



News Release

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CAREGIVERS MAY APPLY FOR TEMPORARY VOUCHER PROGRAM FOR RESPITE

Caregivers can apply for up to \$400 reimbursement

(RICHMOND, Va.) — Virginia families who care for a loved one with disabilities or chronic conditions can apply for up to \$400 reimbursement for respite care under a limited voucher program from the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services.

Caregivers who apply to the Lifespan Respite Voucher Program and are approved may qualify for reimbursements up to \$400 to cover costs related to respite care through the program. To qualify for consideration, the caregiver must provide full-time care to an individual of any age and/or disability who lives with the caregiver in Virginia. In addition, the caregiver cannot have benefited previously from the program.

Respite is short-term, temporary relief for those who care for family members, which can help reduce the strain on caregivers so they can continue to provide for their loved ones. Respite for caregivers can range from a few hours to days or weeks. It can be planned or urgent and services for those in need of care at any age may be provided in the home, adult day care centers or residential care facilities.

“One in five adult Virginians is a caregiver and more than one in six spend 40 hours or more a week providing that care,” said DARS Commissioner Kathryn A. Hayfield. “Respite can help provide essential support so you can continue to care for your loved one as well as for yourself and others in your family. I strongly encourage family caregivers to take advantage of this opportunity.”

The Administration for Community Living awarded DARS \$88,333 for the program each year for three years, for which the state pledged \$30,501 for each year of the grant. Vouchers are for families who provide unpaid care to individuals of any age, with an emphasis on those with a diagnosis of dementia, as well as helping grandparents or relative caregivers providing care to a child under age 18 or an individual between the ages of 19 to 59 who has a severe disability. The first year of the program closes Aug. 31, 2019, or when the funding runs out.

Since 2012, when DARS received similar grants, the Commonwealth has provided vouchers to 1,138 families for such respite services as:

- An in-home program, where services are provided in the family's home or a care provider's home
- A center-based program, where family caregivers bring the care recipient (e.g., child, adult, or an older individual) to a facility to receive respite care
- A child or adult care center, family day care home or adult family home which provides temporary care in addition to regular child or adult care services
- Assisted living or nursing home respite programs

For more information on how to apply, visit DARS' Office for Aging Services website at www.vda.virginia.gov or contact the office at 800-552-3402.

The voucher program is part of the Commonwealth's efforts to support a statewide network of coordinated caregiver respite services. Visit the Virginia Family Caregiver Solution Center at vf.virginiannavigator.org for additional information on respite and related services available in the Commonwealth.

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The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services seeks to improve the employment, quality of life, security, and independence of older Virginians, Virginians with disabilities, and their families. For more information, visit www.vadars.org or follow DARS on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vadars or Twitter at @vadars.