



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:  
Department of Social & Health Services, Respite Funds**

**Question: Am I eligible to use respite funds to pay for this Outdoors for All program?**

**Answer:** Yes. However, some fees may not be able to be reimbursed. Outdoors for All has a contract with the Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS) that allows us to accept respite funds for our activities. It is important for you to check with your case manager prior to registering for a program or additional fee (like transportation) to find out if they will authorize payment for that program or fee, and if they would be able to cover the full cost. **For fees that your respite dollars do not cover (such as lift tickets and equipment rentals), Outdoors for All does have its own financial aid program which may be able to help cover those fees.** Participants interested in aid for fees not covered by respite funds should fill out a financial aid application. For additional information about the financial aid program email: [info@outdoorsforall.org](mailto:info@outdoorsforall.org)

If the Outdoors for All program's hourly rate is greater than \$17.58/hr, Outdoors for All will bill DSHS at the standard hourly rate and automatically supplement the remaining program fees using the organization's own financial aid funds. Financial aid funds used to supplement respite payments will count towards the maximum of \$650 that each participant can receive in financial aid from Outdoors for All during this program season. Participants using financial aid towards a fee that *is* covered by respite funds do not need to fill out a financial aid application.

Example:

- Learn to Bike is \$300 and 6 hours
- DSHS will pay \$105.48 (\$17.58/hr x 6 hours)
- Outdoors for All financial aid will pay \$194.52

**Question: Why do I have to pay the deposit? I can't get reimbursed for out of pocket fees.**

**Answer:** Outdoors for All's current policy is that all participants must pay a program deposit in order to reserve their spot. Participants who are paying out of pocket must pay their program balance 7 business days prior to the start of the activity. For participants using respite funds, case managers will authorize payment to Outdoors for All once an activity has been completed. Many of our programs are limited in the number of participants we can serve and fill up quickly. Deposits help discourage participants from registering for a program then cancelling without notice.

Once you have paid your deposit, ask your case manager to send an email confirming eligibility of funds for the programs you have registered for to: [accounts@outdoorsforall.org](mailto:accounts@outdoorsforall.org). When Outdoors for All receives the email from your case manager confirming eligibility of funds, we will refund any deposits you have paid. Outdoors for All will not refund deposits to participants unless the previously described email from their case manager is received.

Participants who have completed a successful program season with Outdoors for All, have used respite funds to pay for program fees, and have an account in good standing, may request a deposit exemption from the accounting department ([accounts@outdoorsforall.org](mailto:accounts@outdoorsforall.org)). Once approved, a deposit exemption is good for future programs-but cannot be used for any programs that the participant was already registered for.

**Question: Will you bill my case manager directly?**

**Answer:** Outdoors for All's is making changes to our policy and will begin billing case managers directly once a program is completed. It is the participant's responsibility to notify their case manager that they have

registered for a program and to request an email confirming eligibility for funds to be sent to [accounts@outdoorsforall.org](mailto:accounts@outdoorsforall.org). Outdoors for All will only bill case managers directly if the email from their case manager has been received. If an email confirming eligibility of funds is not received, participants will be responsible for paying program fees 7 business days before the start of the program.

There are some fees which are not covered by respite funds, such as lift tickets and equipment rentals. Participants are responsible for paying these fees out of pocket 7 business days before the start of the program.

**Question: What happens if I run out of respite funds? Who pays for the program?**

**Answer:** It is up to participants to track the amount of funding they have available, and changes to their funds. Case managers will confirm to Outdoors for All that funds are available, but they will not contact our agency to let us know that participants have used all their funding on different programs or have had a change in funding eligibility.

If respite funds are no longer available when Outdoors for All bills your case manager, the participant will be responsible for the outstanding program fees.

**Question: What if I can't, or don't want to, use my respite funds? Can I still receive financial aid?**

**Answer:** Yes. All participants who are paying out of pocket can apply for financial aid from Outdoors for All via our standard application process. Financial aid is available on a first come, first served basis. For additional information about the financial aid program, email [info@outdoorsforall.org](mailto:info@outdoorsforall.org).

**Question: How does Outdoors for All get paid?**

**Answer:** Your case manager will post a payment authorization for Outdoors for All on a website called ProviderOne. Outdoors for All staff log into the ProviderOne website to 'claim' payments for completed programs and then the Department of Social & Health Services will mail Outdoors for All a check for all payments that were claimed.

**Question: What information can Outdoors for All see on the ProviderOne website?**

**Answer:** The information that Outdoors for All can see about a participant is very limited. Our staff can only see funds that were authorized for a date range posted by your case manager. The website does not show the name of the program that funds are for, any information about the participant's balance of funds available, or any information about other providers that the participant may be receiving services from.

**Question: I used to be able to use my waiver funds to pay for program fees like equipment rentals, but now Outdoors for All is saying I can't. What changed?**

**Answer:** The Department of Social and Health Services phased out the waiver for recreation activities in May 2016. Now Outdoors for All is only allowed to accept federal respite funds for programs that meet specific standards. This may explain why you were previously able to use waiver funds to pay for a program fee but are no longer able to.

**Question: Are you going to change your policies anytime soon?**

**Answer:** Due to the 2015/2016 changes in the Department of Social & Health Services waiver system, Outdoors for All is seeking input from other organizations that accept respite funds about their practices and policies. Our goal is to have a process that allows Outdoors for All to meet the requirements of our provider contract while allowing participants to focus on enjoying outdoor recreation. If there are any additional changes to Outdoors for All's policies, we will post updates on our website and reach out to participants that have indicated they are using respite funding in the current program cycle.

