



Navy Exceptional Family Member (EFM) Respite Care Frequently Asked Questions for Families January 2023



PROGRAM

1. What is Navy EFM Respite Care?

ANSWER: Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC), Child & Youth Programs (CYP) contracts with Child Care Aware® of America (CCAoA) to administer the Navy Child & Youth Programs Exceptional Family Member (EFM) Respite Care Program. This program is available as a benefit to Navy families who have a child enrolled in the Navy Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) and meet the prescribed eligibility criteria. EFM Respite Care provides parents the opportunity to rest and rejuvenate with peace of mind, knowing their EFM child will be well cared for.

2. Where is the program available?

ANSWER: Navy EFM Respite Care is available throughout the United States.

3. Is enrollment in Navy EFM Respite Care automatic once a Sailor is enrolled the Navy EFMP?

ANSWER: No, EFM Respite Care is a stand-alone benefit program. Eligibility must be verified with Child Care Aware® of America by the family. Participation in this program is voluntary. In addition, **there may be a waiting list for respite care.** Navy families should contact Child Care Aware® of America's toll free number, **800-424-4426** or go to www.childcareaware.org for more information.

4. What do families receive through Navy EFM Respite Care?

ANSWER: Eligible families receive 40 hours of respite care per month per family. Respite care is provided by well-trained and background screened providers and is monitored by the local partner agencies. Families can use respite care services by approved providers in the family's home, or a licensed and accredited family child care home or an off-base child care center.

5. What if a family has two or more EFM children, how many hours of care would they receive? Do all children receive care at the same time?

ANSWER: Families are eligible for 40 hours per month per family: the household may not exceed 40 hours of care per month. Families who have more than one EFM child may split their hours so that they can spend quality time with each child, or as necessary to take a child to medical appointments. However, each time a family schedules care, no matter how many children are present, the hours are deducted from the 40 hour family total. As a general rule, care for all children should be simultaneous. The intent of respite care is to give the parent(s) a break.

6. What if my family is offered enrollment from the waiting list, is care for my non-EFM children included?

ANSWER: EFM Respite Care covers payments for EFM category 4 or 5 children only. However, families may arrange private pay with their respite care provider so that the siblings may remain in care. Care for children not eligible for EFM Respite Care is between the family and their selected provider.

FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

1. Who is eligible for Navy EFM Respite Care?

ANSWER: Active duty Sailors, or Reservists on active duty orders, who are current in their enrollment in Navy EFMP with a child (birth through 18 years) assigned category 4 or 5 are eligible for EFM Respite Care. **The child must reside with the Service Member.** The exception is a family who is geographically separated for reasons such as a short term course, remote tours, or for stability of the child's medical/educational needs. When a Sailor divorces/separates and is no longer the primary guardian, the Sailor is no longer eligible for respite care, nor is the parent with whom the child is residing.

Reservists must submit a copy of their orders to verify their status as active duty serving on active orders for at least 180 days. When activated, the families will receive priority enrollment on the waiting list. Families will remain eligible only while on active duty status. It is important for Reservists to plan ahead of orders to begin the enrollment process.

2. Is a Service Member of another branch (Army, Air Force or Marine Corps) stationed at a Navy base eligible?

ANSWER: No, only Sailors and their families are eligible. If a Sailor is stationed at another Services' base or post, they are still eligible for Navy EFM Respite Care.

3. What happens if the EFM child is placed in a Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) for an undetermined period of time? Does the family get removed from the waiting list or lose their respite care if they are enrolled?

ANSWER: If the family is on the waiting list, they are not removed but the "Need for Care" date will reflect the expected return date of the child. The family maintains their original call date and is placed on the Projected Need list. The family must contact CCAoA once they know when their child will return home.

If the family is enrolled and the EFM child is expected to return within 90 days, the family can remain enrolled but inactive. If the family has another eligible EFM also in the home, only the child who is in the RTF is inactive until they return home.

If the EFM child is expected to be in the RTF over 90 days, the family is dis-enrolled. However, the family can be placed on the waiting list with a projected need for care date for priority enrollment once the child returns home. This means the family would get the next available space. They are not automatically re-enrolled.

4. What if a Sailor is a single parent and deploys? Can they be enrolled? Does the guardian receive respite care?

ANSWER: Yes, a single Sailor can be enrolled and the child's guardian can receive respite care during deployment if the custodial parent (the Sailor) leaves the children with his/her ex-spouse or other legal guardian. Please note the Sailor must be the custodial parent, with primary custody. Proper guardianship paperwork must be submitted for any guardian other than the child's legal parent.

5. Can a Sailor eligible for Navy EFM Respite Care also use another respite care program (e.g., Tricare ECHO)?

ANSWER: Yes. If the family is otherwise eligible, a Sailor receiving other respite care services does not disqualify them from receiving EFM Respite Care.

EFMP ENROLLMENT VERIFICATION

1. How is a family's enrollment in the Navy Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) verified?

ANSWER: The Sailor has access to the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) through which the EFMP enrollment information is stored. There are three options to submit this verification: 1) the Service Member can download the PDF auto-generated EFMP Enrollment Letter from NFAAS; 2) the Service Member can take a screenshot of the EFMP page on a computer or through the mobile app that must include: the Sailor's name, child's name, category, and last EFMP update; or 3) request assistance from their EFMP Liaison who can also download the EFMP Enrollment.

CCAOA does not have access to NFAAS; therefore, it is the family's responsibility to provide documentation of their continued eligibility when requested.

2. What if a NEW family inquiring about EFM Respite Care does not have a current EFMP update?

ANSWER: Families self-certify their eligibility to be placed on the EFM Respite Care waiting list. A family can be placed on the waiting list with an expired EFMP enrollment; however, they CANNOT be enrolled in EFM Respite Care with an expired EFMP enrollment. It is the family's responsibility to ensure their child's status remains current.

3. What happens if a family on the waiting list is offered enrollment before the EFMP enrollment update is processed? Can they be enrolled?

ANSWER: If the family is eligible for enrollment before the EFMP status is updated, the family cannot be enrolled in EFM Respite Care. If the family is working on their EFMP update, they can defer their offer so they can complete the EFMP update. The family is moved to the Projected Need list with their original application date and their "Need for Care" date is adjusted. If the family does not complete the EFMP update within the prescribed timeframe or provide confirmation of extenuating circumstances, they are removed from the waiting list.

4. What if a NEW family's EFMP category is below a category 4 or 5, or a temporary category 6?

ANSWER: An eligibility criterion for Navy EFM Respite Care is an assigned category of 4 or 5. Navy families with children assigned a category 1-3 are not eligible. Children who are assigned a category 6 could be temporarily placed on the waiting list; however, services cannot be offered until a permanent category 4 or 5 is assigned unless an exception is made by HQ Navy CYP.

5. How do families know when their EFM updates are due?

ANSWER: When a Sailor enrolls a family member in EFMP, they receive confirmation of the category assigned as well as guidance on the EFMP Enrollment Letter that updates are required every three years from the date of enrollment. Sailors have access to NFAAS where EFMP enrollment information is maintained, and the enrollment letter is available to download. The next enrollment due date is listed on the bottom of the child's EFMP Enrollment Letter. The EFMP enrollment process can be tracked through this system allowing the family to monitor their child(ren)'s EFM enrollment. In addition, the local EFMP Liaison is listed for the family's convenience. NFAAS provides incremental email reminders to the Service Member regarding EFMP enrollments that are coming due starting at six (6) months in advance of the due date. EFMP updates are completed through the Navy.

When a family is enrolled in EFM Respite Care, they receive reminder notices from the partner agency or CCAoA starting at six (6) months prior to their update, which include a notification that services will be disrupted if the update is not completed and verified by CCAoA prior to their expiration.

6. How often is a family's EFMP enrollment verified by CCAoA?

ANSWER: Families must submit an EFMP enrollment letter (per eligible EFM child) prior to enrollment in EFM Respite Care, when an EFMP enrollment for their child is completed, and at least annually upon recertification to continue receiving respite care services.

Families receive a "Certificate of Approval" for no longer than a period of one year. Before a family's approval is extended for an additional year of service, the eligibility is reconfirmed. Once the EFMP status is verified, the family is issued a new "Certificate of Approval".

7. What is the process for families enrolled in EFM Respite Care when CCAoA verifies EFMP updates?

ANSWER: Families receive email reminders regarding their expiring EFMP status. Once the EFMP enrollment is updated, it is the family's responsibility to submit the EFMP Enrollment Letter to confirm they are still eligible. If a family submitted their EFMP paperwork and it is still in process, the family is made temporarily inactive NTE 60 days pending CCAoA's confirmation of their new update.

If a family is temporarily inactive during their NTE 60 day period and they contact CCAoA because their update was processed, respite care cannot be reactivated without confirmation that the update was processed, and the category did not change to below a category 4. If there is a delay in submitting the EFMP Enrollment Letter, i.e., due to holidays, weekends, etc., as long as the child's category remains a 4 or 5, the family can resume care and CCAoA will update their information once the EFMP Enrollment Letter is received. However, the family is responsible to pay for any respite care the family uses while their EFMP status is expired.

8. What happens if a family currently enrolled in Navy EFM Respite Care has a child whose EFMP status expires? Can they continue using respite care?

ANSWER: No, once a child's EFMP status expires, they are no longer eligible until such time as their category/eligibility is reconfirmed by CCAoA. Respite care services for that child are made temporarily inactive NTE 60 days. The child's eligibility must be confirmed by the end of the 60 day period, or the family is made permanently inactive. Prior to dis-enrollment, CCAoA will evaluate any extenuating

circumstances provided by the family and/or other professionals that may prevent the family from updating, e.g., extended hospitalization of child.

If the family has another eligible EFM child in the program whose EFMP status is still current, the family can continue to receive services for the child(ren) whose EFMP status is current.

9. What if a family does not know who to contact to start their EFMP enrollment update?

ANSWER: Families can reach out to their local EFMP Liaison (who is also listed on the EFMP tab in the Service Member's NFAAS account). The EFMP Liaison assists families with information on the process and provide information on who the EFMP Coordinator is who the family works with to submit their EFMP enrollment packet.

Additional information about locating your EFMP Liaison is available at https://www.cnic.navy.mil/ffr/family_readiness/fleet_and_family_support_program/work-and-family-life/exceptional_family_member/efmp_liaisons_and_mtf_coordinators.html.

PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

1. Where can a family receive respite care?

ANSWER: Families can use their respite care hours in one of the following ways:

- 1) In their own home with a trained, background-screen provider,
- 2) In licensed and NAFCC accredited (or equivalent) or CDA-credentialed Family Child Care Home,
- 3) In a licensed and nationally accredited Child Care Center, or
- 4) In a special center that provides care to children with special needs.

2. How can a family get to know the provider before they receive in-home care?

ANSWER: Participating families have the opportunity to meet each prospective provider in their home (or at a neutral agreed upon location) before care occurs. The provider meets the parents and the child so that parents can assess whether their child seems comfortable with the provider. The provider goes over the individual likes and dislikes of the children who are receiving respite care and the best ways the parents find to interact with their children. If parents are uncomfortable with any aspect of the meeting with the provider, they may request other provider referrals. This request can come at any time – before, during or after respite care.

Once respite care begins with selected providers, parents are not required to leave the home. They may, and are encouraged to, remain at home for initial appointments to continue to observe the interactions and continue to show providers any specific care needs or strategies for their child(ren).

3. Who are the providers that come into a Sailor's home to provide respite care?

ANSWER: In-home providers are the preferred source of respite care for most families because children are often most comfortable in their own home. In-home providers are recruited by local agencies working with Child Care Aware® of America. In-home providers are also available during evening and weekend hours when centers and licensed homes are not typically operating.

In-home providers must complete the following pre-service requirements prior to being referred to families:

- 1) CPR Certification
- 2) First Aid Certification
- 3) Child & Domestic Abuse & Identification, Prevention & Reporting Training
- 4) Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Training
- 5) Medication Dispensation Training
- 6) State Criminal Repository History Check
- 7) Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprint Check
- 8) Child Abuse & Neglect Registry Check
- 9) National Sex Offender Registries Check

In addition, pre-service training must be updated annually or maintain current certification. Providers receive annual in-service training in a variety of special needs topics including working with children with Autism, handling challenging behavior, etc. Providers are recruited with varying levels of education and experience to benefit each family's need.

4. What if a family wants a preferred provider i.e., someone they already know or a relative with whom their child is familiar? Can this person be their provider?

ANSWER: Yes. A family may use a friend or a relative for respite care. This “preferred provider” may apply to be a provider with the partner agency. This is a perfect scenario because the provider, child and parent already know each other, and parents feel secure with this provider. All providers, even those pre-selected by or related to the family, must complete all pre-service training and background check requirements (listed above). A preferred provider cannot live with the family or be financially dependent on the family.

5. How long do providers have to submit an attendance sheet for payment for services rendered to a family?

ANSWER: Providers must submit their attendance sheet for care rendered within 180 days (six months) after the month of services they are requesting to receive payment. A family must verify, sign and date the attendance sheet for each provider they use before payment can be rendered.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. How do a provider and family know when they can start care?

ANSWER: When a family selects an “approved” provider (one who has completed all required pre-service criteria), the agency confirms and completes the selected provider’s information section on the family application. This requires the “start date” for care which is when care can begin. The update to the application is submitted to Child Care Aware® of America and is processed within 5-7 business days. Each family and provider receive a “Certificate of Approval” and attendance sheet per child via email once the family has made their provider selection.

“Certificates of Approval” are issued for periods no longer than one year, but the period can be shorter. It is important to remind families to review the certificate information and dates. Annual recertification for each family is in the month they were entered in our system. EFMP updates that are due within the certificate year would affect the approval dates as well.

For example,

- 1) A family applies January 6, 2020 (application entered in our system)
- 2) The family selects a provider on February 3, 2020
- 3) Their child’s EFMP paperwork is due by December 15, 2020 of the same year
- 4) The certificate start date would be February 3, 2020 (when the provider was selected), but the end date would be December 15, 2020. As long as the EFMP update has been completed and verified by Child Care Aware® of America before that date, the certificate schedule would be extended but only through January of the following year which is their recertification month.
- 5) Child Care Aware® of America will then reach out to the family at least 60 days prior to their recertification date (November 6, 2020) to provide instruction on how to recertify their family for another year of service. The email would detail what documents need to be submitted to CCAoA via email or fax: 1) updated EFMP Letter from NFAAS dated the same date as the recertification email from CCAoA or later; 2) most recent LES (within 30 days), financial information may be redacted; 3) copy of Annual Recertification Statement signed by the Service Member and each line initialed (attached); spouse signature accepted when Service Member is deployed. The notification will reiterate the timeframe to complete this process, as well as consequences for not taking necessary actions. If all documents are received and complete within the 60 days prior to recertification, the new certificate dates would be January 6, 2021 – January 5, 2022.

If a family does not complete the process before their recertification date, then the family is made inactive, cannot use care, and is responsible for payment to their provider for any care used after their certificate expired.

2. How do providers receive payment for respite care services provided to a family?

ANSWER: The provider and family receive an Attendance Sheet and Hours Tracking form with the *Certificate of Approval* packet. When care is provided to a family, the provider can sign in/out each day on the hours tracking form. At the end of the month, the provider completes and signs an attendance sheet for the family. The family reviews the hours for the provider based on their own tracking schedule or using the hours tracking log to confirm the days and hours they received respite care. The family will sign and date the attendance sheet and give it back to the provider who must submit the attendance sheets no later than 180 days (six months) from the end of the month care was provided. Neither the provider nor the family should “pre” sign an attendance sheet before care has been received. An attendance sheet can be submitted once the family has completed their hours.

As part of the quality assurance process for payment made on behalf of EFM Respite Care, families are randomly contacted to reconfirm the information on attendance sheets. Any attendance sheet submitted past a 90-day period will automatically be confirmed and verified with the family before a payment can be rendered.

It is important for families to review, sign and return attendance sheets for their provider in a timely manner as providers CANNOT be paid until the family signs the attendance sheet.

3. How long do providers have to submit the attendance sheet after the provision of respite care?

ANSWER: Providers must submit their attendance sheet for care rendered within 180 days (six months) after the month of service they are claiming to receive payment. Families are required to sign and approve the attendance sheet all care received before payment is rendered.

4. How often are site visits completed for EFM Respite Care?

ANSWER: Partner agencies are required to conduct quarterly site visits during respite care. If a provider works with multiple families, each family must receive a site visit at least once a year. During one quarter, the partner agency must conduct a mid-year discussion with both the family and provider.

5. What happens to a family's respite care service if the Sailor dies while on active duty?

ANSWER: If a Sailor currently enrolled in EFM Respite Care dies while on active duty, the Navy approves a minimum of a **1 year** transition during which time the family can continue to receive respite care. Any exception or extension to this timeline can be approved by request to the Navy Child & Youth Programs.

6. What if a Service Member retires? Can the family still receive care through the end of the certificate date?

ANSWER: Navy EFM Respite Care is for Active Duty Sailors; however, the family is eligible NTE a 60 day transition period once the Sailor retires. Navy EFM Respite Care is a stand-alone program through HQ Navy Child and Youth Programs (CYP) and is not available after retirement, as other services families might receive as retirees, e.g., Tricare. If the EFMP enrollment is due to expire during this transition period, the EFMP expiration date will be extended in the CCAoA system to align with the end of the 60 day transition period after the Sailor's retirement date. Respite Care services must occur at the duty station where the Service Member retired; respite care will not be re-established in another location after retirement.

7. What happens if a family receives PCS orders while enrolled in respite care?

ANSWER: As with other services offered by Child & Youth Programs, the family must re-enroll in the new location which includes being placed on a waiting list when applicable. If a family receives PCS orders, respite care services in their current location ends once the family leaves the area. However, once a family knows they are relocating, they can contact CCAoA to get on the waiting list for their next duty location.

8. What happens if a family exceeds their 40 hours per month?

ANSWER: Families are responsible for paying their provider any hours used over the 40 authorized by EFM Respite Care. Child Care Aware® of America emails the family informing them that CCAoA is unable to pay for hours used that exceed 40 per month. If the provider is not compensated within the timeframe specified, the family's respite care services are temporarily suspended for thirty (30) days. If at the end of the 30 day suspension the provider has not been compensated, notification is forwarded to Navy CYP for review and guidance regarding the family's continued enrollment in EFM Respite Care.