

Frequently Asked Questions Interim Guidance for Flexible Respite and Payment to Families - Notice of 90 Day Deadline of September 30, 2021

Updated June 2021

*These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provide answers to common questions asked about COVID-19 interim guidance for 'Increased funding flexibility for Direct Funding Agents and Person-Centered Societies', and 'Service Provision by Family Members'. Updated questions are indicated as ***New**.*

Q: What is the deadline for the interim guidance for flexible use funding and service provision by family members?

CLBC is providing families with over 90-day notice that Direct Funded (Individualized Funding) Agents, Person-Centered Societies and Microboards have the option to continue to use *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies* (original deadline was June 30, 2021), and *Interim Guidance Service Provision by Family Members* until September 30, 2021 (the updated documents are posted [here](#)).

Q: The deadline for using funding flexibly was June 30th. Why has CLBC extended the deadline?

Great progress is being made with vaccinations, we are seeing significant improvement in case rates and rates of hospitalization; we expect by September the situation will be significantly different than today.

The September 30th deadline acknowledges the primary support families have asked for during this period of transition, namely, to help safely expand their bubbles and to continue flexibility for respite supports while we gradually take the steps towards recovery.

Q: I have found being able to use funding flexibly helpful. Why isn't CLBC continuing this practice?

CLBC established the interim guidance in response to the challenges people faced during COVID-19; this included not having access to caregivers or regular supports.

These measures were intended to only be used during COVID-19. However, we understand how helpful many people have found these options. Over the next several months, CLBC will be looking at the learnings from people's experiences during the pandemic to determine where we can make our policies and practices work better for families. We look forward to sharing more information before the end of September 2021.

Q. Who does this Interim Guidance apply to?

Both interim guidance documents apply to all Microboards, Person Centered Societies and Direct Funding (Individualized Funding) agents. This interim guidance does not apply to Host Agencies.

Note that to be eligible to use the interim guidance for flexible use of funding, contracts **cannot** have a residential service included (e.g. staffed residential, home sharing, outreach etc.)

Q: I have residential services in my contract. Can I use the interim guidance for flexible use of funding?

No. Contracts that contain a residential service (e.g. staffed residential, home sharing, outreach etc.) **cannot** use funding flexibly. However, the interim guidance for Service Provision by Family Member can be used for contracts that have a residential component.

Q: What is the interim guidance for Service Provisions by Family Member?

In April 2020, CLBC developed interim guidance to support an immediate family member to be paid from an existing funding arrangement of Individualized Funding Direct Funding (DF) or Person-Centered Societies (including Microboards). This is a temporary exception, where exceptional circumstances require it.

Q: Can I use my direct funding both flexibly and to pay a family member?

Yes, both approaches can be used providing the requirements of the interim guidance are followed. All arrangements must end as of September 30, 2021.

Q: I have Direct Funding; can I carry over unspent funds during this time?

Yes. Direct Funding Agents can carry over unspent funds to their renewed agreement. This will end September 30th, 2021 as part of CLBC's COVID-19 emergency response.

Q: As a Direct Funding Agent, will I be invoiced for unspent funds?

CLBC stopped issuing invoices for unspent funds as of January 2021 to allow agents to use direct funding flexibly. We will need to restart invoicing agents who have unspent funds. However, the timing of the invoice depends on several factors. We will be using the following approach:

- If you have an active direct funding agreement, invoicing for any unspent funds will start in November 2021. This will provide you with 30 days following the end of the flexible use of direct funding to report spending for any of your agreement(s) that have ended.
- For invoices for unspent funds issued after March 15, 2020, CLBC will follow up on any unpaid invoices starting on August 1, 2021.
- For any cancelled or expired direct funding agreements, CLBC will issue invoices for any unspent funds starting on August 1, 2021.

Q: As a Direct Funding Agent, do I have to submit reports?

Yes. There have been no changes to reporting requirements for Direct Funding Agents during this period. CLBC requires Direct Funding Agents to continue reporting on their use of funding as per the terms of the Direct Funding Agreement. CLBC will continue to send reminder letters for overdue reports.

Q: Can a Person-Centered Society carry over unspent funds during this time?

No. Person-Centered Society contracts are different from Direct Funding Agent agreements and therefore, cannot have their unspent funds transferred from one contract to another. Person-Centered Societies are required to continue reporting on their use of funding and return any unspent funds at the end of their contract period.

Q: Can I use my current funding (prior to September 30th, 2021) to pay for respite supports I will be receiving after September 30th, 2021?

No. While we appreciate that some families have found it difficult to find respite support during COVID, the funding is not meant to pay for future services or activities.

Q: What is the time period for this flexibility?

Flexible use of funding is now December 28th, 2020 – September 30th, 2021.

Q. What if I just submitted my report, but didn't know about this flexibility? Can I re-submit to include receipts that fit this flexibility?

Yes. See below for instructions.

- *Manual Report:* If you wish to re-submit a report manually, complete the manual compliance report with the revised total for the entire reporting period. Be sure to clearly mark the report "Revised" at the top of the form. This revised report will replace the report you previously sent.
- *Online Report:* If you wish to re-submit an online report, submit the report online again by using the same start and end dates as the report you wish to replace and by entering the revised total for the entire period. This revised report will then invalidate and replace the report you previously sent.

Q. Can I be directly paid as a family member for providing respite?

Yes, until September 30, 2021. During this pandemic, an immediate family member, which includes a parent, can be paid to provide CLBC-funded service. There is no review and approval process required for the exception. More details on this temporary policy can be found on our website [here](#).

Q. Are there any changes to the reporting process?

No. Reporting requirements remain the same. Direct funding agents and person-centered societies must continue to retain adequate financial records related to contract spending, including receipts and invoices, and submit compliance reports on time, as per contract and policy requirements.

For more information please see *Interim Guidance: Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies* and *Interim Guidance Service Provision by Family Members* until September 30, 2021 posted [here](#) on CLBC's interim guidance page.

Q. If I haven't been able to use my contracted funding on the services it is designated for, what can I do?

You can spend it on any other service that is included in your contract. Until September 30th, 2021 any direct funding agent or person-centered society can decide to redirect funding between any of the services included in their contract to best meet the needs of the individual.

Q. I receive Direct Funding, but my contract does not have respite. Can I use my direct funding for respite?

Yes, you can use your existing funding for respite until September 30, 2021, as long as your contract **does not** include residential support (staffed residential, home sharing, live-in support, outreach support, cluster living). For the interim period, CLBC is changing how services are defined specifically for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Society contracts so that services such as skills development, employment, etc. can all incorporate respite.

Q. Where do I get more information on what is an acceptable or not an acceptable use of funds?

CLBC has developed resources to support your decision making around proper use of these funds.

- CLBC's *'Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies' Interim Guidance* also outlines what is an acceptable or not acceptable use of your respite funds. Click [here](#) to read the Guidance document.
- Suggestions and tips on how you can get a break are available on our website. Click [here](#) for the menu of options.

Q: Will I need to get approval from CLBC before using my funding flexibly for respite supports?

No. CLBC staff will not be 'approving' or 'refusing' the way you choose to use your existing funds during this time. We trust that families know best when it comes to how you get a break from caregiving. We do not expect families to check in with CLBC.

Q. What if I already have counselling services through my employer. Can I still use these funds for counselling services for myself or my son/daughter?

Yes. If your coverage for counselling services are not adequate for managing personal or family concerns, please use these funds to get the support you need.

There are free counselling support options that may work for you. Click [here](#) for more information.

Q. What about new Direct Funding or Person-Centered Society contracts? Do they qualify for this flexible funding initiative?

Yes. The *'Interim Guidance on Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies'* applies to new Direct Funding or Person-Centered Society contracts until September 30th, 2021.

Q. I am a direct funding agent - should I still follow the “Allowable Expenses” section of the Managing the Money Guide?

Yes. The [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Simplified Guide](#) and the [Managing the Money: Direct Funding Standard Guide](#) still apply, but the *Interim Guidance – Flexibility for Direct Funding and Person-Centered Societies* expands upon the information in that guide. Where there is conflicting information the Interim Guidance supersedes the existing guidance or requirement.

Q. Can families bundle their respite dollars?

- Yes, families can continue to bundle their respite dollars throughout their contract term.