

Autism Community Connection

Autismcc Yahoo Group Responds!

Our group is comprised of parents, educators and professionals in the autism community. We welcome parents to ask questions so that together we may share our wealth of collected knowledge and insight.

www.autismcommunityconnection.com - <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/autismcc/>

Subject: Respite/72D

Teri forwarded this information about respite services and 72D. She is not the author of the information below:

Sorting out resources can be challenging, especially when they involve understanding state regulations. Here is what I worked on today:

I had a long talk with the coordinator of PACT, Inc. - the service coordination agency for DuPage county. One of my questions was why do different people have different understandings of the requirements for state funded respite care for children with autism. The second question regarded whether or not a family can have both respite services and 72D services. I finally got some clear answers.

There are two ways for families of children with autism to get respite services in Illinois. One is by applying through their local service agency. In DuPage, that's Ray Graham and Associates. There are no income or other requirements to get this respite care except a diagnosis of autism (or I would assume some other developmental delay.) This respite program provides between 120 and 180 hours of respite per family per year. The way the program is administered depends on the local agency. In DuPage, this is a voucher system. In other areas the agency pays the workers directly. Some programs provide workers and some require the family to find their own. This is the most common way that families of children with autism access respite services. Respite workers are paid between \$9 and \$11 per hour. Different agencies have different rules about how the hours can be used - whether it is a certain amount per week, month, or are flexible.

The second route is directly through DHS-ORS (Office of Rehabilitation Services). To qualify for this program, families must apply for Medicaid/KidCare and food stamps even if they know they are going to be turned down. The family does not need to be eligible for those programs - just need to have a letter from the state showing they applied and were denied. They also must submit financial records including income tax forms that show they do not have more than \$30K in assets, excluding home and car. DHS-ORS directly administers the program

and pays workers directly up to 240 hours per year per eligible child. The family is responsible for finding the respite worker though there are referral agencies that may be able to help (though don't cross your fingers.) Workers are paid \$7.50 an hour. Hours may be used at any time.

Note that the two respite programs above do NOT come out of the same pot of state funds.

That moves us on to 72D services. 72D services are meant to provide in-home support to families whose children would otherwise be at risk of institutional placement. If approved, the child receives 15 hours per week of support which means that a person (identified either by the family or the service agency, but paid as an employee by the service agency) comes in to the home to work on goals with the child. The goals are drawn up jointly between the service agency and the family and are reviewed quarterly during in-home visits. Application to the program is lengthy and time from beginning of the process to decision about approval can easily be 6 months or more. To apply for this program, families must go through their local service coordination agency (in DuPage, that's PACT, Inc.) 72D services come from the same pot of money that the first respite program above comes from. Therefore a family cannot receive both respite and 72D services at the same time from this pot of money. Supposedly the state regularly checks for this sort of double dipping. However, a family can receive both 72D services and DHS-ORS respite services at the same time, because these are different programs with different funding sources.

So what I took away from this conversation was that different people have different understandings about respite care for children with autism because there are two separate programs supplying it and because for one of those programs every area handles the administration differently. Additionally, families cannot receive both respite services and 72D services from the same program, but can receive both services if they are provided through separate programs.