



610 Airpark Rd, Napa, CA 94558
Phone: (707) 256-1100 • TTY (707) 252-0213

www.nbrc.net

2351 Mendocino Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone: (707) 569-2000 • TTY (707) 525-1239

Q: What do you do if you are a parent providing support to a family member and need additional supports?

A: Please contact your Service Coordinator and discuss the supports that are needed.

Q: Is Premier waiving the CPR and first aid requirement since there are no classes currently being held?

A: Premier personal assistant services (employer of record) do not require first aid and CPR certification. Only Premier respite (employer of record) requires first aid and CPR, and this requirement has been waived by the Department of Developmental Services.

Q: How long will the State of Emergency (SOE) billing continue to be available (e.g. for Day Programs)?

A: NBRC is seeking guidance from the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) on this question. Once we receive guidance, we will communicate that guidance to our community. In the meantime, we are proceeding with the SOE billing on a month to month basis.

Q: If you are a parent of someone that previously lived in a group home and was brought into the home before the shelter in place order, how does that parent continue to provide support and food necessities if social security benefits are still going to the group home?

A: The Social Security funds can be repurposed back to the individual on a prorated basis. Please contact your Service Coordinator to discuss this process. NBRC Service Coordinators can work with our Fiscal Department to calculate the appropriate amounts for the individual and the group home.

Q: What is the billing process for vendors who are offering remote services?

A: Vendors should follow the standard billing process. However, vendors should add a comment that they are providing remote/telehealth services due to COVID-19.

Q: What should parents do in this situation? Our child (a NBRC client) is non-verbal and cannot be left alone. He is staying home due to the shelter-in-place order. His parents are providing his care but both parents are hospitalized due to the COVID-19 crisis. Relatives may be available to help with child's care but it would be very difficult logistically.

A: It is very important to plan ahead. NBRC suggests contacting your Service Coordinator to identify available supports and develop contingency plans.

Q: Please reinforce health/temperature checks before entering facilities, wearing masks, handwashing, social distancing for group home staff and their households (even when not at work) and teaching residents when possible and making it part of their plans.

A: NBRC agrees that it is very important to take all appropriate precautions to prevent virus transmissions. We have communicated best practices to our residential vendors and will continue to reinforce them going forward. See links to guidance from the Department of Developmental Services <https://www.dds.ca.gov/corona-virus-information-and-resources/>, Community Care Licensing <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/community-care-licensing>, and the Department of Public Health <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>.

Q: Can NBRC help families pay their bills, if family members are unemployed due to the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: NBRC cannot directly help families pay their bills. However, NBRC can help connect families with other community resources. Please contact your Service Coordinator to discuss the resources available in your community.

Q: If an individual is not a client, is there a suicide crisis line?

A: Yes. Here are some resources that may be helpful:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255 or suicidepreventionlifeline.org

North Bay Suicide Prevention Hotline: 855-587-6373

NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness: 866-960-6264 or namisonomacounty.org

Solano County Mental Health referral line for psychiatric care and treatment ACCESS

Line: 800-547-0495

Solano and Napa County referrals for counseling and medication monitoring: 707-439-4039

Sonoma County Behavioral Health Mental Health Access Team: 707-565-6900

Sonoma County Crisis Stabilization Unit: 707-576-8181

Q: Do respite agencies properly train their staff on how to care for individuals with special needs?

A: Respite agencies provide training for their employees. However, NBRC encourages families to discuss the qualifications of employees with respite agencies when selecting specific respite providers, in order to ensure a respite worker can meet the individual needs of your family member.

Q: What should you do if a respite provider is scheduled to visit your home but you don't know whether they have tested positive for COVID-19?

A: NBRC has contacted respite agencies and provided the following direction – any employee diagnosed with COVID-19, potentially exposed to COVID-19, or displaying symptoms consistent with COVID-19 should immediately stop providing respite services and should not be permitted to interact with NBRC clients or families until they have been cleared for work by their doctor and the local Public Health Department.

NBRC also suggests that families ask respite agencies and providers to describe the steps they are taking to prevent virus transmissions. For example, you may ask whether respite workers are adhering to universal precautions, such as social distancing, and whether they are equipped with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment, such as face coverings. Additionally, NBRC suggests contacting your Service Coordinator to schedule a team meeting to discuss how respite services can be conducted safely with your family member in your specific home environment.

Of course, if you do not feel safe, you have the right to stop your respite services at any time. If you decide to temporarily stop your respite services due to concerns related to COVID-19, you maintain the right to restart your respite services in the future, at a time of your choosing.

Q: Is North Bay Regional Center still accepting new clients?

A: Yes, NBRC is still accepting new clients. If you are interested in referring someone to NBRC, please contact NBRC's Intake Department at intake@nbrc.net or by calling 707-256-1180.

Q: Why has my Service Coordinator authorized additional respite hours during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: NBRC Service Coordinators are contacting individuals and families during this crisis to make sure that essential services are in place. Decisions regarding regional center services, including respite, are made by planning teams and are based on the needs of the individual and their family. If additional respite was authorized, it was done in order to address a specific need. Generally speaking, individuals and families may benefit from increased respite during this crisis, given that other services and supports may not be available. If you have questions about the amount of respite that has been authorized for your family, please feel free to contact your Service Coordinator. It may be helpful to explore whether [Participant Directed Services](#) is an option that can work for your family.

Q: What precautions should people take while going out into the public?

A: According to the California Department of Public Health, you should take the following steps to protect yourself:

- Stay home except for essential needs/activities.
- Practice physical distancing – stay 6 feet away from people.
- Wear a cloth face mask if you leave home.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. If surfaces are dirty, clean them using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your elbow or a tissue. Wash hands afterwards.
- Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home and away from people if you become sick with respiratory symptoms like fever and cough.
- If you smoke or vape, consider quitting. [Smoking and vaping causes harm to the lungs.](#)
- Follow guidance from public health officials.

Please consult with your health care provider about additional steps you may be able to take to protect yourself. Please refer to the following websites for more information:

California Department of Public Health -

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Q: What are the rules or criteria to apply for the Medicaid Waiver?

A: Please contact your Service Coordinator, if you are interested in applying for the Medicaid Waiver. NBRC can explain and verify the qualifying conditions and assist with the application process.



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Q: If a residential provider is unable to take residents to the doctor for their annual physicals or lab tests, what documentation will be required by the Regional Center?

A: NBRC understands the current situation and will be flexible regarding required documentation. Service providers should document their efforts to address residents' health care needs and highlight necessary changes due to COVID-19. For example, service providers can provide documentation of appointments completed through telehealth.

As always, the health and safety of our clients is the priority. Please communicate with the residents' primary care physician to determine how to best address individual health care needs. It also recommended that residential providers seek guidance from [Community Care Licensing](#).

Q: Can NBRC clarify the [DDS Directive](#) from May 7th, which states that the regional center is the payer of last resort?

A: NBRC is seeking guidance from DDS and will share additional information when it is available. Until there is further guidance, non-residential service providers can continue to bill for absences, according to the previous [DDS Directive](#) dated March 12th, which authorizes "regional centers to pay vendors for absences that are the direct result of the COVID-19 outbreak in California."

Q: What do you foresee regarding day program operations, hours, and transportation with social distancing, when things get back to "normal?"

A: It is likely that the return to day program sites will be a gradual, incremental process. We should not expect that programs will operate exactly how they did before COVID-19. Programs will need to adjust their service delivery models, in order to implement universal precautions (e.g. social distancing) and prevent virus transmissions. Operations will vary from program to program, will depend on a number of factors, and will need to account for the specific needs of those they serve.

Q: Can providers get reimbursed if they buy their own PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)? Will we continue to reimburse indefinitely? I thought we just agreed to put a time limit on this- July 31?

A: NBRC does have a process to reimburse service providers for certain supplies related to COVID-19, including PPE. Please contact Courtney Singleton, NBRC Director of Community Services at courtneys@nbrc.net or Isabel Calder, NBRC Chief Financial Officer at isabelc@nbrc.net for more information.

Q: Can I bill for absences if a family wants to receive telehealth services but is unable to access them? Does sending materials to the home count as providing a service?

A: Please contact Isabel Calder, NBRC Chief Financial Officer at isabelc@nbrc.net for specific billing questions.

Q: If there was a new POS for Early Start services authorized prior to shelter in place but scheduling was disrupted due to COVID-19, can the agency bill for those absences?

A: Please contact Isabel Calder, NBRC Chief Financial Officer at isabelc@nbrc.net for specific billing questions.

Q: If individuals/families are refusing the service, can a service provider bill for absences?

A: No. Service providers cannot bill for services that have been refused by individuals/families. Yes, if the refusal for services is related to COVID-19

Q: Can Community Care Facilities be compensated for day program hours, if Care Facilities need to provide additional staffing during those hours?

A: NBRC does have a process to reimburse Community Care Facilities for staffing during day program hours. Please contact Courtney Singleton, NBRC Director of Community Services at courtneys@nbrc.net for more information.

Q: How often are group homes required to get tested for COVID-19? Is the regional center going to have a site where providers can go with their clients to get tested?

A: NBRC recommends contacting each person's primary care physician and/or the county Department of Public Health for guidance on testing. It also recommended that residential providers seek guidance from [Community Care Licensing](#).

Q: How should service providers balance the need to visit clients in the home (e.g. during times of crisis) with the need to prevent virus transmissions? This can be especially challenging if a

residential provider does not want other providers to enter the home. Can this question be clarified a bit? I am not sure if it is about family visiting loved ones or RC staff visiting people in their group home setting?

A: Each situation is individualized and should be carefully considered by the planning team, including the NBRC Service Coordinator. The Service Coordinator can help the team weigh the pros and cons and develop safe intervention strategies. The Service Coordinator can also help the team obtain appropriate clinical guidance, if necessary.

Q: Where can I purchase masks with clear material so people receiving services can see my mouth? It is very helpful for certain individuals to see the facial expressions of those providing services.

A: NBRC is researching options to purchase masks with clear material and we plan to purchase some in the near future. Here is one recommendation provided by a community member – www.theclearmask.com/product.