



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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August 7, 2015

TO LEA Superintendents
Charter School Directors

FROM Rebecca B. Garland, Deputy State Superintendent
Office of the Deputy State Superintendent

RBG

Tammy L. Howard, Director *TH*
Accountability Services Division

REQUEST FOR TESTING EXCEPTIONS BASED ON SIGNIFICANT MEDICAL EMERGENCIES AND/OR CONDITIONS

There may be rare circumstances in which a student cannot take a state assessment during the entire testing window, including makeup dates, because of a significant medical emergency and/or condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, circumstances involving students who are (1) in the final stages of a terminal or degenerative illness, (2) comatose, or (3) receiving extensive short-term medical treatment due to a medical emergency. Under these circumstances, a school may request from the Division of Accountability Services/North Carolina Testing Program a testing exception for the student. If a medical exception is granted, the student remains enrolled in the school during this period; however, the student does not take the assessment(s), and the school does not include the student when calculating participation rates.

Attached to this memo is the process for requesting testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions for the 2015–16 school year. Failure to adhere to this process or include all requested information may result in the need to resubmit the request or may cause a delay in the response. Submit requests for consideration via (registered mail method) by the LEA superintendent or charter school director to Dr. Tammy Howard, Director of Accountability Services, 6314 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6314.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in adhering to the policies and procedures concerning requests for testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions. Your services and contributions to the education of children in North Carolina are appreciated.

RBG:TLH:whw

c: June St. Clair Atkinson, State Superintendent
William Hussey, Director, Exceptional Children
Jo Anne Honeycutt, Director, Career and Technical Education
Adam Levinson, Office of Charter Schools
LEA Testing Directors/Coordinators
LEA Exceptional Children Program Directors
Regional Accountability Coordinators
Exceptional Children Regional Consultants

Attachment

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY SERVICES

6314 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6314 | (919) 807-3769 | Fax (919) 807-3772

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Process for Requesting Testing Exceptions Based on Significant Medical Emergencies and/or Conditions

The following is the process for requesting testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions for the 2015–16 school year. Failure to adhere to this process or include all requested information may result in the need to resubmit the request or may cause a delay in the response.

1. The local education agency (LEA) superintendent or charter school director must support the appeal and submit a written request to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). **The request must be submitted on the superintendent's or charter school director's letterhead and include the original signature of the superintendent or charter school director.** The parent must be notified that such a request is being submitted and must give consent.
2. The request must include detailed justification explaining why the student's medical emergency and/or condition prevent participation in the respective test administration during the testing window and the subsequent makeup period. The justification must contain the following information:
 - Student's first and last name
 - Student's PowerSchool student number
 - Student's assigned grade
 - School name
 - LEA code
 - School code
 - Name of the test(s) for which the exception is being requested
 - Dates of the scheduled test administration(s) and testing window, including the make-up period, for which the exception is being requested
 - **Indicate if the student has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a Section 504 Plan, or transitory impairment plan**
 - **If the student has an IEP, attach a complete copy of the current DEC 4 IEP form (including present levels of performance, IEP goals, special education services, etc.) to this request. If the student has a behavioral concern, attach a copy of the Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) as well as the Functional Behavioral Assessment.**
 - **If the student has a Section 504 Plan or a transitory impairment plan, attach a copy of the current documentation.**
 - The date of the onset of the emergency and/or condition
 - The expected duration/recovery period of the emergency and/or condition
 - Days of instruction the student has missed because of the medical emergency and/or condition. Attach the attendance record if applicable.
 - **Explanation of how the significant medical emergency and/or condition affects the student on a daily basis, including time spent on instruction, the type of instruction taking place, and how the student's condition impacts it.** This explanation should provide sufficient detail and documented data so the review committee can thoroughly understand the implications of the emergency and/or condition on the student's learning.

Supporting information and/or doctors' notes/letters may be included but are not required. **Notes from doctors and medical professionals should address and/or explain the impact of the condition on the student but should not provide a testing recommendation.**

- **Explanation of why the student's medical emergency and/or condition prevent participation in the respective test administration during the testing window and the subsequent makeup period.** Information should be provided that explicitly states why the test cannot be administered. A request for medical exemption should not be made because the LEA/charter believes that the student cannot pass the test.
- **Students receiving homebound services are expected to test. If a student is homebound and cannot test, the medical exception justification and supporting documents should clearly detail why the student is unable to be tested in a homebound setting (including attendance records for homebound sessions and a letter from the homebound teacher).** Assessments can be administered to students in a homebound setting, provided that test administrators and proctors are appropriately trained.

If information is missing in the request, it may be returned for completion.

The North Carolina Testing Program does not process the following medical exception requests:

- The North Carolina Testing Program does not process medical exception requests for CTE Post Assessments. The Career and Technical Education Division of Instructional Services (CTE) makes decisions regarding special exceptions for these courses. Contact CTE at (919) 807-3818 for questions or concerns about CTE Post Assessment medical exemptions.
 - Medical exceptions for NC Final Exams (NCFE) are not to be sent to the NCDPI. It is a local decision as to how requests for medical exceptions are to be processed for the NCFEs. However, if a student has been granted a medical exception by the NCDPI for the current school year's testing window(s), it may be extended to include the NCFEs at the discretion of the LEA/charter.
3. **Requests for exceptions may be made at any point in the school year *before* the following deadlines:**

Tests Occurring in Fall Semester 2015

Situation	Deadline for Submission
Existing conditions or medical situations known by November 16	November 23
Medical emergency occurring after November 16 but within the fall testing window	End of fall testing window

Tests Occurring in Spring Semester 2016

Situation	Deadline for Submission
Ongoing conditions—evidence present early in the school year that student will be unable to test during testing window	February 1
Existing conditions or medical situations identified by April 25	May 9
Medical emergency occurring after April 26 but within testing window	End of spring testing window but <i>no later</i> than June 15

Please note: Due to time constraints, only those requests received by the NCDPI by May 9, 2016, will be given an opportunity to appeal a decision. Submit all information regarding appeals no later than June 15, 2016.

4. Submit requests for consideration via **(receipted mail method)** by the LEA superintendent or charter school director to Dr. Tammy Howard, Director of Accountability Services, 6314 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-6314. **Do not fax requests.**
5. The NCDPI Director of Accountability Services will provide a written statement of the decision to the LEA superintendent or charter school director.
6. Students who are approved for a testing exception are coded for data analysis purposes by the NCDPI. LEA/charter test coordinators should ensure that the reason code "G" is manually entered into PowerSchool for approved testing exceptions.
7. Any exception granted by the NCDPI is limited to the testing period for the specific test(s) for which it was requested and does not carry forward to future test administrations, unless noted in the NCDPI decision.

It is the expectation of the NCDPI that only those students who the LEA/charter believes are **unable to participate** in a state assessment are submitted for a medical exception request. Students who are granted a medical exception shall not be reported or counted in the school, district, or state test scores and will not be included in the calculation of the 95 percent tested rule. In addition, students who are granted an exception are required to meet all state and local graduation requirements before receiving a high school diploma.

Please be reminded that any written material containing identifiable student information shall not be disseminated or otherwise made available to the public by any member of the State Board of Education, any employee of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, any employee of the NCDPI, any member of a local board of education, any employee of a local board of education, or any other person, except as permitted under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. §1232g.

If you have questions regarding requests for testing exceptions based on significant medical emergencies and/or conditions, please contact Wendy Wooten at (919) 807-3801 or wendy.wooten@dpi.nc.gov.