



## Caregiving and Family Support

Caregivers who are experiencing Long COVID, are caring for someone who has Long COVID, or both, may find they now need additional support. That support may come in the form of respite care, which gives caregivers temporary relief from their caregiving responsibilities, which can range from a few hours to a few days or weeks. It may also include paid leave from work to care for themselves or their loved ones, training to adapt to changes in their abilities or the abilities of their loved ones, or counseling and support groups. Some of the resources in this section may also support individuals, their families and caregivers who are experiencing the longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as mental health and substance use challenges and bereavement. Individuals who may need additional assistance with family care due to the loss of a loved one may also find assistance through these federal supports and services.

This section covers five topics

- Navigation Support
- Family and Medical Leave and Sick Leave
- Respite Care
- Individual Counseling and Support Groups
- Child Welfare.

If you need legal assistance with caregiving and family supports, you may want to review the Legal Assistance section of the ***Know Your Rights*** section.

### ***Navigation Support***

#### ***Kinship Navigator***

The Kinship Navigator assists grandparents and other kin caring for children, including families involved in the child welfare system. Kinship Navigator programs assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs.

### **Not Sure Where to Start?**

***Q. Wondering what support services are available for caregivers in your area?***

**A.** Call the Eldercare Locator at 1 (800) 677-1116 or visit [Eldercare Locator \(acl.gov\)](https://www.acl.gov) to chat live or browse resources

***Q. Are you caring for a veteran or are you a veteran caring for a non-veteran family member?***

**A.** Call the Caregiver Support Line at 1 (855) 260-3274 or visit [Caregivers Support Line \(CSL\) - VA Caregiver Support Program](https://www.va.gov/caregiver-support-program)



- Find a program or contact in your state, territory or tribe, visit [State Kinship Care Contacts and Programs | Administration for Children and Families \(ChildWelfare.gov\)](#)

### ***Family and Medical Leave and Sick Leave***

People with Long COVID may need time away from work—whether a few occasional sick days or longer periods of leave—to seek treatment or for recovery. Workers may also need to take time off to care for family members experiencing Long COVID.

- For more information, visit [COVID-19 and the Family and Medical Leave Act Questions and Answers | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#)

### ***Family and Medical Leave Act***

Employees impacted by Long COVID may be able to take leave from work under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The FMLA entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take up to 12 weeks each year of unpaid, job-protected leave for certain qualifying reasons, including for a serious mental or physical health condition that makes the employee unable to work or care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition. FMLA leave may be taken intermittently in short increments of time or in longer blocks of up to 12 weeks in leave a year for FMLA serious health conditions. FMLA does not require employers to provide paid leave, but employees may elect, or employers may require concurrent use of paid leave, such as accrued vacation or sick leave. The FMLA also requires employers to continue group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) is responsible for administering and enforcing the FMLA. Your state may offer stronger protections for family and medical leave than those under the FMLA, including paid family and medical leave benefits.

- For more information about your FMLA eligibility and use of leave, visit [Fact Sheet #28: The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993](#)
- If you have questions or concerns, you can contact WHD at 1 (866) 487-9243 or visit [WHD | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#)

### ***State Paid Family and Medical Leave Programs***

Some states operate programs that entitle eligible workers to receive wage replacement when they cannot work due to covered family caregiving or medical reasons. Eligibility rules and wage replacement rates vary by state and are based on prior earnings and work history. Eligible workers are entitled to paid leave benefits for qualifying reasons including a serious health condition that makes them unable to work and caregiving leave for family members with a serious health condition. As of 2022, paid family and medical leave benefits can be accessed through state programs in California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, New York, the District of Columbia, Washington, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.



- For more information about state paid family and medical leave programs, visit
  - California: [State Disability Insurance \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov)
  - New Jersey: [Division of Temporary Disability and Family Leave Insurance | Family Leave Insurance \(nj.gov\)](https://www.nj.gov)
  - Rhode Island: [Temporary Disability / Caregiver Insurance | RI Department of Labor & Training](https://www.ri.gov)
  - New York: [New York State Paid Family Leave \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ny.gov) or [Introduction to the Disability Benefits Law \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ny.gov)
  - District of Columbia: [DC Paid Family Leave | does](https://www.dc.gov)
  - Washington: [Washington State's Paid Family and Medical Leave – Washington workers will have up to 12 weeks of paid family or medical leave starting in 2020. Employers begin payroll withholding in 2019](https://www.wa.gov)
  - Massachusetts: [Paid Family and Medical Leave \(PFML\) overview and benefits | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov)
  - Connecticut: [CT Paid Leave Authority \(PFMLA\) | Home | Official Site](https://www.ct.gov)

### ***Paid Leave for Federal Employees***

Leave options available to federal employees who are experiencing Long COVID symptoms include sick leave, annual leave, advance sick and annual leave, and donated leave under the Voluntary Leave Transfer or Leave Bank programs. Federal employees on an alternative work schedule may request to adjust their hours of duty to accommodate medical appointments or accrue and use credit hours. Federal employees may also use any accumulated and accrued compensatory time.

- Learn more about federal policies, visit [Pay & Leave | OPM \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov), [Work Schedules | OPM \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov), [Fact Sheets | OPM \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov)



## ***Paid Sick Leave for Employees of Federal Contractors***

Employees of certain federal contractors may be entitled to paid sick leave to care for themselves or a family member experiencing Long COVID. Executive Order 13706, Establishing Paid Sick Leave for Federal Contractors, requires certain employers that contract with the federal government to provide employees working on or in connection with those contracts with one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours they work—up to 56 hours of paid sick leave each year. The Wage and Hour Division (WHD) is responsible for making sure covered employers comply with this requirement.

- For information on whether you are entitled to accrue and use paid sick leave, visit [How do I know if I am working on a federal contract under which I am entitled to accrue and use paid sick leave?](#)

If you have questions or concerns, you can contact WHD at 1 (866) 487-9243 or visit [www.dol.gov/agencies/whd](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd).

## ***Respite Care***

Respite care provides short-term relief for caregivers. It is an important component of family support and home and community-based long-term services and supports. Respite services strengthen family systems while protecting the health and well-being of both caregivers and care recipients.

### ***National Caregiver Family Support Program***

National Caregiver Family Support Program (NFCSP) provides a range of services that assist family and other caregivers to care for their family members at home for as long as possible. Services to family caregivers include information about caregiver services and supports, connecting caregivers with services, caregiver education and training, respite care provided by trained caregivers, and other supplemental services.

- Find services available near you, call the Eldercare Locator at 1 (800) 677-1116 or visit [Eldercare Locator \(acl.gov\)](http://EldercareLocator.acl.gov) to chat live or browse resources
- Learn more about the program, visit [National Family Caregiver Support Program | ACL Administration for Community Living \(acl.gov\)](#)

## ***Individual Counseling and Support Groups***

### ***Veterans Affairs Caregiver Support Program***

The VA Caregiver Support Program (CSP) offers an array of supports and services to family members and friends who care for Veterans, including online courses, face-to-face classes, telephone support, and peer support. These services are offered in addition to the support provided to families and caregivers across VA by clinicians as part of a Veteran's care. Every VA



medical center has dedicated Caregiver Support Program staff who assist with information and referrals to these programs.

- Find more information, call the [Caregivers Support Line \(CSL\) - VA Caregiver Support Program](#) toll-free at 1 (855) 260-3274, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET
- Visit the CSP Teams/Caregiver Support Coordinators Locator at [Caregiver Support Program \(CSP\) Teams/Caregiver Support Coordinators - VA Caregiver Support Program](#)
- Learn more about the program, visit [VA Caregiver Support Program Home | VA \(caregiver.va.gov\)](#)

### ***Child Welfare***

Child Welfare programs focus on improving the lives of children and families by reducing child abuse and neglect, increasing the number of adoptions, and strengthening foster care. They may provide some assistance to individuals who are caring for children who lost their parents due to COVID-19 and Long COVID.

- The Title IV-E Foster Care Program provides board and care payments for eligible children under the supervision of the state and placed in foster family homes or child care institutions that are safe and licensed
- The Title IV-E Prevention Program provides time-limited prevention services for mental health conditions, substance use concerns, and in-home parent skill-based programs for children or youth who are candidates for foster care, pregnant or parenting youth in foster care, and the parents or kin caregivers of those children and youth
- The Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program to support relatives who become legal guardians of children for whom they previously cared for as foster parents
- Access more information about child welfare programs, visit [Children's Bureau \(CB\) | The Administration for Children and Families \(hhs.gov\)](#) or call (202) 205-8618

**Visit the full [Services and Supports for Longer-Term Impacts of COVID-19 Report](#).**