



# Nottinghamshire County Council's Short Breaks Offer - Changes due to COVID-19

## This information tells you about:

- Changes to the Council's Short Breaks Service because of the pandemic
- Who is able to have a Short Break (eligibility)
- When Short Break bookings will start again
- What you need to know before the person you care for takes their planned Short Break
- Short Breaks budget allocation and rules about rolling this over into the next 12 months
- The cost of Council Short Breaks
- The different ways you can have a Short Break
- What support is offered if you need a Short Break in an emergency
- Where you can find out about other support that is available

We know the coronavirus outbreak has been incredibly difficult for you as carers, as some of your usual support services have not been available. Many people have not been able to use our planned Short Breaks service because;

- of the restrictions made by the national lockdown
- they are self-isolating / shielding
- most providers have been unable to offer their continued level of support due to the lockdown restrictions and the risks of people catching and passing on the virus

As we are starting to have fewer restrictions, we have been working with providers to

understand how we can best support planned short breaks.

We are pleased to let you know that our County Council Short Breaks units are preparing to offer planned Short Breaks from September 2020. However, things will be different to how they were before the pandemic as social distancing and extra infection control means there will be less availability for short breaks. This might mean you do not get the breaks you ask for.

The support and activities provided during the stay may also be different, with some activities not taking place.

We have included some questions and answers to help you understand when and how you can access a Short Break, what you need to know before the break takes place, and how the support and activities will be provided during the stay.

*(Please note that current Government guidelines and restrictions around social distancing and infection control measures could change, and this Short Breaks information will be updated to show any changes in Government guidance as appropriate)*

## **Who will be able to book and have a Short Break?**

The current eligibility for Short Breaks has not changed. Carers who access a planned Short Break through an allocated budget, whether that from the NHS Short Breaks scheme or through a budget from Nottinghamshire County

Council as part of a package of support, will still be able to access a planned short break.

## **When will I be able to book a Short Break from?**

### **For people using a Nottinghamshire County Council service**

Nottinghamshire County Council's Short Breaks units are offering planned Short Breaks from September 2020. However, this will be a reduced offer and some planned breaks may need to be re-arranged to allow for fewer people being allowed in the units at any one time.

If you usually take your break in a Nottinghamshire County Council Short Breaks unit, they will have already been in touch with you to explain how you can book your break. If you have not had any contact from the unit, please contact them to ask how your breaks can be arranged.

### **For people using other providers**

Other providers (residential care homes) are now starting to take bookings. If you plan for your relative to stay in a residential care home you need to know that current Government guidance says that any new person moving into a care home, even on a short-term basis, should be isolated for 14 days in their room.

Please contact the provider directly to find out if they can offer a planned short break that meets the needs of you and your relative. If the provider is unable to meet your needs, please contact your social worker or Nottinghamshire County Council's Customer Service Centre (0300 500 8080) to discuss other options which may be available to you.

### **What information do I need to know prior to my relative taking a planned Short Break?**

Things you need to know If your Short Break is at one of Nottinghamshire County Council's Short Breaks units

If the person taking the short break or anyone in their household, has shown any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 in the days before the

stay, the break will have to be rearranged. At the moment, you would have to wait 10 days but please check current guidance with the Nottinghamshire County Council's Short breaks unit and the [government guidance](#) nearer the time of your planned break.

When the person taking a break arrives at the unit their temperature will be taken by staff. If the reading is above normal levels (37.5), they will not be allowed into the building and the stay will be rearranged.

During the stay social distancing measures will be in place and extra infection control, this will include all staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment including face masks. These precautions will be reviewed regularly in line with current Government guidelines.

Even with these extra precautions there will still be a small risk of your relative catching the virus whilst staying in the unit, so please consider this.

If your relative takes a short break you are agreeing to accept this level of risk.

Before your stay please make sure you know the plans for your relative arriving and departing from the unit. The Short Breaks unit have further information about what you need to know before your relative arrives to take their break, for example what personal belongings they need for the duration of their stay (no money is required as no trips out will be taking place). Please contact the Short Breaks unit to ask about this information.

For breaks being taken in a care home or services not provided by Nottinghamshire County Council, there will be similar guidelines in place. Please contact the care provider before your relatives stay to ask about these.

### **As I have not used my current Short Breaks Allocation Budget during the COVID-19 crisis, can my allocation be rolled over into my next 12-month allocation?**

As it is likely that there will be fewer places available for short breaks and more people

wanting them over the next 9-12 months, the rolling over of Short Breaks Allocation budgets into the next 12 months budget allocation is not being considered.

If, however if the Short Breaks Allocation budget for your relative has run out, or is due to run out soon, please contact your social worker or the County Council's Customer Service Centre (0300 500 8080) who will arrange for your relatives support to be reviewed.

The same will apply to your Short Breaks funded by the NHS Short Breaks scheme, so please contact the County Council's Customer Service Centre (0300 500 8080) who will arrange for your support to be reviewed.

### **Will the cost of planned Short Breaks increase?**

Although the additional measures in place around social distancing and infection control has increased the cost to us of delivering the service, there is no plan to increase the cost to service users of planned breaks in a Nottinghamshire County Council Short Breaks unit.

However, some external providers have said that their costs for short breaks have increased due to the additional measures they have had to put in place, so please contact the care provider to confirm the cost of your relatives break before booking.

### **What alternatives are available to get a planned Short Break?**

To find out what options are available for you to take a short break please contact your social worker or the customer service centre.

Options available to some carers to access a Short Break (over a number of days or nights) or respite (during the day for a few hours) include:

- Shared Lives - care and support is provided by assessed, approved and trained 'Shared Lives Carers' in their own home and users of the service are

carefully 'matched' prior to support being given. More details of the Shared Lives service can be found here: [NCC Shared Lives Factsheet](#)

- Respite at Home – In the past this was known as a 'sitting service' where support can be provided by a care worker (from a community-based service provider) during the day, usually over 2-3 hours duration, to enable the carer to get a break. To find out more information, please contact NCC Customer Service Centre on: 0300 500 8080
- Direct Payment – This is where you can use your Short Breaks allocated budget or Personal Budget for the person cared for as a Direct Payment. A Direct Payment can be used flexibly to enable you to find a Short Break from a wider range of providers including the use of Personal Assistants. For further information about how Direct Payments can be used to provide the support you need, please see the link here: [NCC Direct Payments Factsheet](#) or contact NCC's County Council's Customer Service Centre on: 0300 500 8080 or your Social Worker

### **What support can I access if I need a Short Break in an emergency?**

If you need a break due to an emergency for example because you are taken ill and there is nobody else to care for your relative, please contact the County Council's Customer Service Centre on 0300 500 8080 in the first instance.

### **Where can I find out about other support available to me?**

**More information and support for carers can be found from:**

- Nottinghamshire Carers Hub – Advice, information and support for carers including a dedicated helpline, support groups and one to one support (support

provided virtually due to current restrictions) – Call 0115 824 8824, e-mail: [nottinghamshirehub@tuvida.org](mailto:nottinghamshirehub@tuvida.org) or <https://www.tuvida.org/nottinghamshirehub>

- Notts Help Yourself: <https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/>
- Carers UK: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)
- Nottinghamshire Carers Information Booklet 'Do you look after someone?': <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/121169/carerbooklet.pdf>

## Contact information

Phone: 0300 500 80 80 - Monday to Friday: 8am to 6pm (Calls cost 3p a minute from a BT landline. Mobile costs may vary).

Email: [enquiries@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@nottscc.gov.uk)

Website: [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk)

Minicom: 01623 434993

Phone 0300 500 80 80 if you need the information in a different language or format.