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Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Respite for ME Grants

Last Updated: September 18, 2023

1. Who is eligible for Respite for ME Grants?

To be eligible for a Respite for ME Grant, caregiver must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a) Adult family member or other informal caregiver 18 years of age or older providing care to individuals 60 years of age or older.
- b) Adult family member or other informal caregiver 18 years of age or older providing care to individuals of any age with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia.
- c) Relative, not including parent, 55 years of age or older providing care to children under 18 years of age.
- d) Relative, including parent, 55 years of age or older providing care to adults 18 to 59 years of age with disabilities. (Source Maine P.L. 2021, c. 483 § CC-1.2)

A caregiver must also be able to demonstrate that they were negatively impacted financially and/or suffered economic hardship directly or indirectly associated with COVID-19 Pandemic on or after January 21, 2020.

2. What does “negatively impacted financially and/or suffered economic hardship directly or indirectly” mean?

It means that the caregiver must be able to demonstrate that on or after January 21, 2020 they experienced one of, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Job loss
- b) Reduction in household income
 - i. Loss of hours or wages
- c) Incurring significant costs for healthcare, childcare, or dependent care
- d) Increase cost for grocery delivery
- e) Other financial hardship related to the pandemic
 - i. Loss of supplemental income (e.g., decreased retirement dividends or interest payments, etc.)

3. Can paid caregivers receive a Respite for ME Grant?

No, caregivers must be an informal and unpaid provider of in-home and community care to their care recipients in order to be eligible to receive a Respite for ME Grant.

4. Do I have to be a US citizen to be eligible for a Respite for ME Grant?

No, there are no restrictions based on immigration status.

5. Do caregivers need to live in Maine to receive a Respite for ME Grant?

Yes, the caregiver must reside in Maine and provide care to a care recipient who resides in Maine. In the case that the care recipient lives close to the Maine border, the Department may allow an exception. Please contact your local [area agency on aging](#) for more guidance.

6. Can I apply if my care recipient lives in Assisted Living, a Skilled Nursing Facility, or a Residential Care Facility?

No, the care recipient must live in their own home, with their caregiver, or an apartment. The care recipient can have others living with them but cannot live in a facility.

7. If I share caregiving responsibilities with another person in *my home*, can we both apply?

No, only one caregiver per household may apply for a Respite for ME Grant per year.

8. If I share caregiving responsibilities with another person who does not live with me, can we both apply?

Yes, because that Caregiver lives in another household.

9. If I am a caregiver to more than one person, can I apply for more than one Respite for ME Grant?

No, only one Respite for ME Grant per household is available per year.

10. If my care recipient is already receiving services through the State Respite Program, can I apply for a Respite for ME Grant?

No, caregivers who meet criteria for the Respite for ME Grant and whose care recipient meets criteria for the State Respite Program must choose to receive only one of the programs per year.

If your care recipient is on a wait list for the State Respite Program, you may apply for the Respite for ME Grant.

11. If my care recipient is receiving services from state funded or MaineCare programs, such as Section 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 61, 63, 68, 69 or 96 can I apply for a Respite for ME Grant?

No, if the care recipient has active services in place in the home through any state funded or MaineCare programs (Section 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29, 61, 63, 68, 69 or 96) the caregiver is ineligible for a Respite for ME Grant.

If your care recipient is on a wait list for these services, you may apply for the Respite for ME Grant.

12. If I as the caregiver and/or my care recipient have MaineCare for medical insurance, can I apply for the Respite for ME Grant?

Yes, you may apply. Having MaineCare as a medical insurance does not disqualify the caregiver or care recipient. Your local [area agency on aging](#) will work with you to determine eligibility.

13. How much is each Respite for ME Grant?

Each Respite for ME Grant is a total of \$5171.00.

14. Do I get \$5171.00 up front to spend?

No, the funds are reimbursed after you provide receipts for covered services.

15. How do I know what is a covered service?

Your local [area agency on aging](#) will work with you using the [TCARE®](#) platform to assess your needs and develop a tailored care plan to determine what covered services will best assist you and your care recipient.

16. What if I already know what I want to spend the money on? Do I have to complete the assessment and care plan?

Yes, to receive the grant, the caregiver must complete the TCARE® assessment and care plan. The TCARE® platform is designed to identify root causes of burnout and identify easy-to-follow action plans using an evidence-based and scientifically validated caregiving approach.

17. How long are the Respite for ME Grants available?

Respite for ME Grants are available from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024.

18. How do I apply or get more information for a Respite for ME Grant?

Contact your local area agency on aging's Family Caregiver program.

Aroostook AAA 207-764-3396
Eastern AAA 207-941-2865
SeniorsPlus 207-795-4010
Southern Maine AAA 207-396-6500
Spectrum Generations 207-622-9212

If you do not know what area agency on aging serves your area, call 1-877-353-3711 to be connected to your local area agency on aging or visit www.maine.gov/givecare.