

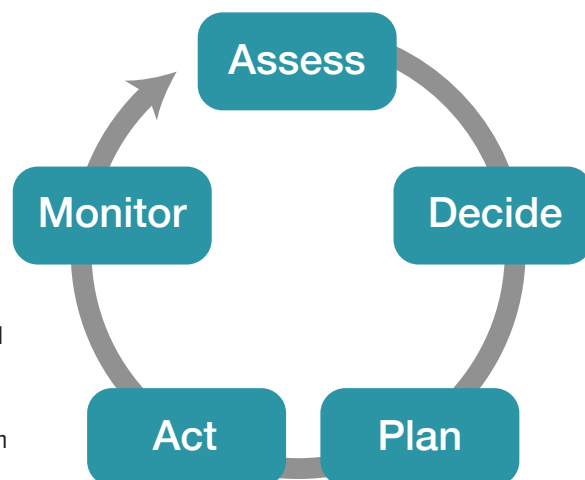
RESPIRE AGENCY DECISION GUIDE

Deciding when it's safe to resume respite care services during the COVID-19 pandemic

Developed by the ARCH Workgroup

The Decision-Making Process

The decision to resume respite services is a continuous process that involves thorough assessment, detailed planning, ongoing monitoring, and regular reassessment. Respite care agencies must carefully consider all potential risks, benefits, and barriers before making an informed decision. It is important to remember that information and guidance related to COVID-19 is evolving rapidly. Additionally, depending on where you are located, the risk for exposure may vary and change over time. As a result, it is important to continually monitor and regularly reassess the safety of providing and receiving respite care. You may need to resume services in a step-wise or phased approach and you should be prepared to stop providing respite care services as the situation changes. It is important that all individuals involved in providing and receiving respite care feel comfortable with the decision and are kept in close communication regarding any changes.



- YES NO UNKNOWN 1. Is there sufficient client interest in resuming respite services?
If not now, when are your clients interested in resuming respite care services? DATE:
- YES NO UNKNOWN 2. Will resuming respite care services be consistent with applicable state and local orders?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 3. Is the number of new cases of COVID-19 going up, down, or holding steady in your area?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 4. Have there been any recent outbreaks or surges in the number of cases of COVID-19?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 5. Have there been any high-risk events in the past two weeks, such as large gatherings in the community, that could result in an outbreak or surge in cases of COVID-19?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 6. Have you discussed and resolved any liability concerns with your insurance provider and/or legal team?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 7. Has everyone involved been fully vaccinated?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 8. Is it possible to follow the recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including: vaccination, screening for symptoms, social distancing, handwashing, PPE, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 9. Do you have a sustainable way to obtain the necessary PPE and cleaning and disinfecting supplies?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 10. Are you able to adjust your budget and/or staffing to meet enhanced safety recommendations?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 11. Do you have the capacity and the information to provide training and support to staff on safety precautions and in dealing with behavioral issues that may place someone at higher risk because of difficulty wearing a mask or social distancing?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 12. Do you have a system in place to ensure regular and timely communication with staff and clients?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 13. Does anyone involved have an underlying health condition or other risk factors that make them more likely to become seriously ill or hospitalized?
- YES NO UNKNOWN 14. Does anyone involved have other high-risk exposures (i.e., exposure from being or living with an essential worker, recent travel, etc.)
- 15. What are the possible risks and benefits of resuming services for everyone involved? Consider social, emotional, mental, social, financial, and spiritual needs.



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Decide

1. Who is impacted by the decision?
2. Who should be involved in the decision?
3. Who should be informed about the decision?
4. Can the decision wait? How long is the current situation sustainable?
5. Do the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks?
6. Are there any other barriers or concerns to consider?
7. Should respite services resume as normal or are there ways to adapt respite services to enhance safety?
8. What is the BEST decision at this time? Resume respite services Not resume, and continue to assess the situation

Plan

- 1. Ensure there are policies and procedures in place related to the recommended steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including: vaccination, screening for symptoms, social distancing, handwashing, PPE, and enhanced cleaning and disinfecting.
- 2. Ensure there are policies and procedures in place related to staff travel including limiting travel to hot-spots and measures to take once they return back to work.
- 3. Train and verify competency of all staff on health and safety procedures, including how to support people with developmental and behavioral disorders, dementia, and other high-risk individuals.
- 4. Plan how to adjust the time, frequency, environment, or type of activities to minimize risk.
- 5. Create an emergency plan if staff or clients get sick.
- 6. Identify and share resources and strategies for self-care and stress management with staff and clients.
- 7. Notify clients of policies and procedures and ensure understanding of expectations.

Act

- 1. After thoughtful assessment and detailed planning, ACT on the best decision at this time.

Monitor

- 1. Regularly monitor developments with local authorities.
- 2. Monitor staff absences and have flexible leave policies and practices.
- 3. Monitor stock and distribution of cleaning and disinfecting supplies and PPE.
- 4. Monitor daily and consult with local health authorities if there are cases in program or an increase in cases in the local area and adjust operations, as needed.
- 5. Keep track of all visitors and staff who enter the facility using a sign in/out log that records the day, time, name, and contact information.
- 6. Monitor staff travel to help avoid visiting hot-spots.
- 7. Continue to monitor the situation and reassess decision regularly.