

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Increasing Respite Care Service Hours Funded Through Department of Children and Families

06/28/2024

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed legislation ([S2491/A3412](#) ([https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jsvc9l/fd1rrbm/r2srt9_!!J30X0ZrnC1o0tbA!PDUgSchwp90EHDYCaKJS7wwOyHdsKd-jSScc4lPZoM4KN9NS7TsGsAazDn5pVhEBQsXJiHPiU3U324TM-w2BD4PwJyU\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://t.e2ma.net/click/jsvc9l/fd1rrbm/r2srt9_!!J30X0ZrnC1o0tbA!PDUgSchwp90EHDYCaKJS7wwOyHdsKd-jSScc4lPZoM4KN9NS7TsGsAazDn5pVhEBQsXJiHPiU3U324TM-w2BD4PwJyU$))) that would increase from 60 to 90 the number of respite care service hours funded through the Division of the Children’s System of Care in the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. Under the bill, up to 90 hours of respite care services may be provided by either an agency-hired or self-hired respite worker over a 90-day period, with funding provided by the Department.

“As many know, even on the best days, being a parent is a full-time job; however, for those who have to step into the role of caregiver for their children, it is especially demanding, even for the strongest and most resilient among us,” **said Governor Murphy**. “By increasing the number of respite care service hours funded through the Department of Children and Families, we are supporting caregivers across the Garden State.”

“Respite care is an invaluable safety net for caregivers of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, affording them the opportunity to focus on other responsibilities, other children, or simply unplug and recharge, secure in the knowledge that their children are being properly cared for,” **said New Jersey Department of Children and Families Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer**. “Respite provides caregivers with a much-needed break, and reduces familial stress, caregiver fatigue and burnout. The Department of Children and Families is proud to extend these services for families in need, at no cost to them.”

Respite care workers provide temporary, short-term care for an eligible child on behalf of the caregiver in the case of an emergency or on an intermittent basis to relieve the daily stresses and demands of caring for a child with disabilities.

“Increasing the number of hours and dedicating funds for those that take care of our loved ones not only helps our families with much-needed assistance, but it will also attract highly qualified people to the profession. Additionally, this bill will help relieve the daily stresses and demands of caring for a child with a functional impairment to give everyone involved the peace of mind they deserve,” **said Senator Kristin Corrado**.

“This legislation will significantly improve the lives of families in the I/DD community, providing them increased access to quality respite care,” **said Assemblyman Chris Tully**. “Parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities depend on respite care services to take care of other family members, grocery shop, and see their own doctors – this bill helps them fulfill those responsibilities without sacrificing their children’s care”

“Families who care for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities not only need, but truly deserve, to have more time to manage other household and personal responsibilities, without worrying about their children’s safety,” **said Assemblywoman Lisa Swain**. “This bill, now law, will provide a substantial increase in quality of life for New Jerseyans who need it most.”

The Fiscal Year 2025 State Budget includes \$7.3 million to increase funding for respite care hours.

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