



# Respite Care Professional Core Competencies

*The following Respite Care Professional Core Competencies are meant to serve as a baseline for entry-level respite care professionals. Additional training may be required depending on the unique needs of the care recipient and their family.*

## **Principles of Respite**

The respite care professional understands the importance of providing meaningful short breaks for family caregivers to promote the well-being of family caregivers, care recipients, and other family members.

## **Person and Family-Centered Care**

The respite care professional provides care that is focused on, and respectful of, family caregivers' and care recipients' preferences, needs, values, and goals for respite.

## **Cultural Competency**

The respite care professional understands and provides services and supports that are respectful of the cultural preferences, traditions, and language needs of family caregivers, care recipients, and other family members.

## **Communication and Relationship Building**

The respite care professional builds and maintains trusting relationships with family caregivers and care recipients through active listening and respectful verbal, non-verbal, and written communication that is easily understandable.

## **Health and Wellness**

The respite care professional supports the physical health, functional ability, spiritual, and social-emotional well-being of care recipients based on the preferences of family caregivers and care recipients and in accordance with the respite care professional's training and certification, as well as local laws and regulations.

## **Safety and Emergencies**

The respite care professional helps protect care recipients from illness, injury, abuse, neglect, or other harm; understands how to report incidents; and responds quickly and safely during emergency situations.

## **Planning Respite Activities**

The respite care professional works with family caregivers and care recipients to explore, define, plan, and engage in appropriate and meaningful respite activities for care recipients.

## **Ethics and Professionalism**

The respite care professional works in an ethical and professional manner by maintaining boundaries, ensuring confidentiality, and respecting the privacy, rights, and preferences of family caregivers, care recipients, and other family members.

## **Professional Development**

The respite care professional obtains appropriate training based on the unique needs of care recipients and seeks opportunities for ongoing education and training.

## **Selfcare**

The respite care professional recognizes the importance of selfcare and actively engages in practices that promote their own safety, health, and well-being.



## Acknowledgements

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Proposed Respite Care Professional Core Competencies were developed by an expert work group that included representatives of state and national organizations and government agencies that represent children, adults, and the aging and have experience in workforce development. Many members of the expert work group also have personal experience as caregivers.

The proposed competencies were informed by an extensive review of existing core competencies and

evidence-based frameworks developed by national and state organizations, governmental entities, and universities in training curricula for direct support professionals and respite providers.

More than 200 people completed a public comment survey that was developed to allow members of the general public to provide their feedback on the proposed Respite Care Professionals Core Competencies.

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