

Included in the BC [Restart Plan](#), The Ministry of Child and Family Development will continue to offer their interim measures in order to make sure children and youth with special needs and their families have the services and supports they need. [Pandemic supports to continue through the summer | BC Gov News](#)

The following interim extended measures will continue to be offered after June 30<sup>th</sup>

#### **A. Emergency Relief Support for existing CYSN clients:**

A direct payment of \$225 per month to assist eligible\* families will be available for up to three months from July 1 to Sept. 30, 2020.

\*Using a needs-based approach, the emergency funding will support 50% more of the eligible families that are currently awaiting services.

#### **B. Flexible use of Basic Direct Funded/At Home Program Respite Funding:**

01. Families receiving **Basic Direct Funded/At Home Program respite** (\$256.66/month):

- a. a. Can continue to use this funding in a flexible manner until March 31, 2021. (e.g. meal preparation and grocery shopping assistance; homemaking services; caregiver relief support; counselling services, online or by phone; and other services that support family functioning)\*
- b. Are also not required to provide a record of respite expense forms for agreements expiring before March 31, 2021.

\*[This](#) is an option for families in consultation with CYSN worker if other options have been explored and cannot be applied in certain circumstances.

02. Families with an **Enhanced Respite Agreement** (over \$256.66/ month) expiring by March 31, 2021 will need to:

- a. contact their CYSN worker about renewing their agreement.
- b. continue to submit Records of Expense Forms for Enhanced Respite Agreements. (CYSN workers will consider the need for flexibility when reviewing records)

#### **C. Temporary suspension of Special Needs Agreement and Voluntary Care Agreement maintenance payments:**

01. Families with children in care on a special needs agreement or a voluntary care agreement will not have to make monthly maintenance payments for the duration of the pandemic period.

#### **D. Autism Funding Interim Measures:**

01. **Unspent funding** - Families and caregivers of children or youth whose 6th or 19th birthday falls between **March 15, 2020 and August 31, 2020** will have up to three additional months to use unspent funding from the affected funding period.

*a) Autism Funding Program staff will assist families to ensure access to the unspent funding. For assistance families can call Autism Funding Program 1- 877-777-3530.*

#### 02. **Equipment**

a. Up to 35% of autism funding can be used to buy items or pieces of equipment that would enhance a child's current Behavioural Plan of Intervention.

03. **“Family Counselling/Therapy”** - will continue to be an eligible program expense for all ages accessing Autism Funding program. Typically, for children over 6 years old.

#### 04. **Update Return to Clinician Supported Justification for Equipment Forms**

**(JFE):** Beginning July 1, 2020, the Ministry will return to requiring detailed [JFEs](#) to be completed by a:

- a. Behaviour Consultant
- b. Occupational Therapist
- c. Paediatrician
- d. Psychiatrist
- e. Registered Psychological Associate
- f. Physiotherapist
- g. Neurologist
- h. Registered Psychologist
- or
- i. Speech-Language Pathologist.

*The JFE form can be submitted for review by the Autism Funding Program through mail, fax, email and MyFS portal.*

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Victoria Office: 250-387-3530

Toll Free: 1-877-777-3530

Fax: 250-356-8578

Mailing: PO Box 9776 STN PROV GOVT Victoria, BC V8W 9S5

Email: [MCFD\\_AutismFundingUnit@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCFD_AutismFundingUnit@gov.bc.ca)

#### **E. At Home Program Temporary Eligibility:**

01. If a child or youth is likely to be eligible for the At Home Program (AHP) and has a document from a health care professional which describes the child's functional need for support has been provided, they can be temporarily admitted without an assessment.
02. Children currently on the AHP will maintain their current eligibility until assessors become available.
03. Urgent admissions will continue to be priority "urgent admits" to the Medical Benefits program. They will need to be tracked by Children and Youth with Special Needs social workers for follow-up AHP assessments.

#### **F. NEW - School Aged Extended Therapies (SAET):**

01. Children or youth whose 18th birthday falls between **March 15, 2020 and August 30, 2020** will have up to three (3) additional months to use unspent funding from the affected funding period.

For more information, please visit the Children and Youth With Special Needs COVID-19 [website by clicking here](#).