don't let little things that are bothering you go by. Be proactive. Bring them up in a non-accusing way, using problem-solving techniques such as:

- Always talk to the person you are having the problem with first. Don't gossip about the problem with others.
- Give the person a chance to state their side of the story and try to understand their perspective.
- Listen actively and look for ways to resolve the situation.

This can often lead to a simple solution that prevents the problem from becoming bigger and adversely affecting your relationship with the consumer and/or family. Often finding a mutual solution to a difficult situation helps to build trust and strengthen your relationship. If you cannot solve the problem yourself, contact the H.O.M.E Society. We can provide conflict resolution support

#### **7.5 Individual's Property**

You are expected to respect the personal property of the individual you are caring for. Keep track of the individual's belongings during the respite visit and return them to the family at pick-up. Keeping an individual's belongings at your home between respite visits should be done only by arrangement with the family.

#### **7.6 Identification**

Families are responsible for making sure that individuals have appropriate identification and for making sure it accompanies them to and from respite. This could include BCID; B.C. Medical Card; Medic Alert (if applicable); Birth Certificate and/or passport.

#### **7.7 Keeping Records**

Respite providers are expected to keep a file for each individual with information needed to provide service and supports. This file should include a copy of the most recent care plan (if available), emergency information, a consent form and any applicable health care plans and/or protocols. Do not keep highly sensitive personal

information in these files once it is no longer needed; forward it to H.O.M.E.S office for retention in the individual's central file

### ***7.8 Transportation***

You may use your own vehicle to transport the individual you are caring for. You are expected to drive with due care and attention and adhere to all requirements of the *Motor Vehicle Act*.

Vehicle insurance, payment of all traffic fines and costs associated with operating and maintaining the vehicle are solely your responsibility. We recommend that you carry at least \$2M in third party liability insurance, and check with an insurance professional about whether you should carry business insurance.

We recommend that you do not take individuals you are caring for out of the lower mainland. If you are going to do so, you must get advance written permission.

### ***7.9 Community Inclusion and Advocacy***

Part of your role is to help broaden the circle of friends and build new opportunities for the individual you are caring for. Recreational and other community activities should form a part of what you provide. Ideally, this should happen in natural settings in the community, with peers if possible. It can mean swimming at a recreation centre or going horseback riding or to the movies. It may also mean taking an individual to a regularly planned recreational activity. Families are expected to pay for the costs of admission or participation in such activities.

### ***7.10 Religious Activities***

H.O.M.E.S is a non-denominational organization serving people of all religious beliefs. We encourage and support the right of individuals to freedom of religious choice. As a caregiver, you should respect and support individual choices and make reasonable accommodations regarding things such as dietary or moral decisions based on religious belief. Do not take an individual in your care to a religious meeting or event without express family or individual consent.

## ***8. Individual Health and Well-being***

You provide personal care to the individual you care for, develop relationships with them and their families, and form a part of the network of formal and informal supports surrounding that individual. As such, you can become involved in many personal aspects of their lives, and play a role in their overall development. You are responsible for their health and personal well-being while they are in your care.

The key to successfully supporting an individual during respite stays is to have and follow an up-to-date care plan, as well as any other individual plans or protocols that pertain to their specific situation and needs. The following describes these individual plans, and the various aspects of an individual's well-being for which you are responsible while you care for them:

### **8.1 PATH/Individual Support Plan**

Some individuals receiving respite may have a PATH and an Individual Support Plan (ISP). An ISP and PATH sets out the dreams, goals and aspirations of an individual, and guides the delivery of all services and supports. It identifies the activities the person will be involved in and who will facilitate or provide them. It may be developed by H.O.M.E.S or by another agency involved with the individual with input from the individual and the family/support network. It is reviewed regularly. If the person you are caring for has a personal plan, you may be given a copy of relevant sections and should follow it whenever possible. It can act as a useful overall guide and context about the individual's life. You may also be asked to participate in developing or reviewing parts of it that are specific to respite.

### **8.2 Care Plan**

Every individual receiving respite **must** have a care plan. A care plan describes the assistance and support that an individual needs in daily living. It is tailored to reflect the unique preferences and support requirements of each individual. The family usually completes it, with assistance from H.O.M.E.S, if needed. There are situations when an individual begins a respite service and the individual does not have a current care plan. If this is the case, please talk to the H.O.M.E.S Manager. It is a confidential document that contains personal information, and should be treated as such.

A care plan usually contains information such as the following:

- Personal and emergency contacts, including professional support.
- Description of the person e.g. gifts, talents, likes, dislikes, important issues, potential challenges, significant life experiences
- Description of potential risks such as going missing, including a missing person's info sheet.
- Description of personal support network
- Personal care and health needs including diet, favourite foods, sleeping patterns, washroom routines, therapies, medical and specialist appointments, medications, allergies, and any other medical concerns
- Communication needs and support including preferred learning style and successful teaching strategies
- Community involvement including safety protocols when in the community, preferred activities and supports needed.

The care plan is a big help to you – it should guide the care you provide. Always have a copy of the plan. Review it and discuss any issues or concerns with the family before providing respite. Care plans are updated by families annually.

### **8.3 Personal Care**

Some individuals need direct assistance with personal care and hygiene routines. You are expected to provide personal care in a way that ensures the privacy and dignity of the individual, and promotes the highest level of independence and personal choice possible. This helps the individual learn appropriate touch, language and personal boundaries through consistent modelling. It also provides comfort, consistency of routine and familiarity for the individual while protecting everyone involved.

### **8.4 Health Care**

You are responsible for meeting the health care needs of the individual you are caring for, as per the care plan. This could include administering prescription and non-prescription medications, using equipment such as braces or a wheelchair, following established routines and instructions regarding feeding, allergies or other medical concerns. Only carry out routines that are set out in writing in the care plan. The care plan includes details about when and how to administer prescription and non-prescription medications and procedures and ramifications of missed doses.

Keep all medications in locked storage, out of reach. H.O.M.E.S will provide you with general medication training along with Medical in Service training. Families are responsible for keeping you informed in writing of any changes to medication or other medical routines, providing you with enough medication (in original containers) or other medical needs for the respite stay, including current M.A.R sheets and Health watch information sheets.

### **8.5 Universal Precautions**

Caregivers are expected to observe basic cleanliness routines such as regular hand washing, and to understand and follow standard health precautions at all times when providing personal care to an individual. Always treat blood and other bodily fluids as potentially dangerous. Use latex/vinyl gloves when personal care involves blood or other body fluids, or when touching non-intact skin or items/surfaces contaminated with blood or body fluids. Disinfect contaminated surfaces, items and materials with bleach or in the dishwasher or microwave.

For your own protection, you may want to consider immunizations against Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and influenza. If the individual you are caring for is a carrier of Hepatitis B, you have a right to be notified and we strongly advise you to be immunized. If you choose not to be immunized, we may not consider you as a caregiver for someone who

is a Hepatitis B carrier. We also suggest that you do not perform personal care duties. You are responsible for arranging your own immunizations, blood tests and boosters.

### **8.6 Nutrition**

If you provide respite in your own home, you are responsible for meeting the nutritional needs of the individual in your care. Follow any nutritional plans and preferences in the care plan, including any food preferences, intolerances or allergies. You are expected to handle food safely, paying particular attention to adequate cooking and refrigeration and to preventing contamination. We strongly encourage you to take a Food Safe course.

### **8.7 Sexuality**

Sexuality is a natural part of the development and growth of human beings. It is inherent in expressions and perceptions of self. Individuals have the right to learn about and explore their sexuality and sexual identity in developmentally appropriate ways. You should clarify family practices and expectations about things such as appropriate TV shows and videos, touching, and language, and follow those expectations. Do not impose your own moral choices or judgements on the individual you are caring for. Inform families of any issues regarding sexuality that arise, and ask for specific training if needed.

### **8.8 Support during a hospital stay**

Sometimes you may have to transport or accompany an individual to the hospital, if the family or alternate contacts are not available. If this happens, arrange to meet the H.O.M.E.S Emergency Response Person at the hospital. In such situations, act as the person's advocate and support, and provide information to medical staff as required. This may include acting as an interpreter, providing food, personal care and emotional support, assisting with medication administration and liaising with medical staff.

## **9. Safety**

When providing care in your own home, you are expected to provide a safe environment, including adequate fire precautions and procedures. This should include fire procedures and regular fire drills, fire safety equipment such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting such as a flashlight.

Make sure you have a fully-stocked first aid kit in your home and in your car if you are transporting the individual. Check and restock the kit after every use and at least annually. H.O.M.E.S will provide a checklist during the home study and it is suggested that you use it as a guideline thereafter.

First Aid kits should include:

- Antiseptic towelettes (Handi-wipes)
- Band-Aids in various sizes
- Sterile gauze and eye pads
- Gauze roll
- Non-allergenic tape
- Large and small pressure dressings
- Roll crepe tensor bandage
- Triangular bandages
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Safety pins
- Disposable gloves
- Source of cold (ice pack, frozen peas, chemical cold)
- Mouth shield for CPR (child and adult)
- Protective eye goggles

## **10. Emergencies**

An emergency is a situation that places an individual or a caregiver at risk, and/or that requires the assistance of a doctor, nurse, 911, or a H.O.M.E.S Manager. Examples include a fire, vehicle accident or earthquake. H.O.M.E.S has an Emergency Response Procedure for Respite providers, including a Manager on call 24/7. Contact the H.O.M.E.S Manager in the event of an emergency, at the numbers listed on the phone list. He/she will respond and provide support as necessary, and make sure critical incident reports are filed with the appropriate agencies. Call 911 if it is a medical or safety emergency. Contact the family, or designated family emergency contact if the family is not available. ***Please ensure your emergency numbers are updated on an annual basis.***

You should be aware of and follow community emergency preparedness plans. We encourage you to follow community guidelines for earthquake preparedness, including having a 72-hour supply of food, water and emergency supplies, and adequate medication or equipment needed to support the individual you are caring for. H.O.M.E.S will provide you with our Agency Wide Emergency Plan as part of your respite package. It is your responsibility to have an updated copy on an annual basis. This will ensure that all the agency contact numbers are current.

Keep emergency phone numbers for fire, police/ambulance, poison control, and H.O.M.E.S, along with the individual's emergency contact numbers and information, near the phone.

## **11. Critical Incidents**

Please refer to Policy B.10 in the Policy and Procedure Manual. All incident reports must be submitted to the appropriate manager within 24 hours.

## **12. Abuse and Neglect**

All individuals have the right to an environment that is safe and free from any abuse or neglect. This includes physical, verbal, emotional, financial and sexual abuse as well as active and passive neglect. Please ensure you have read and completely understand Policy B.30 Abuse and Neglect.

## **13. Working with H.O.M.E.S**

As an independent contractor, you are a partner with H.O.M.E.S in the care of the individual you support. We are committed to nurturing that relationship and providing you with the support and training you need to be a successful respite caregiver. Here are some tips for making our partnership work:

- Communicate regularly with us – let us know at any time if you have any questions or concerns.
- Tell us about your ideas for how to improve the Respite Program.
- Take advantage of training, networking and professional development opportunities offered through The H.O.M.E Society and other agencies. Tell us about areas where you would like specific support or resources.

## **14. Monitoring and Evaluation**

We are responsible for monitoring the respite service you provide on a regular basis, and for an annual home study/safety checklist. We are concerned about the health, safety and well-being of the person served, and about your performance in meeting your contractual obligations. You can expect to hear from us periodically, just checking in to see how things are going. You can also expect to hear from us at the time of the annual home study/safety checklist. At that time, we will ask for the following:

- Your participation by completing a respite review questionnaire that gives us important feedback about how things are going from your perspective.
- A home visit to complete the Safety Checklist, if you provide respite in your home.
- A meeting to review the questionnaire, Safety Checklist, any critical incident reports, and any other reports or issues relevant to renewal of your respite.

We will also speak with the family and the person served about their perspective on how things are going. If there are concerns on our part or on yours, we will try to address them and make changes as needed. The safety and well-being of the person served is always the most important consideration in our decisions.

## ***15. Training and Professional Development***

One of the best ways to manage any stress is to be open to learning new things and meeting new people. Training events and professional development opportunities can offer new information, new contacts, new ways of meeting challenges, and a sense that you are not the only one dealing with things. H.O.M.E.S offers such opportunities on a regular basis. We encourage you to participate in them, as well as other opportunities offered in the community. We also encourage you to let us know about issues or subjects that you would like training in. Please call H.O.M.E.S for upcoming training and dates.

## ***16. A Final Word***

In closing, we wish to thank you again for taking on the special job of providing respite care for adults with developmental disabilities. If you have read through to the end of this guide, you are well on your way to being an informed, successful caregiver. We encourage you to use this guide and the other resources we have to offer.

**The H.O.M.E Society**

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