



Respite Provider Handbook



Revised November 2023



NAMI Maine Family Respite Program Respite Services Handbook For Providers

Welcome to the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program. This manual is intended to inform providers who are delivering respite care services about general policies, principles, and procedures. If you have any questions after reviewing this manual, please feel free to contact your regional manager at the appropriate office listed below.

The NAMI Maine respite program does not assign providers as it supports a model of family choice. All providers must be NAMI Maine employees and must satisfy eligibility requirements and complete an application and orientation process before working with families.

The NAMI Maine Family Respite Program adheres to the general NAMI Maine policy and procedure manual as well as those policies and procedures contained in this manual. NAMI Maine is free to act according to the best business judgment of its management staff and to change the policies, principles and procedures described herein at any time with or without notice.

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Our Mission. Our Vision. Our Values.

Mission Statement

NAMI Maine provides advocacy, education, and support so that all individuals, families, and communities affected by mental illness can live fulfilling lives.

Vision Statement

NAMI Maine envisions a world where all people affected by mental illness live healthy, fulfilling lives supported by a community that cares about mental health.

Values

- Hope
- Inclusion
- Empowerment
- Compassion
- Fairness

What Is Respite?

The purpose of respite care is to support families by providing a much-needed break from the responsibility of caring for a child with significant developmental delays, behavioral, emotional, and other special needs.

Providing continuous care for a child with special needs can be stressful. Respite is the temporary relief from the responsibility of constant caregiving. The Family Respite Program is designed to provide family members of children with special needs with time to revitalize themselves or attend to other matters, away from their caregiving responsibilities.

Respite is not to be utilized as daycare and cannot be used while a parent/guardian is at work. Requests for respite services must be made by the family member, caregiver, or guardian with whom the child resides. The Family Respite Program is not a clinical OR crisis service. If you should ever need to contact crisis services, you can call this 24-hour phone number: 1-888-568-1112.

Program Guidelines

Eligibility

Children under the age of 18 with developmental, emotional, or behavioral diagnoses are eligible for respite services. Children in foster care, living in residential care settings, or in state custody are not eligible for respite services. Respite care is not to be used in lieu of daycare.

Levels of Care

There are two levels of care:

Level I is provided to children with behavioral issues who have non-life-threatening medical conditions generally controlled by medication, and who require basic respite care.

Level II is for children with severe physical, behavioral, or emotional needs that require a higher level of care. They may have life-threatening medical conditions and/or medical fragility. They may exhibit aggressive and/or assaultive behavior and require services from providers who are trained in behavioral intervention.

Respite Service

- Families may be eligible to receive up to 288 hours of respite care per year.
- No respite provider shall be paid for more than 19 hours of continuous care in any 24-hour period, per family. (5 hours minimum must be deducted for sleep time when doing an overnight shift.)
- No respite provider may serve more than 4 children from the same family at any one time.
- No respite provider may bill for multiple families during the same time frame.
- All respite providers must be certified by NAMI Maine, which includes a criminal, child protective and motor vehicle background check.
- All individuals aged 18 and older, living in the same household as the respite provider, are also required to have background checks.
- If a family requests that their child participate in activities that have costs, the family is responsible for providing funds for those costs.
- Families must complete a satisfaction survey once per quarter.
- Providers may work up to 29 hours per week.

See the “Per Diem Respite Employees” section in the NAMI Maine Policy Manual for more details.

Linkage to NAMI Maine Respite Providers

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to offer families opportunities to utilize their own choice of respite provider or choose from a list of available respite providers in their region. Families will be responsible for ensuring the respite provider they choose is thoroughly informed about all aspects of care pertaining to the needs of their child. All respite providers providing respite hours for a family must be employed by NAMI Maine.

Procedure:

1. Existing relationships between families and respite providers will be honored and encouraged.
2. Families and individuals approved for respite services will be notified and provided with information on how to access respite provider profiles on the NAMI Maine website. The families and individuals will be informed that it is their responsibility to contact, interview, and select a provider. NAMI Maine can provide guidance regarding the types of questions and issues that a family or individual may want to consider before selecting a respite provider.

3. The dates and hours during which respite services are to be provided are determined between the respite providers and the caregivers or families, in accordance with the families' needs, the program's guidelines, and the funding parameters that govern the program. In no instance may respite care be used as child daycare.
4. Respite families may end their relationship with a worker at any time. Respite providers, too, may end their relationship with a family. Families and providers are encouraged to notify their regional manager when a change occurs.
5. A family or individual that is unable to obtain another respite provider may contact their regional manager for assistance OR they may refer an individual to apply with NAMI Maine to become their respite provider.
6. NAMI Maine will maintain an updated list of available respite providers on our website.

Key Policies

All NAMI Maine policies are outlined in the Policy Manual which is distributed at orientation. It is the responsibility of all family respite providers to review and adhere to these policies as a NAMI employee. Some key policies are detailed below to guide you in your work as a family respite provider.

Confidentiality

POLICY: NAMI Maine complies with state and federal confidentiality laws that govern the release of information about medical and behavioral health. It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program that confidentiality of the respite providers, families, and individuals who provide or receive respite services be maintained at all times. All respite providers will adhere to these guidelines and sign a notice of confidentiality statement.

Abuse/Neglect and Mandated Reporting

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine to report suspected abuse and to follow rules connected to mandated reporting. All family respite providers are mandated reporters. Please see the "Abuse and Neglect" section of the NAMI Maine Policy Manual for more details.

Adverse Incidents

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine to provide a safe work environment and to report all adverse incidents to external authorities (as required) and to the Executive Director. Please see the “Adverse Incidents” section the NAMI Maine Policy Manual and the handout on Reporting Protocol for more details.

Safety

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine to provide all employees with a safe and healthy workplace. An effective health and safety program protects NAMI Maine’s most valuable asset—its employees. In return, NAMI Maine expects its employees to adhere to safety policies and procedures and to recognize their individual obligation to conduct themselves regarding their own safety and that of others. All new employees are oriented to NAMI Maine safety procedures. Please see the “Policy on Safety” section in the NAMI Maine Policy Manual for full details.

Medications

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine’s Respite Program to safely dispense medications to children during the time that they are in respite care only if the family grants written permission.

Procedure:

Respite providers may, with written permission from the family, dispense medications to children under their care. Written permission must be documented for each time respite care is provided and medications will need to be dispensed. The family is to specify, in writing, the name of the medication(s), dose(s), and times that the medication(s) are to be provided.

Families may only provide the exact number of pills for the time that respite care will be provided. The respite provider must sign that they have received the medications (i.e., each pill, the dose, the time to be dispensed and the initials of the respite provider for each). Under no circumstances may respite providers be given a bottle of pills, blister pack, or doses beyond what will be needed during the episode of care. Please see the “Guidelines for Administering Medications” handout for more details.

The NAMI Maine Family Respite Program does not require respite providers to dispense medications and a respite provider may choose not to dispense medications. All inappropriate, fraudulent or misuse of medications by a respite provider will result in immediate termination. Failure of a family to report suspected or admitted misuse of medications by a respite provider may also be cause to terminate services.

Suicide Prevention Protocol

Suicidal behavior is complex and frightening. The impact of suicide is devastating to family, friends, and entire communities. The increase of suicide rates in Maine is cause for concern. On average there is one suicide every two days. The Maine Suicide Prevention Program and NAMI Maine offer trainings around suicide prevention and respite providers are encouraged to attend. If you suspect that someone you know may be suicidal, please contact the Maine Crisis Program at 1-888-568-1112.

Boundaries

NAMI Maine strives to ensure that all respite providers consider how they work with families and how those relationships impact the children receiving care. Respite is a planned, intentional break for parents. It is not a clinical service for children, nor is it designed to provide support to parents outside of the provision of respite. There are many resources that providers can share when they feel families would benefit from additional programs and services. However, too often providers can cross the line from respite provider to family advocate or support person. If you feel a family could benefit from other services, please direct them to other known resources or the NAMI Maine Information & Referral Help Line (1-800-464-5767).

NAMI Maine respects that many respite providers are family members or close family friends and are providing respite to children that are already known to the respite provider. NAMI Maine does not expect family members or close family friends who come to the respite program with a family to follow these expectations around boundaries. When a respite provider's FIRST contact with a family is because of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program, we do expect that both the parents and the provider will work to adhere to appropriate boundaries.

It is important to limit your role to that of a family member receiving services or a respite provider offering services. This means that communication should remain in the context of that relationship and should be limited to what both parties have previously consented to as appropriate methods of

communication. Providers and families should communicate only through agreed upon methods such as phone, email, or text.

Respite is a state funded service, and therefore, respite providers and families need to be aware of the dynamics of the relationships they develop. They must work hard to ensure those relationships do not become personal friendships. To this end, respite providers should be treated in a manner like other service providers. Some basic guidelines are listed below.

Family Respite Program Boundary Guidelines

- Facebook and other social media communication: This should occur only with the consent of both parties. Friending, following, posting, and tagging pictures should only be engaged in with the approval of both the family and the provider.
- Pictures should not be taken, shared, or displayed without the permission of both parties.
- Family members and providers only share personal information that is directly related to the delivery of respite services.
- Family members only grant access to their home for specific respite episodes and do not provide keys to respite providers.
- Respite providers limit the purchasing of gifts for the children they serve only to special occasions or events and with prior approval from the parent(s)/guardian.
- Respite providers who nominate families for charitable programs (e.g. Christmas Angel) are to have no further involvement in the outcomes of such nominations.
- Respite providers are not to fundraise or directly secure donations on behalf of the families to which they provide services.
- Families and providers are not to solicit one another to purchase goods or services that they are selling.
- It is not appropriate to express concerns about a family's parenting style or threaten to report them to DHHS for this approach. If a provider suspects child abuse, they are legally mandated to take immediate action and report their concerns to the child abuse hotline.
- Respite is not a clinical service; therefore, it is considered a boundary violation to provide clinical consultations or assessment of the child or parent enrolled in the respite program.

If a provider or family is concerned about how to create clear boundaries, they feel a boundary has been crossed, or they need assistance in resolving a conflict, they should contact their regional manager.

If either a family member or a respite provider engages in behavior that clearly crosses appropriate limitations for the consented relationship, NAMI Maine has the right to suspend or terminate services for either or both parties.

Examples of behavior that would be grounds for suspension include, but are not limited to:

- Contacting family members, extended family members of provider or family without permission

- Contacting the respite provider or family member(s) on a work phone number without permission
- Making false statements or filing reports with authorities that are intentionally false and knowingly inaccurate
- Physically showing up unannounced at a provider or family's home, worksite, or child's school
- Engaging in any form of defamation of character or slander in a public forum about a provider, family, or family member of either party
- Harassment or communication beyond that which is necessary to arrange or deliver services
- Conspiring to submit falsified RSRs (time sheets)

If you have any questions about what is or isn't a boundary issue, please contact your regional manager.

Code of Conduct for Respite Providers

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program that families and providers treat each other and staff of NAMI Maine with courtesy and respect.

Providers delivering respite services will be required to sign a code of conduct form at onboarding, agreeing to:

1. Avoid violence or the threat of violence in all its forms.
2. Avoid rude, disrespectful, discourteous, harassing, or abusive behavior toward respite families, other providers, and staff of NAMI Maine.
3. Set and maintain appropriate boundaries as described in the Respite Provider Handbook.
4. Respect boundaries set by families, NAMI Maine staff, and/or the Respite Provider Handbook.
5. Take steps to prevent or correct any safety issues related to the child or the physical space in which the respite care takes place.
6. Maintain confidentiality.
7. Report any safety issues or suspected abuse and neglect.
8. Not participate in or perpetuate fraud (for example, billing for respite services that did not occur).
9. Refrain from substance use before or while providing respite care.
10. Inform NAMI Maine staff if they are no longer able or eligible to be a provider.
11. Comply with all policies as set forth in the Family Respite Services Handbook.

Respite Provider Recruitment, Classification, and Terms of Employment

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to employ certified respite providers and individuals with independent licensure to provide respite care. To this end, it is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to recruit and retain individuals of diverse backgrounds, including those who may have disabilities or who may have family members with disabilities.

It is also the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to offer two types of respite care:

- Level I: Families who receive Level I care are those whose children require basic care and may have behavioral issues that require some behavior management, but overall have significantly lower needs than that of a child requiring Level II care.
- Level II: Families who receive Level II care are those whose children have severe physical, behavioral, or emotional needs that require a higher level of skill from a respite provider. They may have life-threatening medical conditions and medical fragility. Children receiving Level II care may exhibit aggressive behaviors. Respite providers caring for Level II children will need experience and certification in behavioral intervention.

The Executive Director shall have the authority to hire and terminate respite providers. All recruitment and selection decisions will be made in accordance with NAMI Maine policies and procedures.

Procedure:

1. Recruitment, selection and authority to hire and terminate respite providers lies with NAMI Maine's Executive Director.
2. Respite providers will be recruited via advertising, notifications in the NAMI Maine Newsletter, publicly posted notices, mailings to relevant university and college departments and programs and other methods.
3. All NAMI Maine respite providers are subject to the following classifications:
 - a. Level I Providers: Certified respite providers who have experience with children with special needs, behavioral interventions, and behavior management.
 - b. Level II Providers: Certified respite providers who have training and certification in the management of aggressive behaviors, de-escalation, and life-threatening medical conditions/medical fragility.

Respite Provider Eligibility Requirements

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program that all persons wishing to become NAMI Maine respite providers must satisfy the eligibility requirements and successfully complete the

application process to be considered for acceptance as respite providers. As of January 1, 2013, all respite providers providing services must be certified according to the Respite Care Certification guidelines found at www.respiteforme.com.

Procedure:

To be eligible to provide respite services under contract with NAMI Maine an individual must:

- Be at least 18 years of age, but must be 21 to transport respite recipients
- Be either a U.S. citizen or otherwise eligible to be employed in the U.S.
- Have at least a high school diploma or GED
- Submit a completed application
- Submit a resume or work history
- Submit at least two positive references– these must be from current or former employers, supervisors of either an internship or volunteer activities or some similar type of reference
- Agree to and successfully pass background checks with the Division of Motor Vehicles, the State Bureau of Identification, and the Department of Health and Human Services
- Obtain and maintain required certification for Mandated Reporting, CPR, First Aid, Blood Borne Pathogens and YMHFA training (YMHFA is required within 6 months of hire).

An individual's application to become a respite provider will be denied if:

1. There exists a Department of Health and Human Services substantiated case of abuse or neglect.
2. There exists a conviction of a crime against either a child or an adult, a crime involving violence, or operating under the influence.
3. There are significant motor vehicle incidents that document unsafe driving habits.
4. Formal allegations being processed for either of the above will be cause to delay initial certification, pending resolution of the allegations. In substantiated cases/convictions, certification will be denied. Certification may be issued at the discretion of NAMI Maine if there exists a conviction for a crime other than those identified above, pending a review of the circumstances with the applicant and, at the discretion of NAMI Maine, an evaluation by a psychologist or therapist. Any evaluation is at the expense of the potential provider.
5. Once accepted (prior to providing any respite services) respite providers must complete the NAMI Maine orientation process as outlined in NAMI Maine's policy and procedure manual.

Respite Provider Certification and Recertification

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program that all individuals providing respite services meet the eligibility criteria previously set forth in the section entitled "Respite Provider Eligibility Requirements" and qualify as either a Level I or Level II provider. All individuals providing respite services must be recertified every two years, from the date of employment.

Procedure:

Certification – Level I

In order to be a Level I certified respite provider, an individual must satisfy the eligibility criteria set forth in the section entitled “Respite Provider Eligibility Requirements” and the following:

1. Must satisfy at least one of the following scenarios:
 - i. Successfully complete required trainings from NAMI Maine
 - ii. Complete the on-line training modules and exam
 - iii. Provide documentation of at least 30 hours of training/education in working with children who have special needs
2. Must successfully complete all NAMI Maine required training or training updates.
3. Must complete all required orientation paperwork and pass background checks.
4. Must immediately notify NAMI Maine’s Executive Director of any legal actions that have been taken or are pending against them in the time since the initial background checks. Such actions may include but are not limited to driving license violations and criminal violations.

Failure to comply with any of these criteria could result in termination.

Certification – Level II

To be Level II certified, an individual must satisfy the eligibility criteria set forth in the section titled, “Respite Provider Eligibility Requirements” and the following:

1. Must possess and submit evidence of behavioral intervention certification (MANDT, NAPPI, WELLE, TCI or Safety Care)
2. Must successfully complete any required trainings from NAMI Maine prior to providing any services.
3. Must complete all required orientation paperwork and background checks.
4. Must successfully complete all NAMI Maine training updates.
5. Must immediately notify NAMI Maine’s Executive Director of any legal actions that have been taken or are pending against them in the time since the initial background checks. Such actions may include but are not limited to driving license violations and criminal violations.
6. Must maintain their certification by obtaining continuing education credits as required.

Procedure:

Recertification

Certification either as a Level I or Level II provider is for a two-year period. To be recertified an individual must:

1. Be actively providing care to at least one family.
2. Receive a positive evaluation from the family (or families) for whom care has been provided.

3. Be in compliance with required on-going training/documentation, Mandated Reporter, CPR, First Aid, BBP, YMHFA, Vehicle Insurance ID and Driver's License.
4. Complete 18 Continuing Education credits within two years of the last certification.
5. Have provided at least 60 hours of respite care in the previous two years.
6. Agree to and successfully pass updated background checks with the Division of Motor Vehicles, the State Bureau of Identification, and the Department of Human Services.

Either a Level I or Level II provider will be denied recertification if:

- There exists a Department of Health and Human Services substantiated case of abuse or neglect or significant motor vehicle violations.
- There exists a conviction of a crime against either a child or an adult, a crime involving violence or operating under the influence.
- Formal allegations being processed for either of the above will be cause to delay recertification pending resolution of the allegations. In substantiated cases/convictions, recertification will be denied.
- There are substantiated concerns expressed by families who have received care.

Recertification may be issued at the discretion of NAMI Maine if there exists a conviction for a crime other than those identified above, pending a review of the circumstances with the applicant and, at the discretion of NAMI Maine, an evaluation by a psychologist or therapist. Any evaluation is at the expense of the provider.

Criminal Background Checks

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to conduct background checks on newly certified respite providers and any individual age 18 or older who resides with the provider. NAMI Maine reviews any criminal charges against any respite provider or a household member in terms of the impact on the agency and the respite program.

Procedure:

1. When an applicant wishing to provide respite services is offered the opportunity to become a certified respite provider, she or he is required to disclose any criminal convictions or pending criminal charges at the time of application for employment with NAMI Maine.

2. Although NAMI Maine believes that a person is innocent until proven guilty, the Executive Director may choose to suspend any respite provider charged with a criminal offense.
3. When this legal action is resolved, the status of the respite provider will be determined by the Executive Director.
4. Any respite provider who is charged with a crime must report it to the Executive Director. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment.

Note: As part of the application process for becoming a respite provider, the provider applicant and anyone in the household 18 and older must consent to background checks including motor vehicle, criminal, and child protective services. Any criminal record or motor vehicle violation may constitute valid cause to not hire an individual. Such decisions will be the sole responsibility of the Executive Director or their designee. Any applicant who has a substantiated record of child abuse or neglect, using current standards for such, will not be approved as a respite provider. Any family member 18 years of age or older who resides in the same household as the provider and who has a criminal record, motor vehicle violation, substantiated record of child abuse or neglect, or any substantiated charges involving vulnerable populations, may constitute cause for not approving a provider applicant.

Respite services may be provided in a variety of locations, some requiring prior approval.

1. Respite may be provided by an approved family respite provider in the family home.
2. Respite may be provided in the provider home when background checks have been completed on every individual 18 years of age and older living in the same household and the Executive Director, or their designee, determines that there are no records or accounts that constitute an unsafe environment for respite children.
3. Respite may be provided in the community. The respite provider is responsible for ensuring the character of any individual who they are in contact with during the provision of respite services. Any violations of the above policies are grounds for immediate dismissal.

When a minor in the household is turning 18, background checks must be completed. This process must be started within thirty (30) days of turning 18. Providers previously approved to provide respite in their home may continue to do so if the process for the background check is started within thirty (30) days. If the process is not started within thirty (30) days, a provider may not provide respite in their home. At the discretion of the Family Respite Program, and depending upon the situation, a respite provider may be placed on temporary inactive status until all required background checks are completed.

Any subsequent criminal, motor vehicle or substantiated abuse or neglect must be reported by the provider to their regional respite manager within fourteen (14) days of the offense. Should, at any time, a change occur in the household resulting in additional individuals over the age of 18 residing in the home, background checks must be completed on these individuals. It is the responsibility of the respite provider to notify the Family Respite Program and initiate the paperwork for the background checks.

Grievance Procedure for Complaints and/or Formal Grievances

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine to respond to all complaints and/or formal grievances brought forward by internal staff and the families and/or individuals served by the agency. This procedure is not intended to deal with disciplinary matters as that process is outlined in a separate procedure.

Procedure:

External Complaints

1. Any staff person receiving a complaint or grievance from a customer must, within 24 hours, notify the Program Director or Director of Operations that a person has complained. This notification must be in writing and must include the name and phone number of the person with the complaint/grievance and the nature of the complaint.
2. The Director will, within three working days, contact the complainant and attempt to resolve their concern(s). Informal resolution is preferred.
3. The Director will prepare a written summary of the nature of the complaint, the actions taken to attempt to resolve the problem, and the results. A full copy of the report will be forwarded to the complainant. If the complainant is satisfied with the Director's actions, no further action is needed.
4. If the complainant is still not satisfied, he/she will be referred to the Executive Director.
5. No retribution or other discrimination may occur against any person or family who has filed a grievance or complained about NAMI Maine staff or services.
6. If the complaint/grievance is about the Executive Director, the person receiving the complaint will transmit their written notification about the complaint to the President of the Board of Directors, who shall follow all the above procedures to resolve the concern. The Board President shall bring these concerns to the executive committee for resolution.
7. In all instances where a complaint/grievance involves personnel (including a complaint about the Executive Director) the person(s) about whom the complaint has been made will be notified and interviewed about the issue as part of the investigation and resolution.
8. When an external grievance has been received, no NAMI Maine staff person may discuss the grievance with the person who has complained, unless it is the Program Director responding to the initial complaint or the Executive Director.

Training Sessions

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to require attendance at and the successful completion of training and orientation by all individuals providing respite services. Additionally, the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program may require certification via the "Respite for ME" training modules and successful passing of the exam.

Procedure:

Initial Respite Training Provider Session

Prior to providing any respite services, all individuals must attend and successfully complete required NAMI Maine orientation and training.

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine to assure its workers have adequate training.

Procedure:

Supplemental Training Sessions

1. The Executive Director will have the discretion to develop, review, and require additional training sessions concerning various topics relevant to the provision of respite care services.
2. The Executive Director will notify respite providers regarding training requirements with enough notice that they can meet those requirements.
3. All respite providers are required to become certified in Youth Mental Health First Aid within 6 months of their hire date.

Compensation and Limits to Respite Services

POLICY: It is NAMI Maine's policy to maintain standard employment and other practices concerning its respite providers and to ensure accountability and regular satisfaction from families receiving care.

Procedure:

1. There are two rates of pay for respite providers – an hourly rate for Level I and an hourly rate for Level II. These rates are based on the requirements of the contract with the Department of Health and Human Services.
2. No respite provider will:
 - a. Bill for more than 29 hours per week (pay period Saturday to Friday)
 - b. Serve any more than 4 children from the same family at one time.
 - c. Serve children from multiple families at the same time.
3. Respite families will complete a satisfaction survey each quarter.

Time sheets (Respite Service Report) Reimbursable Expenses

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to require the submission of properly completed time sheets and other paperwork by all respite providers for the respite providers to receive timely payment. The NAMI Maine Family Respite Program operates on the state's fiscal year, starting on July 1st and ending on June 30th. Respite providers must deliver and document the provision of respite services within those months in accordance with the annual payroll schedule.

Any respite provider who intentionally submits a Respite Service Report (RSR, or time sheet) reflecting inaccurate times worked is committing fraud. Such inaccuracies will result in immediate termination. Any family that signs an RSR (time sheet) knowing it contains inaccurate information may also be removed from the respite program. Such decisions are at the sole discretion of the Executive Director and may not be appealed.

Procedure:

1. All respite providers must submit a completed NAMI Maine Respite Service Report (or online payment submission if applicable) to receive payment for services rendered. The submission of incomplete or improper forms may result in delayed payment(s) to providers. Forms may be returned to providers for correction and completion.
2. Families are responsible for providing applicable funds for any activities/events that they would like the respite provider to participate in with their child. NAMI Maine does not reimburse for any activities.
3. The Respite Service Report must be signed by both the caregiver and the respite provider after respite care has been provided, verifying the actual date, times and respite children receiving care on those occasions. Forms submitted without proper signatures will be returned to the respite providers unpaid.
4. Respite Service Report forms should be submitted within the pay period in which respite services are provided and payment will be processed bi-weekly in accordance with NAMI Maine's payroll.
5. Respite Service Reports must be submitted by noon on the Friday that ends a pay period. Any Respite Service Reports received after noon will not be paid until the next scheduled payroll date. (RSRs should be sent in within 72 hours of each service ending.)
6. Family caregivers cannot pay providers and then be reimbursed by NAMI Maine.
7. The introductory meeting between the family receiving services and the respite provider is considered billable time and should be submitted within the pay period in which it occurred. This is called a 'meet and greet'. This time is reported on a Respite Service Report.
8. In the event a respite provider submits a Respite Service Report for hours of respite services that were provided to a family in excess of the family's yearly allotment of hours, the provider will not be paid.

9. Respite providers are to be reimbursed only for hours of respite care that they provide. The NAMI Maine Family Respite Program does not reimburse providers or caregivers for any other expenses connected with the provision of respite services, including but not limited to long-distance telephone calls or activities that charge a fee (e.g. movies, museums, restaurants). If a family requests these activities as part of respite care, they are responsible for providing the respite provider with the funds needed. This includes reasonable travel costs at the approved State rate.
10. Respite providers may receive additional compensation of \$1.00 per hour per approved respite child when a family has more than one eligible child, up to a total of three additional children.
11. Respite providers are reimbursed for travel from their home to point of service and back again (once per episode) at the current State of Maine rate. The maximum amount to be reimbursed is for 130 miles per episode and does not include mileage for transporting children in the vehicle.

Billing System Control Decision to Deny Payment of Respite Service Report

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to ensure that appropriate checks and balances are maintained over the receipt and expenditure of respite program funds. All procedures set forth in this section of the manual are designed to ensure that the organization's financial transactions are accurately carried out and to operate in conjunction with those procedures set forth in NAMI Maine's Policy and Procedure Manual in the section entitled "Accounting Control". It is also the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to reserve the right to deny payment of vouchers for respite services under certain circumstances.

Procedure:

1. The Executive Director or their designee shall review all Respite Service Reports submitted to NAMI Maine for completeness and compliance with all relevant policies and procedures. The hours submitted by each respite provider will be entered into the payroll database which tracks the total hours submitted during the current fiscal year.
2. The Executive Director or their designee will approve or deny payment in accordance with the Family Respite Program's Policies and budgetary constraints, and sign and mark the payment voucher form accordingly.
3. In the event of a problem with a voucher submitted for respite services, the Executive Director or their designee will contact the respite provider involved and attempt to resolve the problem.
4. The decision to approve or deny payment of a Respite Service Report submitted for respite services or expenses is at the discretion of the Executive Director or their designee. Payment decisions may be based on, but are not limited to, (a) completeness of the Respite Service Report that was submitted (b) budgetary constraints (c) whether the submitted Respite

Service Report complies with all relevant policies and procedures governing NAMI Maine and its Family Respite Program and (d) the existence of fraud.

5. If a Respite Service Report is denied payment, NAMI Maine will notify the respite provider involved stating the reason for the denial and advising the respite provider of their right to appeal. This notification will be given within ten business days of the decision to deny payment.
6. The appeal process for a denial of payment is the same as the one that is followed after a decision to deny respite services.

Paid Time Off for Respite Providers

POLICY: It is the policy of NAMI Maine to offer Paid Time Off (PTO) to its respite providers.

Procedure:

Maine Earned Paid Leave

Temporary and per diem employees are eligible to earn Maine paid leave benefits. Current NAMI Maine-provided benefits for PTO will be utilized to satisfy this requirement to provide Maine paid leave where employees are eligible for those benefits. Employees not eligible for other NAMI Maine-provided paid time benefits will be provided with Maine earned paid leave under this policy.

Accrual

Upon commencement of employment, employees will accrue one hour of paid leave for every 40 hours worked up to 40 hours per calendar year (or other year as defined by organization).

In determining accrual, Fair Labor Standards Act exempt employees will be presumed to work 40 hours unless there is a record of time worked.

Benefits Waiting Period

Employees are eligible to utilize accrued paid leave benefits after 90 days of employment.

Reasons for Use of Earned Paid Leave

Employees can utilize earned paid leave for any reason such as an emergency, illness, sudden necessity, planned vacation, etc.

Notice of Need for Leave

Employees should provide up to four weeks' advance notice for any planned use of earned paid leave. When the leave reason is based on emergency, illness, or sudden necessity, employees should provide notice of the need for leave as soon as practicable.

Use of Leave

Maine earned paid leave may be utilized in one-hour increments.

Carryover

Employees can carry over up to 40 hours of paid leave from one calendar year (or other year as defined by organization) to the next. No more than 40 hours of earned paid leave may be accrued or used under this policy during any one-year period. As an example, if an employee rolls over 8 hours of unused leave from the previous year, the employee will earn only 32 hours of earned leave in the present year, regardless of how much leave the employee uses in the current year and when it is used.

Use of Other NAMI Maine Provided Benefits to Meet Maine Earned Paid Leave Requirements

Current NAMI Maine provided benefits for PTO will be utilized to satisfy this requirement to provide Maine paid leave where employees are eligible for those benefits. Employees will be able to utilize up to 40 hours of paid leave provided under other NAMI Maine policies for the leave reasons noted in this Maine Earned Paid Leave Policy and all caps, carryover and other requirements will apply for up to 40 hours of paid time benefits provided under other policies.

Where other NAMI Maine paid time off policies do not provide employees the opportunity to earn the amount of paid leave benefits required under Maine law, Maine earned paid leave will be provided to supplement those benefits up to the maximums noted in this policy.

Employees not eligible for other NAMI Maine provided paid time benefits will be provided with earned paid leave under this policy.

Termination

Upon termination of employment, Maine earned paid leave will be paid out upon termination of employment.

Where employees are not eligible for payout of Maine earned paid leave, the balance will be restored to the employee if they return to work within a year of the termination date.

Employees who have utilized more Maine earned paid leave than they have earned will have the amount not earned deducted from their final paycheck.

Supervision of Respite Providers

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to supervise respite providers, monitor and limit the number of hours of care they provide, and assess the quality of the service they provide.

Procedure:

All providers are required to participate in monthly supervision. This shall include a one hour-long call for group supervision per quarter. Additionally, providers are required to participate in at least 6 one-on-one and two face-to-face supervisions annually.

Respite Providers Acting as Respite Providers for Their Families, Relatives or Individuals Known to Them

Policy: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program that families should have discretion to choose their respite provider and may be permitted to select family members or individuals they know and/or who know their child and are familiar with or known to the family to provide respite care. However, under no circumstances can a family caregiver, family, or individual receive respite services and, at the same time, serve as a respite provider. A family's respite provider and the respite family may not live in the same household.

Procedure:

1. All respite providers will be advised of this policy during their orientation or be considered to have constructive notice by virtue of their having received a copy of this policy and procedure manual.

2. All family caregivers will receive notice of this policy at the time they are approved for respite services, as part of the information materials distributed to families participating in the program.
3. Respite providers or family caregivers found to be in violation of this policy may be terminated from the program.

Family Caregiver, Client, and Respite Provider Surveys

POLICY: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program to gather information concerning the needs and opinions of those persons who either receive or provide the program's respite services.

Procedure:

1. Information concerning the needs and opinions of respite families will be gathered from the DHHS questionnaire; the completed survey will be submitted to NAMI Maine at least once each quarter. Surveys are sent to families via email. Respite providers may need to bring a paper copy of the survey to the family if they do not have computer access.
2. Families may complete the survey electronically or request a paper copy be mailed to them, or they can contact the respite program and ask for assistance in completing the survey.
3. Families who do not complete these surveys will be given a two-month period of time to comply, after which the continuation of respite services will be reviewed. Based upon that review, services may be terminated.

Service Termination

Policy: It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program that the relationship between a respite provider and the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program may be terminated by either the provider or NAMI Maine at any time for any reason.

Procedure:

1. The party terminating the relationship shall inform the other in writing of the decision to terminate the relationship within a reasonable time, not to exceed ten business days from the date of the decision. The initial notification may, however, be verbal.
2. Following the termination of the relationship, a provider will be paid for any outstanding hours of respite care unless a legitimate reason exists to deny payment.
3. Should financial or reorganizational reasons result in the termination of the relationship by NAMI Maine, every effort will be made to provide providers with a one-month advance notice.

Adoption of Policies

POLICY: NAMI Maine and the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program operate under certain policies and procedures that assure that all families, respite providers and NAMI Maine staff understand and follow the same rules. It is the policy of the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program for the Director to draft policies and to implement them. All policies must be approved by the Executive Director and the NAMI Maine Board of Directors.

Procedure:

1. NAMI Maine reserves the right to modify policies and procedures at any time and without advance notice.
2. As the need arises, the Executive Director shall draft policy and procedures for implementation. The policies shall be submitted to the Board at the next scheduled meeting for a vote.
3. In the interim between meetings, the draft policies will be in place, pending approval by the Board.
4. All Family Respite Program policies and procedures may be reviewed by any board member for comment at any time.
5. The NAMI Maine Family Respite Program considers themselves free to act according to the best business judgment of its management staff and Board of Directors, and to change the policies, principles and procedure described here, at any time, with or without notice to either the families or individuals receiving respite services or to the respite providers.

NAMI Maine's Reservation of Rights

POLICY: NAMI Maine and the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program reserves the right to deny or revoke certification to individuals whose performance and personal behavior is inconsistent with those of the organization.

NAMI Maine reserves the right to deny or terminate respite provider certification to anyone whose personal behavior, relationships or actions are determined by NAMI Maine to create a potential risk to families and children who are part of the Family Respite Program.

NAMI Maine and the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program reserves the right to refuse or to enter or continue all relations with a respite provider who (1) the Department of Health & Human Services has substantiated allegations of abuse or neglect against, (2) has been convicted of any crime, or (3) has been determined by NAMI Maine to have engaged in fraudulent billing for respite services.

Formal allegations being processed for the above will cause to end all relations pending resolution of the allegations. In cases resulting in convictions or substantiated allegations, all relations will end.

Employment may be revoked by the NAMI Maine Family Respite Program at any time, for any reason. Notification will be provided to the provider and the family as soon as a decision to revoke the certification has been made.