

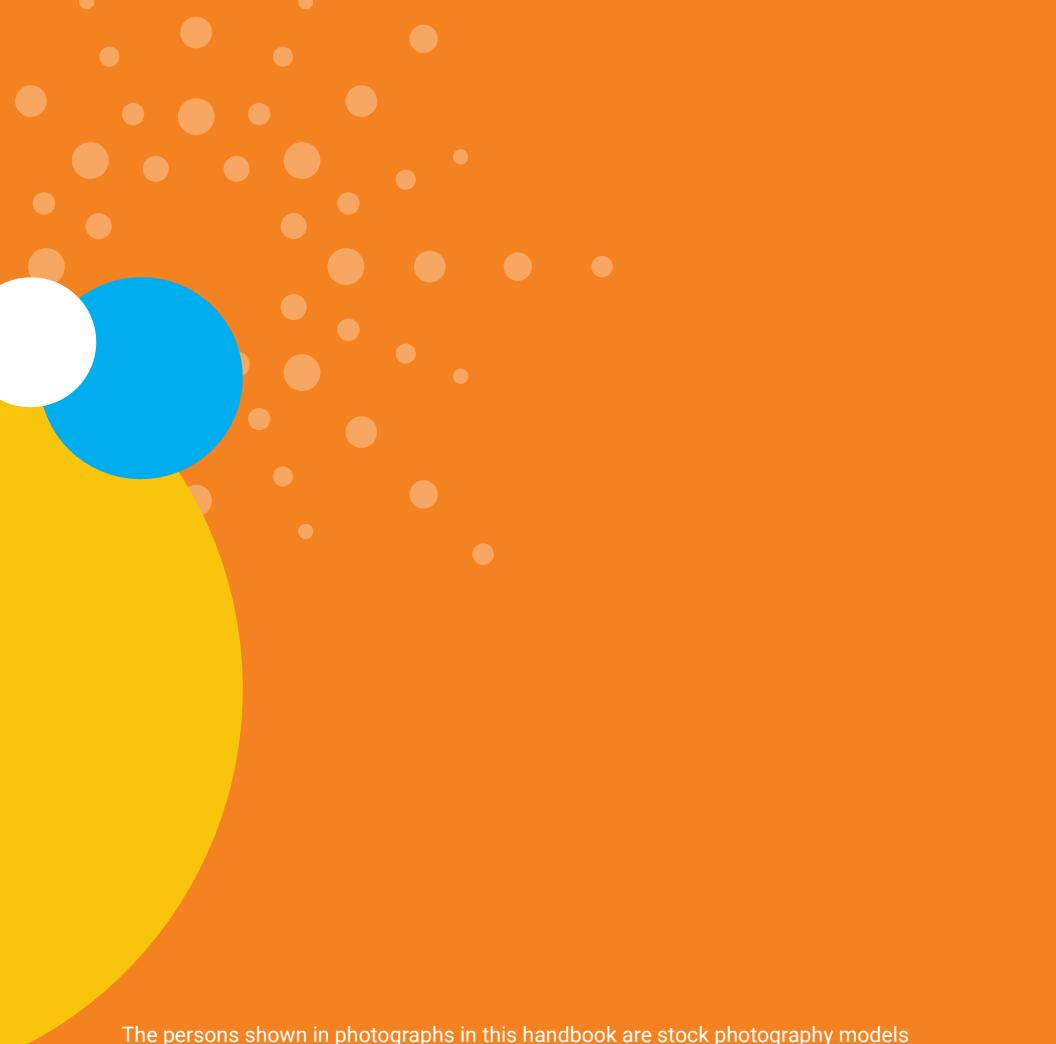


# Autism Services Handbook



*We're creating a more equitable world so people with developmental disabilities can choose their path. We do this by reimagining how care and support can be better connected to fill gaps in human services across an individual's lifespan.*





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# WELCOME

Welcome to the Easterseals Hawaii Autism Services Program. This handbook is provided to you as a resource, giving you information about your rights and responsibilities while receiving services from us and providing an overview of our program. We believe that the partnership between you and the Easterseals Hawaii team is essential to meet the needs of your loved one.

## OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES

At Easterseals Hawaii (ESH), we're creating a more equitable world so people with developmental disabilities can choose their path. We do this by reimagining how care and support can be better connected to fill gaps in human services across an individual's lifespan.

Values shape the culture and define the character of Easterseals Hawaii. Values guide how we, as an organization, behave and are the standards by which we make decisions. As an organization, our values are:

**BOLD**

**EQUITY-INFORMED**

**COMMUNITY-CENTERED**

**WELLBEING-DRIVEN**

## WHO IS A CAREGIVER?

We use the word "caregiver" for anyone who provides regular parenting and care to someone. For example, a caregiver might be a grandparent, aunt or legal guardian.

## OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We will provide exceptional, individualized, family-centered services to empower children and adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities, and children who are at risk for developmental delays, to achieve their goals and live independent, fulfilling lives. Our services are voluntary and at any time you can refuse, decline or withdraw from them.

## ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Easterseals Hawaii believes that everyone should be treated equally. We provide the same level of care to our clients regardless of their race, gender expression, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or any other factor that makes them uniquely themselves.



**Set aside quiet time to review the handbook** to read its important information. Take time to read everything and complete the required forms.

## WHEN YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the supervision team. We want to make sure all clients, caregivers and the community in a client's life understand how Easterseals Hawaii can improve the lives of people with disabilities. Contact information can be found at the end of this handbook.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

**STEP 1:** Review the contents of this handbook.

**STEP 2:** Review, sign, date and return the following forms:

- Consent to Services
- Client Information
- Financial Responsibility
- Scheduling
- Authorization to Use/  
Disclose Video Health  
Information (optional)
- Authorization to Release  
Video Recordings Containing  
Protected Health Information  
(optional)
- Authorization to Disclose  
Protected Health Information  
(optional)
- Family Survey

## IMPORTANT:

Throughout this handbook, you will see "Tip" sections. Tips offered in the handbook include helpful information and proven parenting strategies.

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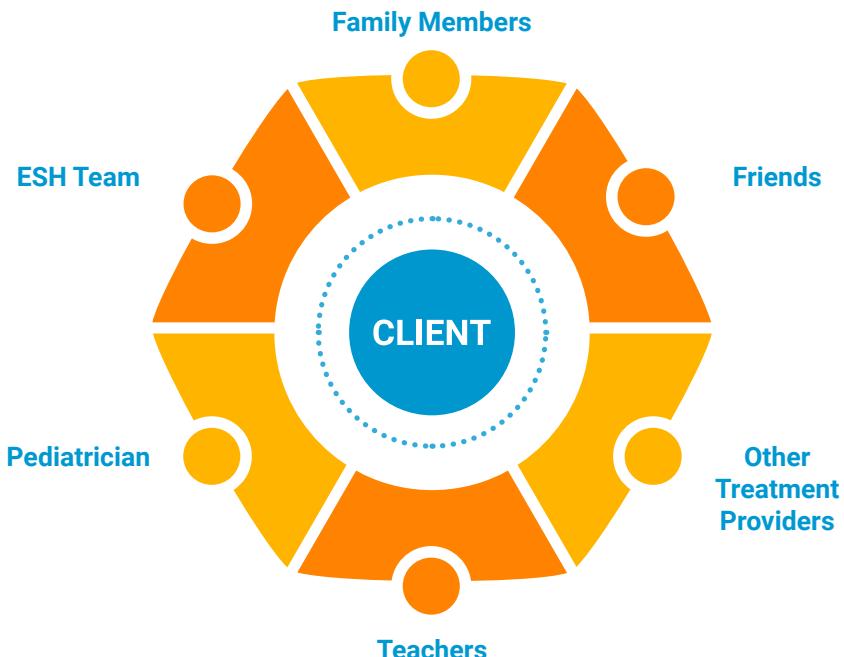
# OUR CLIENT-CENTERED AND FAMILY-INVOLVED APPROACH

***We believe in a client-centered philosophy.***

Each client, family member and caregiver are an important member of the treatment team.

You know your loved one best, so we try to recognize your knowledge and experience. Your input will help us reach better outcomes for someone with a disability like autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Parents and others close to the client need to participate in treatment in order for it to work well.



**All caregivers should understand all treatments.** It is helpful for everyone involved in your loved one's care to understand all the treatments being delivered. If your loved one gets medical or educational services from several providers, let us know what other services are received.



# AN INTRODUCTION TO OUR CLINICAL SERVICES



## WHO IS EASTERSEALS HAWAII?

Easterseals Hawaii (ESH) is an affiliate of Easterseals, Inc. We have proudly served thousands of individuals and families across the State of Hawaii for over 75 years. We are part of Catalight Care Services, a behavioral health and therapy provider network. ESH is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to create a more equitable world so people with developmental disabilities can choose their path.

## WHAT FUNDING SOURCES DO WE ACCEPT?

ESH partners with HMSA, UHA, UnitedHealthcare (UHC), Kaiser Permanente, TRICARE and other funding sources. Together with these partners, we provide treatment services. For a complete list of services that we offer, you can visit [eastersealshawaii.org](http://eastersealshawaii.org).

## key terms

Key Terms used in this handbook help explain different topics. You can also find the Key Terms at the end of the handbook.

### Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

ABA is a process used to help us understand how learning takes place. A wide variety of ABA techniques are used to help clients with ASD learn new skills.

### Client

Anyone who receives necessary treatment services from ESH.

### Evidence-Based Therapies

Treatments that are:

- Shown to be effective
- Part of research and evidence-based strategies

### Funding Source

The organization responsible for paying for some or all of the services a client receives.



## WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE SERVICES?

Everyone is unique. That's why clients at ESH receive services personalized and designed to meet their individual needs. A treatment team is assigned to each client and is responsible for creating each client's treatment plan.

At least one member of the ESH supervising team leads the treatment team. This team may also include professionals called practitioners. Practitioners are trained and qualified in working with individuals with ASD.

The following services and modalities of care are provided by ESH, and each client's treatment plan is developed with one or some of these services as either the best or most clinically needed for the client.

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### TYPES OF SERVICES

- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
  - Practitioner-Led ABA (2-Tier)
  - Caregiver-Led ABA
  - Social Skills Groups
  - Caregiver Training

### METHODS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

- Telehealth
- In-person
- Hybrid
- Direct (face-to-face)
- Indirect (treatment development and oversight by clinical staff)

---

## key terms

### Supervising Team

A clinical manager (CM), clinical supervisor (CS) and clinical leadership team make up the supervising team. Every member of this team has advanced training and is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) and a Licensed Behavior Analyst® (LBA®) in the State of Hawaii. In addition, they each work according to the laws and regulations for providing autism services. Together, this team makes sure of three things: developing your loved one's treatment plan, that your loved one's treatment plan is followed, and that your loved one is making progress.

### Practitioner

A practitioner is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) or a Registered Behavior Technician® (RBT®) who provides services to ESH clients.

### Sessions

The time during which a client receives services from ESH.

### Services

Any clinical service (direct or indirect) provided to clients.



## **PRACTITIONER BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS**

Consistent with federal and state laws, all ESH employees are subject to background checks and exclusion screening. These checks verify that our employees have no history of involvement in adverse actions related to fraud, patient abuse, suspension, or other healthcare program-related crimes.

ESH also conducts a reasonable and careful background investigation for employees, including a reference check, fingerprinting, and more, as part of the application and hiring process.



## HIGH STANDARDS AND EXCELLENCE

We are committed to excellence and high standards of clinical care for our clients. Our clinical practitioners are certified, credentialed/licensed and experienced in working with clients with disabilities.

ESH follows all laws and regulations required for each of our practitioner positions. We also require all practitioners to participate in ongoing training about:

- The latest research in the field
- Up-to-date treatment approaches
- Cultural awareness and understanding of the diverse populations that ESH serves

Practitioners also receive direct training through supervision and observation during sessions.

## INNOVATION

One of our core values is innovation, or to try out new ways of working. We do this to improve our continuous quality of care. We also do this so that our clients and families will be satisfied. Throughout treatment, we may ask you to use one of our apps. For example, we have smartphone and tablet apps. These apps can help you and your loved one with ASD stay informed about treatment.



## COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

How do we serve clients better? First, we encourage practitioners from different professional disciplines to work together and share their skills. Through this collaboration, we can help clients and families reach the goals that they desire.

Besides input from the ESH team, we may ask other professionals in a client's life, like a teacher or pediatrician for their suggestions. Professionals, family members, friends and the client all share valuable information. We want to hear from the client and all the important people in their life.

## CLIENT'S VOICE

While every client has a voice, some clients may not have the ability to say what they want and need. Others may communicate through their behavior, but not with words. No matter how a client expresses their wants and needs, we believe it is very important to listen to their voice. As a client goes through assessment and treatment, the ESH treatment team will always listen to the client's voice.

**tip**

**Don't go it alone!** Join a caregiver support group online or in person. Reach out to friends, family or your religious community for support.

## key terms

### Responsible Adult

A person who is a guardian or any individual who is:

- 18 years old or older
- Capable of providing care for the client in the caregiver's absence
- Approved by the caregiver to provide care for the client in the caregiver's absence

### Guardian

A guardian is someone authorized to make medical decisions for a client or on behalf of a client. This person could be the primary caregiver. It may also be another person responsible for the client's medical decisions – like a grandparent or legal guardian.

## **SIBLINGS, FRIENDS AND PEERS**

At ESH, we believe brothers and sisters, friends, and peers also matter. This view means that we may involve siblings, friends and others significant in a client's life in their treatment. Our practitioners will ensure treatment sessions include appropriate people who will benefit the client. ESH practitioners need to be able to focus attention on the treatment of the client. For that reason, a responsible adult must supervise the client's siblings and peers at each session.

## **INDIVIDUALIZED TREATMENT AND FAMILIES**

We try hard to create a unique treatment plan to serve the needs of the client. Sessions are focused on not only improving client skills but also on empowering the family and caregivers. We encourage families and caregivers to be active participants during the entire treatment process. This includes each and every session.

## **FAMILY COACHING**

Practitioners assigned to the client's case will work with the client, family, and caregivers to decide the right level of participation to reach the treatment goals. Practitioners will offer training and coaching on how the clients and caregivers can work on treatment during and between sessions. For example, participation may include coaching on how to respond or when not to respond to certain client behaviors.

# YOUR LOVED ONE'S TREATMENT PATH WITH ESH



## WHAT IS TREATMENT?

- A short-term opportunity for working on targeted goals
- Intended for gaining skills and resources that are needed to manage the symptoms of autism or other developmental disability
- An important time for clients and families to build their skills
- Different for every client who comes to ESH for treatment

## TREATMENT

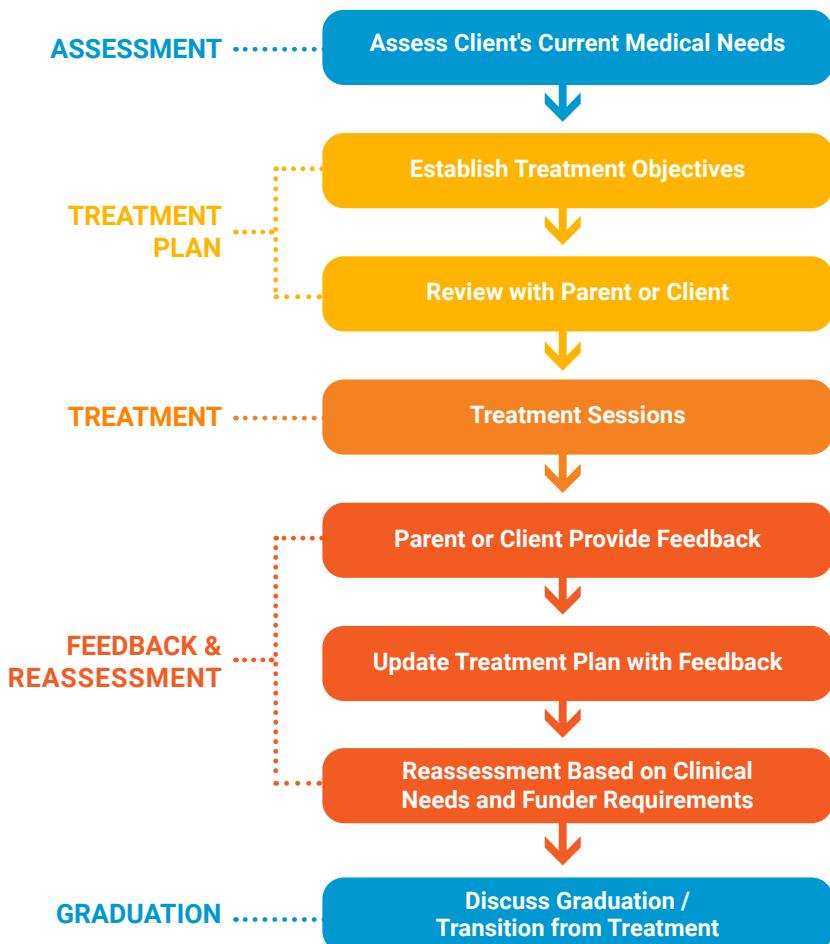
The first treatment period usually lasts about six months. Total treatment length usually lasts two years or less.

During treatment, the team working with your loved one will follow the treatment plan developed during the assessment.

If you are concerned about the treatment plan at any time, or if your loved one is not making progress, please talk with your supervising team.

# ABA ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

As part of your loved one's ABA assessment and treatment plan, we will spread assessments over several appointments with you and your loved one. This method will allow us to understand their current medical needs better. You are an essential part of this process. We will ask you for your feedback about your loved one, their treatment plan and talk to you about when your loved one will graduate or transition from ABA treatment.



## FEEDBACK AND REASSESSMENT



### REASSESSMENT

Every six months, we reassess your loved one. At this reassessment, we look at the same measures we used during the first assessment and it is how we can see how much progress your loved one has made. At each reassessment, we will talk about graduation from treatment or transition to another type of treatment.

**tip**

#### Don't forget to schedule enough time for your loved one's sessions.

When beginning services, look at your family's daily schedule and determine if it needs to be changed to make time for your loved one's treatment sessions.

# YOUR LOVED ONE'S TREATMENT TEAM

ESH uses a tiered practitioner treatment team approach, an industry best practice. We encourage you to interact with all members of your loved one's treatment team.

## YOUR LOVED ONE'S PRACTITIONERS

The following practitioners may be assigned to your loved one's treatment team to work directly with them or supervise their treatment.

### Registered Behavior Technician® (RBT®)

- Provides direct treatment based on your loved one's treatment plan

### Program Supervisor

- Is a Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®)
- Supports your loved one's treatment plan with regular session visits
- Supervises the RBT's clinical work

### Clinical Supervisor or Clinical Manager

- Is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®)
- Meets with the clients and caregivers each month to discuss progress and review treatment plans
- Oversees all practitioners who are on the team
- Is responsible for the development, implementation and overall success of your loved one's treatment plan

### Clinical Leadership Team (Program Director or Program Manager)

- Is either a BCBA® or Board-Certified Behavior Analyst-Doctoral® (BCBA-D®)
- Oversees a region's office and services
- Provides clinical consultation for high needs cases
- Supervises practitioners and ensures service quality

## DISCHARGE

Leaving the program is considered being discharged. The process for planning for the client's discharge starts as soon as they begin receiving services. A client "graduates" or is discharged from the program when we feel that the client and their family have the skills and resources needed to maintain or continue improvement without our services.

However, in some instances, we may need to discharge a client for other reasons, such as not following ESH or funding source policies and requirements. We also may discharge clients if treatment is not progressing as recommended.

Here are some examples of why a client may be discharged for other reasons:

- Attends/participates in sessions inconsistently or cancels too many sessions.
- Often arrives late to treatment sessions or leaves sessions early.
- Is unresponsive to contact attempts (by phone, email, etc.).
- Does not provide needed documentation related to consent, custody or other issues that affect our ability to provide treatment.
- Refuses clinically recommended treatment.
- Tells ESH that they do not want services anymore.
- Moves to a home that is not in ESH's or the funding source's coverage area, and can no longer access services provided within the coverage area.
- Your loved one needs services other than the services ESH provides, such as a residential or another type of program.

ESH works with clients and caregivers whenever possible to take care of any issues before any client is discharged. In addition, when feasible and recommended, we may facilitate a client's transition to another provider for treatment.



**Understand the plan.** Understanding the treatment plan is essential to your loved one's success. Just ask us if you don't understand any part of the plan. Your loved one's supervising team is here to help you understand your loved one's treatment.





# AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT TREATMENT SESSIONS

## TREATMENT SESSIONS

A responsible adult must be present at all sessions, whether they are home or community-based or in-person or via telehealth:

- When a client is under the age of 18
- When a client is an adult but needs supervision
- Whenever any siblings, peers or other children under 18 are present, including at the client's home
- To reinforce your loved one and to learn strategies used with your loved one

## IMPORTANT: RESPONSIBLE ADULT REQUIRED

We will cancel your session if a responsible adults is not present at any time during a session outside of ESH center sessions.

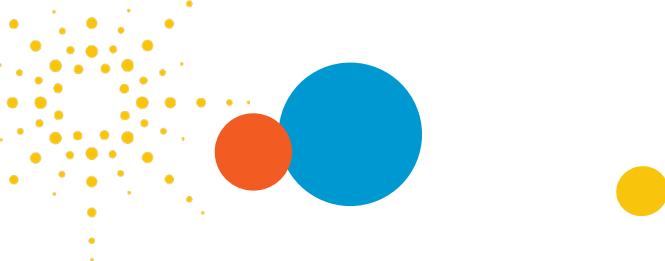
A Responsible Adult must take care of:

- Feeding
- Bathroom routines
- Monitoring the health and safety of the client
- Monitoring the health and safety of any peers or siblings under their supervision
- The client's safety during an emergency or crisis

The responsible adult is also responsible for communicating feedback and information about treatment to the client's caregiver.



**Keep phone numbers handy.** Add the phone numbers for each member of your loved one's supervising team to your phone, along with the ESH Autism Services front desk number, 808-523-8188, Catalight Care Services' Customer Service number, 855-843-2476, and email address [customerservice@catalight.org](mailto:customerservice@catalight.org).



## **CENTER BASED TREATMENT SESSIONS**

ESH provides center-based treatment services at its center in Honolulu.

A caregiver or responsible adult is not required to be present during center sessions after signing in their loved one unless the session includes any siblings, peers or other children under 18.

### **ESH Honolulu Autism Services Center**

Aloha United Way Building A

200 North Vineyard Boulevard, Suite A-600 Honolulu, HI 96817

808-523-8188

**When dropping off your loved one at our Honolulu center:** Please escort your loved one into the building and sign in at the front desk for safety and security reasons.

**When picking up your loved one at our Honolulu center:** A caregiver signature is required on each completed session note. A caregiver or responsible adult must come upstairs to the center 5-15 minutes before the end of their loved one's scheduled session to sign the session note and sign out their loved one. We reserve this time for regular communication about your loved one's progress, essential to maximizing ABA treatment. When a caregiver drops off a client at the center for sessions, they must return to pick up their loved one at the scheduled pick-up time. A caregiver must arrive 5-15 minutes before the end of their loved one's session. Timely pick-up is very important so that the practitioner's next scheduled responsibilities or sessions can start on time.

## **TELEHEALTH**

At times, ESH provides services via telehealth in addition to in-person. Prior to engaging clients in telehealth, a team member will provide instructions to the client and/or caregiver on the equipment used in service delivery, including features, set-up, use, maintenance, safety considerations, infection control and troubleshooting. Further, if a client and/or caregiver has questions about telehealth at ESH, they can contact a member of the supervision team. If after normal operating hours, clients and/or caregivers can expect a response within two business days.



## SCHEDULING A TREATMENT SESSION

We want you and your loved one to be satisfied. Therefore, we will make every effort to work around the client or the family's scheduling needs. However, because ESH provides services to many clients, we cannot always accommodate every scheduling preference. Please read our scheduling policy and let us know if you have any questions.

In addition to scheduling sessions at convenient times, ESH also schedules the number of sessions that the funding source has authorized. Doing this is called a "full schedule." Sometimes a client or family is unable to accept all the hours that are authorized. When this happens, we will consider your needs and schedule fewer hours. Occasionally ESH may not be able to accommodate a full schedule due to your scheduling limitations.

Schedules will include various practitioners to allow for treatment generalization and flexibility. It also gives the client the chance to work with different people.

## IN-BETWEEN SESSIONS

Your treatment team will give you things to work on between sessions and throughout the treatment period. Working on skills in between sessions will make a big difference in your loved one's response to treatment.

Practice the skills your loved one is learning in treatment. If you can, make them part of your loved one's everyday routine. For example, you can read picture books at home and have your loved one point to various pictures in the book if the treatment team is working on increasing your loved one's ability to identify objects.

## IMPORTANT: PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

Treatment is not a long-term solution but rather a short-term opportunity to obtain the skills and resources needed to manage the symptoms of autism or other developmental disability. Also, the more you help your loved one practice new skills, the more independent they will become.

## key terms

### Session Note

At each session, practitioners will write a session note. A caregiver or responsible adult must sign each session note. This signature is simply a verification that the session occurred at the documented times. It does not indicate that the caregiver or responsible adult has reviewed or agreed with the note's content.

### Full Schedule

A full schedule is the complete number of sessions authorized by the funding source.

## WORKING WITH YOUR LOVED ONE BETWEEN SESSIONS

- Set aside time to work on skills.
- If you have other young children in the home, find someone to watch them while you are interacting with your loved one receiving ABA services.
- Work in small amounts of time. Stop if you or your loved one gets tired.
- Take advantage of unexpected opportunities that happen when you and your loved one are doing daily tasks. For example, perhaps your loved one is working on asking for items or requesting. If you know that they want something, like a cookie, keep it just out of reach so they have the opportunity to ask for it when they want it.
- Ask us if you run into a problem and aren't sure how to handle it! Your loved one's treatment team will help you find a solution that works for you and your loved one.

**tip**

**Focus on the desired behavior.** Explaining or trying to reason with an upset child is difficult. For many caregivers, this goes against how we would want to respond. For example, we want to reason, explain, and force. So instead, focus on the behavior you want to see. Simple prompts such as, "When you are calm, we will go to the park" can help.

## TREATMENT SESSION SETTINGS AND LOCATIONS

One way to build a client's skills is to provide sessions in various settings and locations. For example, ESH may offer sessions at both your home and also one of our centers. In addition, when clinically appropriate, safe and possible, we will hold sessions in community settings, such as a park. The session location must be built into the client's treatment plan and align with your loved one's treatment goals. The supervising team must approve all requests to consider a service location for treatment sessions at least one week before delivering service at that location. We base location approval on treatment plan alignment and staff availability, including all settings outside your home or an ESH center.

We care about the safety of our clients and staff. We reserve the right to evaluate any treatment session setting before approving it. We also reserve the right to re-evaluate to determine if the location is suitable at any time. The setting can be rejected at the sole discretion of the staff member if they feel an environment is unsafe, possesses a health hazard or could subject the client or any staff member to any kind of harassment.

ESH reserves the right to discontinue providing sessions in a home or any other environment. A supervising team member will directly address any safety concerns with the client, caregiver or another responsible adult who can help resolve the issue.



### tip

**Mix up the location of sessions.** Some families find that a mix of sessions at home, the community and the center works very well. Center sessions may give your loved one the chance to interact and practice social skills with other children. For some clients, having most or all sessions in the center works well. Discuss these options with your loved one's supervising team.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In addition to the client's caregiver(s), we must have at least two emergency contacts for each client. Emergency contacts should be able to travel to the program site within 45 minutes of being contacted.

In case of an emergency, if we cannot contact the caregiver, we will call the first designated emergency contact. If we cannot get in touch with the first selected emergency contact, we will call the second designated emergency contact. If we cannot reach an emergency contact, we will call local law enforcement.

You must notify ESH immediately of any changes to your contact information or the designated emergency contacts and their contact information.



## **SPECIAL COSTS**

Sometimes a client or caregiver may request their practitioner to participate during a session with an activity or setting outside the home or center that requires an admission fee. The client or caregiver is responsible for any cost and payment required for this participation at the time of the activity.

Also, ESH and its practitioners are not financially responsible for any property damage incurred during, or as a result of, treatment in the home or other setting.

**There are times that your clinical team may ask you to purchase certain materials to support your loved one's treatment plan. If there are financial constraints in purchasing these items, please inform your clinical team.**

## **PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SETTINGS**

ABA services may be provided in a school setting during specific times and depending on the funding source requirements. As a regular part of medically funded treatment, ESH practitioners do not participate in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. However, our practitioners may participate in IEP meetings for clients with prior approval from the clinical leadership team when clinically indicated for continuity of care.

Our practitioners cannot participate as part of the school team; however, they can collaborate with the school team to support a client across settings. ESH practitioners may participate only in the portion of the IEP meeting dedicated to discussing the client's behavioral programming.

The client or caregiver may also request ESH reports to share with schools or other programs by following the Release of Information process.

## **IMPORTANT: LIMITS ON ESH'S PRESENCE**

Allowing a client to attend or participate in any particular setting such as preschool, daycare, school, lesson or class cannot be dependent on ESH's presence at that location.



## SCHEDULING POLICY

We understand how busy life can get at times. Please review our scheduling policy below to learn about how we schedule sessions for our clients. We will make every effort to meet your scheduling preference. However, at times based on practitioner availability, we may not be able to meet that preference. We promise that we will work with you to offer a full schedule that includes all authorized/accepted hours during your loved one's times of availability. We update schedules regularly, and we will do our best to make accommodations.

**Availability:** The time when your loved one can have services outside of any legally mandated activities, such as school.

**Preference:** We will consider any preferred schedule times based on clinical needs and treatment plan recommendations.

**Session Times:** Schedules will be offered in specific blocks to meet the demand for services efficiently.

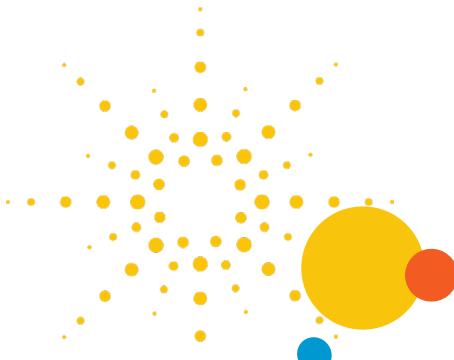
**Full Schedule:** A full schedule is the number of hours authorized by the funding source.

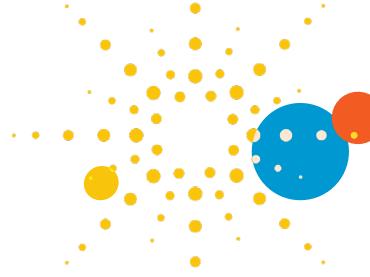
**Declined Hours:** Any scheduled hours in a full schedule that the client or caregiver does not accept due to their preference. Just because hours are declined once does not mean they have to be declined in the future. For example, if you initially refuse hours but later can accept the declined hours, you may do so.

**Schedule Changes:** ESH will periodically allow you to update your schedule preferences and availability.

**Approval of Changes:** Changes will be made based on scheduling guidelines and when the practitioner is available. Requests for schedule changes are never guaranteed. The scheduler or supervising team will contact the client or caregiver regarding any schedule changes requested.

**Treating Practitioners:** The practitioners assigned to your case will be changed regularly. These changes support ongoing generalization of your loved one's skill development.





## AN INTRODUCTION TO APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS (ABA)

For many clients who have ASD, a common treatment option is applied behavior analysis (ABA). ABA is a scientific discipline that focuses on the principles of how learning takes place. Many factors can contribute to determining our behavior. One set of characteristics includes both our past and our current environments. Others are biological factors, such as genetics. For example, by rewarding (positively reinforcing) a child who sits at the table with their family at dinnertime, that child will more likely want to sit at the table in the future. Similarly, if a child behaves poorly, the adults that are present can ignore this behavior. The result is that child will be less likely to repeat the action over time.

ABA has consistently been shown to increase skill sets and decrease challenging behavior associated with ASD. Specifically, there is strong evidence supporting ABA's ability to improve communication and social skills and reduce challenging behaviors.

To support our families, we offer two different approaches to ABA: Caregiver-Led ABA and 2-Tier ABA. Let's explore these more!

- Caregiver-Led ABA puts caregivers in the driver's seat of their loved one's care and their family's schedule. With the support of a comprehensive care team, we will train caregivers to support their loved one with tried and tested ABA disciplines. A Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) will guide, supervise and teach caregivers how to apply skills during everyday life, making teachable moments more relevant and fun.
- 2-Tier ABA, or paraprofessional-delivered ABA, is a common treatment method for children with ASD that focuses on increasing communication skills, social abilities and decreasing difficult behaviors. At Easterseals Hawaii, this model of ABA is provided by a Registered Behavior Technician (RBT®) who will work directly with your loved one under the supervision and guidance of a BCBA®.

For both models of ABA, we offer a variety of flexible treatment options, including caregiver-led ABA via telehealth, home-based and community-based 2-tier ABA to communities around our Honolulu and Kapolei locations, as well as center-based 2-tier ABA at our center located in Honolulu.



# CANCELLING A TREATMENT SESSION

## CANCELLATION POLICY

Continued progress in achieving treatment goals is essential to ESH. Depending on your funding source, progress may also be a requirement to continue receiving funding for treatment. Frequent cancellations can negatively affect our ability to help your loved one make progress. We understand that either clients or ESH may sometimes need to cancel sessions. For example, a session may need to be canceled due to illness. When the number of cancellations, for any reason, interferes with the treatment progress, ESH will make a reasonable effort to work with you and your loved one to find the most appropriate solution. We may also consult with the funding source regarding ending treatment if the cancellations are excessive or interfere with treatment progress.

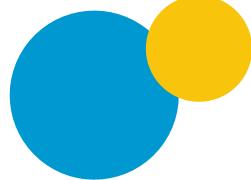
## WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE TO CANCEL A TREATMENT SESSION

Follow these guidelines when canceling a session:

- Provide as much notice as possible. Remember that we require a minimum of 24 hours' notice except for an unforeseen illness or emergency.
- Let the scheduler at [ABAscheduling@eshawaii.org](mailto:ABAscheduling@eshawaii.org) or 808-990-5294 know about the cancellation. Do not communicate cancellations directly to RBT®s or BCBA®s because they do not manage schedules.
- Provide details regarding the cancellation(s) – the number of sessions, dates, time and reason.
- Refer to the guidelines when asking for a make-up session.

## NEED TO CANCEL A SESSION?

Email [ABAscheduling@eshawaii.org](mailto:ABAscheduling@eshawaii.org) or call 808-990-5294 to let the scheduler know about the cancellation.



## WHEN A PRACTITIONER CANCELS A TREATMENT SESSION

We want to ensure cancellations by the practitioner don't adversely affect a client's treatment. Therefore, clients and caregivers are encouraged to notify the supervising team of any unplanned gaps in treatment sessions, including a practitioner's tardiness. ESH will make every effort to either send another practitioner or make up sessions canceled by a practitioner.

## IMPORTANT: SCHEDULE CHANGES

Sometimes ESH needs to make a schedule change. When this happens, the scheduler or supervising team will contact the client or caregiver.

## MAKE-UP SESSION GUIDELINES

All make-up sessions are subject to your specific funding source's expectations and the availability of practitioners.

For client-initiated cancellations, ESH will offer a make-up session only if the required 24 hours' advance notice is given and practitioners are available.

If an ESH practitioner cancels a session, we will make every effort to provide a make-up session if another practitioner can fill the regular session time.

If a client or caregiver declines an offered make-up session for any reason, these hours will be designated as declined.

## HOLIDAYS

- New Year's Day
- King Kamehameha Day
- Labor Day
- President's Day
- Juneteenth
- Thanksgiving Day
- Prince Kuhio Day
- Independence Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Memorial Day
- Statehood Day
- Christmas Day

In addition to the above holidays, the Autism Services Program may be closed for up to two business days per year for staff training. Holidays are subject to change and will be communicated in advance.



# SAFETY COMES FIRST

## ENSURING THE SAFETY OF CLIENTS AND PRACTITIONERS

We want to ensure the health and safety of all of our clients and practitioners. Therefore, it's important to follow all policies, laws and regulations related to health and safety, including our sick policy, to reduce health and safety risks during treatment.

## SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

To help maintain a safe and secure environment for all individuals on our property—children, families, visitors, employees, and caregivers—video surveillance is in use throughout all public areas. No audio is recorded. These cameras help us monitor activity, prevent incidents, and protect both people and property. By entering the premises, you acknowledge and give your implied consent to this safety measure.

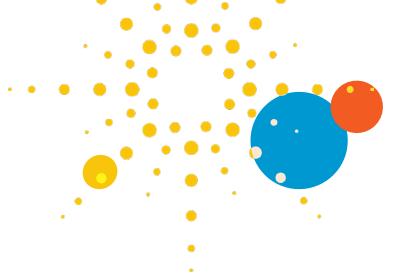
## SICK POLICY

Caregivers must notify the program if their loved one shows signs of illness, unless there is documentation provided by a medical provider stating that their loved one is well enough to attend sessions. Your loved one should be free of symptoms for 24 hours before resuming scheduled in-person sessions. In-person sessions should be cancelled if you loved one is sent home or stays home from school, childcare or has signs of illness without a doctor's note. In-person sessions can be rescheduled for telehealth or take place another day when your loved one is symptom-free and no longer contagious.

If anyone else in the family or home is experiencing any signs of illness, we ask that a safe distance be maintained between the individual and ESH staff to prevent transmission of any illness.

If your loved one or anyone in the loved one's home has a highly contagious disease, such as, but not limited to, COVID-19, Pink Eye, Strep, Impetigo (skin infection), or Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease, sessions must be cancelled. A note from a medical provider may be requested by ESH prior to resuming services.

If anyone in the home has head lice, please let us know and cancel sessions until treated and nit-free.



## **IMPORTANT:**

ESH requires all clients and practitioners to abide by the terms of the sick policy. Sessions will be cancelled and rescheduled if there is a risk of spreading illness or infection.

## **MEDICATION ASSISTANCE**

Easterseals Hawaii ABA program does not provide medication support during programming. Clients and caregivers should ensure that all medications are taken prior to or after all appointments.

## **RESPONSE TO UNSAFE CLIENT BEHAVIOR**

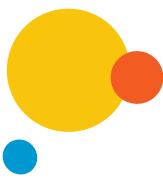
With input from the client and caregiver, practitioners develop treatment goals. They may also provide coaching on how to respond to unsafe and unhealthy client behavior in the most effective way. While practitioners may use gentle physical prompting based on specific treatment guidelines, we prohibit them from using any physical restraint on your loved one. The only exception is if your loved one's Treatment Plan specifically recommends it.

Using restraint during treatment is rare. A multidisciplinary team, including ESH Clinical Services leadership and Catalight Care Services clinical leadership, must approve all use of restraint. Practitioners trained in safe and effective restraint are the only ones allowed to use this method.

ESH instructs practitioners to remove themselves if a client's behavior escalates to the point that it makes them feel unsafe. If a client is in immediate danger to themselves or others, ESH staff will call 911.

## **TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES**

ESH practitioners are responsible for their own transportation. Therefore, our practitioners can neither provide transportation to clients and caregivers nor accept rides from clients and caregivers.



## YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We are committed to protecting the rights of our clients and staff at all times.

You have the following rights:

- To receive services in a manner free from abuse, retaliation, humiliation, neglect and financial or other exploitation.
- To receive services voluntarily and of your own free will.
- To receive services that are sensitive to age, sexual orientation and gender identity, race, cultural or religious preference, health status, and physical ability.
- To receive information that allows clients and caregivers to make informed consent before starting services.
- To refuse services offered after being notified of the benefits, alternatives, and consequences.
- To be provided with access to or referral to self-help support services, advocacy services and legal entities for appropriate representation, when applicable.
- To be an informed participant by receiving information regarding services in a reasonably prompt and confidential manner.
- To access information and records in sufficient time to facilitate decision making, as outlined in the Notice of Privacy Practices. Our Notice of Privacy Practices is maintained at all times on our website, [www.eastersealshawaii.org](http://www.eastersealshawaii.org).
- To have the client's records protected as required by applicable privacy law, as described in our Notice of Privacy Practices.
- To receive relevant information regarding the individuals providing services, to the extent permitted by organizational policies and applicable privacy laws.
- To be provided on request, an accurate and current set of professional credentials of practitioners working with the client.
- To be provided with information on how to lodge complaints about professional practices of practitioners through the applicable professional licensing/credential board.
- To file a complaint without fear of retaliation or the imposition of any barrier to service.



To help your loved one get the most out of services, we ask that all caregivers and Responsible Adults follow these important responsibilities:

### **Be an Active Participant in Your Child's Treatment**

- Join scheduled sessions and meetings.
- Use the strategies outlined in your child's treatment plan at home.
- Share your thoughts on your child's goals, progress, and any concerns.
- Help set and review goals with your child's care team.
- Keep us updated on any changes in your child's behavior or routine.

### **Communicate with Respect**

- Treat all staff with kindness and professionalism.
- Use respectful language and behavior during all interactions.
- If you have concerns, please follow the steps in our complaint and grievance section so we can support you appropriately.

### **Maintain a Safe and Clean Environment for In-Home Sessions**

- Provide a clean, quiet, and safe space for services.
- Secure any fragile or valuable items away from the session space.
- Keep pets, hazardous materials, and distractions out of the area being used for services.
- Make sure the space is comfortable and ready for your child and the practitioner.

## **PARTICIPATION IN LEGAL MATTERS**

Sometimes families who come to ESH for services are involved in legal matters such as due process with the Department of Education (DOE) or court related matters such as custody or divorce proceedings. We understand that these situations can be stressful for you and your loved ones. It is important to know that we will remain neutral and not participate in any legal matters or disputes, including those involving your loved ones unless required by law or court order.

If you require information about services, please inform your practitioner. They will supply you with a Request for Information form, which you can present to a court official to receive the necessary details.

## **MANDATED REPORTING LAWS IN HAWAII**

In Hawaii, we consider ESH staff and practitioners mandated reporters.

**Child Abuse and Neglect:** If an ESH staff member or practitioner believes that child abuse or neglect has occurred or that there is a substantial risk that may happen in the near future, they must immediately report their suspicions to the Hawaii Department of Health or the police department. (Hawaii Revised Statutes § 350-1.1)

**Vulnerable Adult Abuse and Neglect:** A mandatory reporter who, in the performance of his or her professional or official duties, knows or has reason to believe that a vulnerable adult has incurred abuse or is in danger of abuse if immediate action is not taken must promptly report the concern to the Hawaii Department of Health. (Hawaii Revised Statutes § 346-224)

A vulnerable adult is someone 18 years and older who, because of a mental, developmental or physical impairment, is unable to:

- Communicate or make responsible decisions to manage the person's care or resources.
- Carry out or arrange for essential activities of daily living.
- Protect oneself from abuse.

## **CONSENT TO SERVICES**

Obtaining valid informed consent for services is a necessary step in providing services to our clients. Any medical model and medical necessity-based services require approval. Clients or caregivers must provide written consent for services before receiving them. Clients or caregivers must also renew consent annually or when the client's Treatment Plan significantly changes.

Because obtaining accurate and complete documentation is essential to starting or continuing services, it is the caregiver's responsibility to:

- Provide current, accurate information and documentation.
- Notify ESH about any custody or decision-making authority issues or changes.
- Update ESH with relevant information changes.

## **JOINT CUSTODY/DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY**

In cases involving joint custody and decision-making authority of a client, ESH will assume either party with joint custody has independent authority to make medical decisions for the client and will rely on the consent of the guardian referring the client for treatment. We will not suspend services due to the inability to contact one party holding joint custody. However, if ESH is informed or otherwise reasonably believes that there is a disagreement related to medical decision-making between parties with joint medical decision-making authority ESH may suspend services for the party until the disagreements are resolved. ESH requires any guardian or individual claiming custody or joint decision-making authority to provide a certified copy of a current court order that clearly establishes their legal authority to make decisions on behalf of the child.

## **CAPACITY TO MAKE MEDICAL DECISIONS**

Sometimes a client is not able to make his or her own medical or treatment decisions. This depends on the severity of the disability or on the age. If a client, who is 18 years of age or older, cannot make his or her own medical decisions, under Hawaii law, family and/or other caregiver participation becomes part of all treatment plans. In addition, depending on the funding source of treatment, family or caregiver participation may be required for continued funding.

## **HOW TO AUTHORIZE ESH TO SHARE PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION (PHI) OR REQUEST MEDICAL RECORDS**

Our policy is to send medical records to only clients or caregivers unless authorized to send them to other parties.

### **TO GET AUTHORIZATION FORMS:**

- Contact the ESH ABA clinical leadership team (the program manager or [clientprograms@eshawaii.org](mailto:clientprograms@eshawaii.org)).
- Ask a member of the client's supervising team (the BCBA® or BCaBA®).
- Clients or caregivers may authorize ESH to share PHI with an individual or entity by completing the Authorization to Disclose PHI Form.
- Clients or caregivers may fill out a request to obtain a copy of the client's medical records by completing the Authorization to Release PHI Form.
- Clients or caregivers may revoke an authorization to disclose PHI except: to the extent that we have already acted in reliance on the authorization, or if the authorization obtained was a condition of getting insurance coverage, and another law provides the insurer with the right to contest a claim under the policy or the policy itself.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING

Whenever possible, ESH uses technology to raise the level of care we offer to clients and families. This means using video or photography during treatment – or both. They are important tools to improve the quality of care. Video and photography enable practitioners to train and share information with clients and families. We strive to use every available and appropriate way to improve services and achieve treatment goals. Your consent to photograph and video record treatment is an important step to help us accomplish this goal. However, this is voluntary. You may decline to sign this consent or have the right to revoke consent at any time without impact on treatment, payment or eligibility for benefits.

*(Please see the **Consent to Photography/Video Recording Authorization to Use/Disclose Photograph(s) Form**).*

## FILING A COMPLAINT OR GRIEVANCE

Clients and caregivers may file a complaint at any time without fear of retaliation. When we receive a complaint, our staff works to remedy the concern and prevent the issue from happening again.

### IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT OR GRIEVANCE:

**STEP  
1**

**Ask to meet with a member of your loved one's supervising team to discuss your concerns.** Usually this is the only step you need to take. We are committed to resolving issues quickly. If you are not satisfied after meeting with a supervisor or manager, please move on to the second step below.

**STEP  
2**

If the discussion with a supervisor or manager does not resolve the issue, **talk to your Program Manager or a member of ESH's clinical leadership team** by emailing them at [clientprograms@eshawaii.org](mailto:clientprograms@eshawaii.org).

**STEP  
3**

If the issue is not resolved by the clinical leadership team, contact our **Quality Department at [Quality@catalight.org](mailto:Quality@catalight.org) to file a complaint or grievance.** You may also bypass steps 1 and 2 above and file a grievance at any time. Our Quality Department will work with you, your treatment team, and our leadership to resolve the issue in an unbiased and ethical manner.



## COMMON TERMS USED DURING TREATMENT SESSIONS

The following are definitions of commonly used terms found in this handbook.

### APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

**(ABA):** ABA is a scientific discipline that focuses on the principles of how learning takes place. We use various ABA techniques to help clients with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) learn new skills.

**AVAILABILITY:** When your loved one can have services outside of any activities they have to participate in by law, such as school.

**BEHAVIOR MAPPING:** A visual representation of engaging in appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and the consequences the behaviors result in.

**CAREGIVER-MEDIATED:** When a caregiver utilizes clinical strategies to implement goals with the client.

**CLIENT:** Someone receiving treatment services from ESH.

**CLIENT-MEDIATED:** When a client utilizes clinical techniques or strategies to implement and monitor their own goals.

**EVIDENCE-BASED THERAPIES:** Treatments that are based on well-designed research and have been shown to be effective.

**FULL SCHEDULE:** The complete number of sessions authorized by the funding source.

**FUNDING SOURCE:** The organization responsible for some or all of the payment for services ESH provides.

**GUARDIAN:** The person(s) authorized to make medical decisions for or on behalf of a client. This could be a parent but could also be another

person (a grandparent or caregiver) who is responsible for the client's medical decisions.

**PRACTITIONER:** Any professional who provides services to ESH clients.

**RESPONSIBLE ADULT:** A person, other than the caregiver(s), who is: (1) 18 years of age or older; (2) capable of providing care for the client in the caregiver's absence; and (3) approved by the caregiver(s) to provide care for the client in the caregiver's absence.

**SELF-DETERMINATION:** The practice of a client choosing their own treatment goals and strategies.

**SERVICES:** Any clinical service provided to clients by ESH.

**SESSION NOTE:** At each session, practitioners will write a session note that a caregiver or responsible adult must sign. This signature is only a verification that the session occurred at the documented times. It does not indicate that the caregiver or responsible adult has reviewed or agreed with the note's content.

**SESSIONS:** Time when a client receives services from ESH.

**SUPERVISING TEAM:** A clinical supervisor and the senior clinical manager make up the supervising team. This team is responsible for developing a client's treatment plan. That the client is following this plan and monitoring their progress. Every member of the supervising team has advanced training and is certified according to the laws and regulations for providing ABA.



[EastersealsHawaii.org](http://EastersealsHawaii.org)



*Easterseals Hawaii has been awarded the highest level of accreditation by CARF International for its Autism Services Program.*



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