

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division on Aging and Adult Services

NC Project CARE
(Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty)
Fiduciary Agent

RFA Posted	Thursday, April 1, 2021		
Questions Due	Thursday, April 8, 2021 by 2:00 pm		
Applications Due	Thursday, April 22, 2021		
Anticipated Notice of Award	Monday, May 3, 2021		
Fiscal Year	July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022		
Purpose	NC Project CARE (Caregivers Alternatives to Running on Empty) Fiduciary Agent		
Issuing Agency	NC DHHS DAAS		
E-mail Applications and Questions to	Dawn Oakey Gartman	Email	dawn.gartman@dhhs.nc.gov
Title	Alzheimer's Supports / Project CARE Director	Phone	Office: 919.855.3462 Mobile: 984.220.6043

This RFA is for governmental entities to provide information to the NC DHHS Division of Aging and Adult Services. The purpose of this RFA is to select one fiduciary agent responsible for processing respite care vouchers for caregivers (care partners) of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias (ADRD).

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

NC Project CARE Fiduciary Agent

Purpose

The North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) is seeking a fiduciary agent to execute the delivery of the respite voucher payments for the state-funded Project CARE (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty) program serving unpaid family caregivers of individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD). Project CARE uses the family consultant model to provide 1) information and referral services, 2) individualized care consultation, 3) respite care, and 4) education, training and community awareness. Partnerships with the North Carolina Area Agencies on Aging and similar community-based organizations enhances the delivery of services and supports to family caregivers.

Eligible caregivers receive respite vouchers valued at \$500 each. The fiduciary agent will be responsible for verifying appropriate reimbursement documentation and systematically processing voucher reimbursement payments to caregivers in a manner that is accurate, timely, and transparent to the DAAS Project CARE Director and the regionally based family consultants.

Background

According to the Alzheimer's Association 2020 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures Report, the number of people living with Alzheimer's disease is expected to triple by 2050. In North Carolina, there are approximately 479,000 caregivers providing 545 million hours of unpaid care for 180,000 individuals with Alzheimer's disease. This amounts to \$7.15 billion of unpaid care provided by families. It is projected that North Carolina will see a 16% increase in the number of older adults living with ADRD. The main reason caregivers provide care is the desire to keep a family member or friend at home.

Recognizing how important it is to support families caring for an individual living with Alzheimer's disease and/or related dementias, the State of North Carolina through the Division of Aging and Adult Services offers Project CARE in all 100 counties. North Carolina is served by six regional Project CARE sites, each with one full-time equivalent family consultant. The family consultants collaborate with Family Caregiver Support Program which provides supports to family caregivers of adults age 60 and older or a person with dementia or grandparents raising grandchildren. For more information on Project CARE go to <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/adult-services/project-care>.

Respite Care Vouchers

Since 2017, the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) has employed a consumer-directed approach to distribute Project CARE respite vouchers. This model requires a fiduciary agent responsible for providing reimbursement to caregivers statewide. Project CARE family consultants authorize vouchers in the amount of \$500; caregivers can receive up to \$1,500 (or three vouchers) per fiscal year. Caregivers may receive reimbursements in amounts as low as \$100.

Individuals with dementia are often very uncomfortable with people they do not recognize. There may also be areas in the state where few home care or adult day care agencies exist to meet a

family's needs. The consumer-directed voucher model embraces a family-centered system that allows caregivers to choose the best respite care both for their own needs and for those of the person living with dementia.

It is important that the fiduciary agent for these vouchers can work with this model and support it internally and externally. The role of the fiduciary agent is to reimburse the family caregiver, who acts as an employer for the individual or agency actually providing respite care. Since the fiduciary agent itself is not the employer or the employee, the entity is not responsible for issuing an IRS Form 1099.

The respite voucher award letter received by the caregiver includes the following statement which may change in the future.

If you hire an individual to provide your respite care for the full \$500.00 award and then continue to use the individual for additional respite care that you pay for yourself (or with another voucher), please be aware that certain tax regulations may apply. Depending on your use of your respite provider in a calendar year, there are federal and state tax regulations you may need to consider. Please consult with your tax professional with any questions regarding these requirements. You may refer to *IRS Publication 926: Household Employer's Tax Guide*, which can be found at the IRS website at www.irs.gov, and to the *North Carolina Income Tax Withholding Tables and Instructions for Employers* located at <https://www.ncdor.gov/documents/income-tax-withholding-tables-and-instructions-employers>.

Performance Measures

The following performance measures will be captured and reported to the Department of Health and Human Services for Project CARE:

1. The fiduciary agent must have sufficient cash flow to administer respite care vouchers with reimbursement from the NC Department of Health and Human Services monthly. The NC Division on Aging and Adult Services must receive requests for reimbursements no later than the 10th of each month for the preceding month.
2. The fiduciary agent must process reimbursement payments to caregivers within five (5) business days following receipt of a reimbursement request. The process includes verifying appropriate documentation (completed and signed provider agreement and record of respite services forms), processing the reimbursement, entering data in the shared voucher management workbook, and mailing the voucher reimbursement through the US Postal Service.
3. For data management and monitoring purposes, the fiduciary agent, the Project CARE family consultants, and the DAAS Project CARE Director will maintain a current caregiver payment record. This record must be an on-demand, shared document using technology that enables all users to view current activity and enter information into one main workbook. The fiduciary agent will have access to the shared workbook before any vouchers are awarded. It is the responsibility of the fiduciary agent to make sure this workbook is accessible, accurate and current. The data captured includes caregiver and care recipient information, voucher award and expiration dates, awarded voucher amounts, and caregiver reimbursement data, including the date on which the reimbursement request was received/approved, the date the check was mailed, the

amount requested, the amount paid, the type of respite provided, and the remaining balance.

Performance Standards

The Contractor will use a consistent and reliable process to meet the performance standards stated in this contract, which comprise the following:

1. Accurately reviewing and recording caregiver reimbursement requests and maintaining the reimbursement documentation for individual caregivers.
2. Maintaining a standard protocol for processing reimbursement requests within five (5) business days from the time of receipt to the date on which the check was mailed via USPS.
3. Maintaining or archiving records for five years.

Monitoring/Quality Assurance

The Division will perform the following monitoring activities to ensure the terms of this contract are met:

1. Annual fiscal compliance monitoring, which includes reviewing the accuracy and timeliness of payments to caregivers based on the completed required documentation received by the fiduciary agent.
2. Reviewing internal processing systems.
3. Reviewing contractor reimbursement requests on a monthly basis.

Reimbursement

The fiduciary agent will receive 8% above the value of the voucher reimbursement amount. For example, for a reimbursement to the caregiver in the amount of \$500, the agent receives a total of \$540 (\$500 for the voucher and \$40 to the agent).

The fiduciary agent will submit a monthly Contract Reimbursement Form (CRF) certified by an organization official along with supporting expense documentation (copy of Project CARE report/worksheet) to the State Project CARE Director, Service Operations Section, with the Division of Aging and Adult Services each month by the 10th of the following month. Electronic reimbursement will be made after the reimbursement request has been reviewed, approved, and processed by DHHS. The contractor may submit semi-monthly reimbursement requests when a high number of caregiver reimbursement requests are received. The contractor must submit its final invoice for the month of June 2022 by no later than Friday, July 8, 2022.

Funding

Funds available for respite care vouchers are estimated to be between \$350,000 and \$400,000, or between 500 and 800 vouchers for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. In 2020, Project CARE awarded 586 unpaid caregivers with 800 respite vouchers. No vouchers are awarded after June 1, 2022 as final caregiver reimbursement requests are due to the fiduciary agent by June 15, 2022. An estimated 1,100 to 1,500 reimbursement checks are processed annually.