

# Overview

This article explains the characteristics of CarePortal requests that tend to receive more responses from community and church responders. Caseworkers should consider all of these factors for each of their requests so they are advocating safely and effectively for the family and children in need as well as representing their agency in a professional way.

## Intended Audience

Agency Workers, Agency Supervisors, Agency Reps; Regional Managers

## 5 Tips for Entering a Quality Request

### 1. **No Names or Contact Information, Ever**

This means information for the family and children in need, but *also regarding the caseworker entering the request*. When an approved responder makes a commitment to help through the CarePortal platform, they will automatically receive the caseworker's contact information (and vice versa). If they are not an approved responder with this level of access, they will be directed to work with someone in their area who *does* have this approval.

### 2. **Advocate for the Family**

Caseworkers should highlight the family's strengths and the hurdles they've overcome. It helps to show confidence in how the family will benefit directly if this request were met, and why. When caseworkers have clearly taken time to write something from the heart to explain why they personally want to see a particular family receive help, responders can sense that and often rally around that family as well.

### 3. **Include Answers to Potential Questions**

Caseworkers should put themselves in the shoes of a responder that only knows what they are sharing about a family, and ask what questions might remain unanswered to show responders someone has considered their potential concerns. For example:

-Would a responder need to know sizes for the needed items? Include them in the description.

-Has the agency invested in helping the family in other ways already? Share how to give responders confidence they aren't the only avenue for help.

-Is there a plan to help the family avoid the same circumstance next month? Share what that plan is.

#### 4. **Use Realistic Time and Value Estimates**

CarePortal requests are not guaranteed to receive responses, so caseworkers should not stop looking for the needed items or services from other potential providers. It's also important that requests are not entered with a critical urgency level unnecessarily since the platform does treat these requests differently. Value estimates should also be kept to what they genuinely require someone to invest since the CarePortal platform allows for responders to commit funding for certain requests as well. What they can commit for each request is directly affected by the estimated value given to the items on the request.

#### 5. **Focus on the Essentials**

Requests that include a long list of small items can feel overwhelming and more complex than they really are. Likewise, request descriptions that don't match the items added to the request can lead to confusion. When caseworkers hone in on the main needs that present the biggest barriers or would have the highest impact on the family (whether they are big or small items), responders will have a clear understanding for how they can get involved in that request. These responders are often eager to look for other, smaller needs as a way to follow-up with families they serve.

*For more training and insights, please refer to the Agency Training Module video and speak with your designated Agency Rep within your organization.*