




**STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES**

1115 Washington Street, SE • P.O. Box 40983 • Olympia WA 98504-0983

July 1, 2021

TO: Child Welfare Field Operations Staff

FROM: Kwesi Booker, Assistant Secretary of Child Welfare Field Operations 

SUBJECT: **UPDATED** Respite Guidance

DCYF is committed to supporting our out-of-home caregivers. Governor Jay Inslee ordered a full reopening of Washington State effective June 30, 2021. While risks related to COVID-19 remain, we recognize the value of respite to support our caregivers and are lifting restrictions regarding the use of respite. Our first goal as an agency is to ensure that all children and families are safe. In addition, we need to support and maintain health and safety guidelines. Please note that while restrictions on respite have been lifted, there continue to be limited placement and respite resources and a respite provider may not always be available.

Following is the current DCYF respite guidance:

- Respite will be allowed consistent with policy [4510. Respite for Licensed Foster Parents, Unlicensed Relative Caregivers and Other Suitable Persons](#).
- Caregivers are expected to comply with requirements for use of face coverings consistent with their vaccination status and that of the children in their care. More information about face coverings and requirements is available in the [Washington Ready](#) plan and on the [Washington State Coronavirus Response webpage](#).
- Within 24-hours prior to any respite occurring, caseworkers must ask the child's regular and respite caregivers about COVID exposure, illness, isolation or quarantine<sup>i</sup>.
  - The regular and respite caregivers, their families, and the child receiving respite do not need to be tested in preparation for the respite.
  - This guidance applies to families directly licensed by the Licensing Division and families licensed by child placing agencies as well as unlicensed formal kinship caregivers.
- Caseworkers should continue to work with caregivers to identify their support needs and provide services as available. Caregiver supports include FTDMs or other shared planning meetings needed for placement stabilization and identifying resources, referrals to mental health services or DCYF contracted resources, and information on the [CaRES program](#).

If you have caregiver support questions, please contact Michael Campbell at [michael.campbell@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:michael.campbell@dcyf.wa.gov) or 509-654-4940.

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<sup>i</sup> Please visit the CDC's website to learn more about **isolation and quarantine** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>