

Grand Time Off Childcare Respite Program

A Program of Children & Families First Sponsored by Joining Generations

Answers to Commonly Asked Questions

1. **Who is offering the Grand Time Off respite program and why?**

Delaware Health & Social Services' Division of Services for Aging and Adults with Physical Disabilities (DSAAPD) is working with the grandparent and relative caregiver population through its Joining Generations program. Joining Generations recognizes the need grandparents and older relative caregivers have for respite childcare to give them a break from caregiving responsibilities and to assist them in meeting their own personal, health, and social needs. The Grand Time Off program links caregivers with respite care options.

2. **Who is eligible for this service?**

Eligible caregivers must be 50 years of age or older and raising other relative's children in their own homes, providing the majority of care for these children. Eligible children must be 17 years of age or younger.

3. **What does respite care mean? What is the Grand Time Off program?**

The Grand Time Off program, administered by Children & Families First, helps you find and pay for respite care. Respite care is childcare that you use when you have appointments or other commitments and need care for your eligible child, or just need a short break from your routine caregiver duties. For this program, respite care is short-term. *Grand Time Off is not intended to replace your ongoing care arrangement.*

4. **Why has Joining Generations decided to subsidize childcare through the Grand Time Off program?**

With funding from the Federal National Caregiver Support Program, Joining Generations is providing the subsidy to make respite care more affordable for caregivers. Caregiving duties can be demanding and exhausting, particularly for older adults. Your willingness to provide the majority of the care for a relative's child in your home makes you a valuable resource, both to the child and to society. Caregivers can do a better job with the children if they are able to attend to their own needs and commitments effectively.

The Grand Time Off program is designed to support caregivers as they continue in this valuable role. Joining Generations provides a specified amount of subsidy per child per year to help cover the costs of respite care services. Caregivers are expected to contribute to the cost of care for their children as they are able.

5. **Does the child have to be living with me?**

Yes, the child you are caring for must be living with you. In addition, you must be providing a majority of the care for an eligible child in order to use the Grand Time Off respite care program.

6. **What does Grand Time Off actually do to help me with this once-in-a-while childcare?**

The Grand Time Off Specialist will help you get enrolled in the GTO program, assist you in setting up a respite care plan that meets your needs, and give you contact information for care providers who do respite care. The Specialist will also process the payment to your care provider. The GTO specialist is also available to you by phone if you have questions or problems.

7. **Are there other care options I can use under the Grand Time Off program?**

You can turn to your own resources, such as friends, family members, and any childcare providers you are familiar with. The Grand Time Off program can also refer you to legally operating family childcare homes, childcare centers, or in-home care agencies that can provide respite childcare.

NOTE: If you use a friend or family member, GTO will pay a maximum of \$5/hour per child.

8. **What are the rules for care provided by a family member or friend?**

In order for a provider to receive a Joining Generations payment from the Grand Time Off program, the following conditions must be met by the provider:

1. must be over age 19;
2. must provide his or her Social Security number or tax identification number;
3. cannot be your spouse or partner;
4. cannot be the child's parent or stepparent; and
5. is not your regular caregiver, unless used for respite hours that are different from your regular schedule.

9. **What do I need to do to arrange my respite care?**

1. Complete the enrollment process by contacting Grand Time Off at **302-479-5101** in New Castle County or **800-537-5557** in Kent or Sussex Counties. You will receive written confirmation that you are enrolled.
2. Check with the GTO Specialist to confirm that you have enough subsidy in your account to cover the cost of the care you are planning to use.
3. Make arrangements directly with your care provider

10. **How is payment handled?**

Once the care is completed, you must:

1. pay the provider your cost-sharing portion of the cost of care when care takes place;
2. complete a Grand Time Off invoice and make sure both you and your provider sign it
3. mail or fax the invoice to Grand Time Off after the childcare is provided. **All invoices must be submitted within 30 days of the care arrangement.**

11. **What are the typical costs of an hour of respite care?**

The full cost of drop-in respite care ranges from approximately \$2 to \$10 an hour, depending on the type of care selected and the location of the care. An average hourly rate for drop-in respite care is approximately \$5. In-home agency care can range from \$17 to \$20 an hour for the full cost.

12. **Do I have to pay my portion at the time of care, or will I be billed for it?**

You will pay your portion of the full cost of the care directly to the provider on the day of service or according to arrangements made with the provider.

13. **What if I prefer, or my provider requests, that I pay the provider 100% of the cost of care in advance, or when the care takes place?**

That is your decision, but the subsidy payment **cannot** be sent to you, it must be sent directly to your provider. If your provider prefers having the full cost of care paid for at the time of care, maybe he or she could give you a credit for care another day, refund your money when the subsidy check from Grand Time Off arrives, or even sign the subsidy check over to you. Ultimately, that arrangement must be worked out between you and your respite care provider. Grand Time Off and Joining Generations are not responsible for arrangements of payments to your childcare provider outside of the regular arrangements.

14. **How long will it take for my respite care provider to be paid?**

Your provider's payment will be sent to the provider within two to four weeks of receipt of the invoice.

15. **If I care for more than one eligible child, do I get subsidy allocation for each of the children?**

Yes, you will be eligible for subsidy for each child because the subsidy is calculated per eligible child in your care.

16. **If I need two or more different caregivers for my eligible children, can I use the Grand Time Off program for them at the same time?**

Yes, you can use the Grand Time Off program to pay for two or more caregivers providing childcare for your eligible children.

17. **How will I know that I have used up my subsidy allocation?**

Grand Time Off staff track your use of the subsidy, based on the invoices you submit for payment. Contact them regularly (especially when planning to use care) to get up-to-date information on how much subsidy you have remaining in your account.

18. **Will my respite care provider(s) be taxed on the money they make through the program?**

If, during any calendar year, a provider receives payments totaling more than \$600 from the Grand Time Off program, he or she will receive a Form 1099 from Children & Families First for IRS tax reporting purposes. This is true even if the childcare provider is an eligible family member or friend.

19. **Can the Grand Time Off program be used for eligible children with disabilities?**

Yes. The Grand Time Off program is available to all eligible children of eligible caregivers.

20. **How can I be sure of getting the care I need should the occasion arise?**

The Grand Time Off program operates on a “best-effort,” first-come first-served basis. Although there are no absolute guarantees, there are certain steps you can take to improve your chance of getting the care you need. Enrolling in the Grand Time Off program and discussing a respite care plan with the Grand Time Off Specialists **before you need care** is the best way of increasing this likelihood.

When you enroll, make sure you fill out all forms completely and accurately. Once you know what respite care you need, call the Grand Time Off service right away. In addition, you’ll be more likely to find a childcare provider service from the program if you are willing to consider several options instead of restricting yourself to just one type of care or one location.

21. **How do I enroll?**

If you do not already have the necessary enrollment information and forms, call the Grand Time Off care program at (302) 479-5101 in New Castle or (800) 537-5557 outside New Castle County to have the information mailed to you. The enrollment information provides details about the service, including forms that you will need to fill out and return to the Grand Time Off program.

22. **Can I enroll at any time during the year?**

Yes, there is no specified enrollment period. However, all caregivers who think they might use Grand Time Off care any time throughout the year are encouraged to enroll **now**, since the funds available to Grand Time Off care are limited.

23. **Can I use the service if I don’t enroll?**

No.

24. **What do I do if I am unhappy with the care my child received?**

Your feedback is very important to the program. Children & Families First conducts an evaluation with each person who uses the service. You are also welcome to call the Grand Time Off program at any time at (800) 537-5557 with any concerns or complaints you may have.

25. **Who operates the Grand Time Off *program*?**

Children & Families First (CFF), headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware, is responsible for the development, operation, and administration of the Grand Time Off respite care program. CFF is a nonprofit social service organization that has been serving Delaware families for 125 years.