



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR FAMILIES

I believe my child needs distance learning for the 2021-22 school year due to COVID-19. How do I register?

Due to the critical benefits of in-person learning and the robust health and safety protocols in place in our schools to support the wellbeing of students, staff and families, distance learning in the 2021-22 school year will only be available to students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade with a documented physical or mental health condition that requires distance learning due to COVID-19. Students with a health condition that requires distance learning must submit a *COVID-19 Medical Consent and Certification for Distance Learning*, completed by the parent/guardian AND licensed physician or nurse practitioner.

What information must be included in the COVID-19 Medical Consent and Certification for Distance Learning?

Students requesting distance learning for the 2021-22 school year due to COVID-19 must submit a complete *COVID-19 Medical Consent and Certification for Distance Learning* form (“medical certification form”). All sections of the form must be completed for the form to be considered, including the parent consent (page 1), as well as the clinical documentation by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner of the student’s physical or mental health condition that requires distance learning (page 2).

Will all medical certification forms be accepted?

Local education agencies (LEAs) and schools will review the medical certification form to ensure it is complete and legible and explains how a student’s health condition requires the student’s participation in distance learning due to COVID-19. LEAs and schools may follow-up with the healthcare provider who completed the form to verify critical information. LEAs and schools will accept forms found to be complete and legible and that explain how the student’s physical or mental health condition requires the student’s participation in distance learning due to COVID-19.

My child has a medical need for home or hospital instruction, unrelated to COVID-19. What forms do I complete?

Families seeking Home and Hospital Instruction should follow the LEA’s/school’s standard policies and procedures to request Home and Hospital Instruction. The medical certification form is only for requests for distance learning due to a medical condition that requires distance learning due to COVID-19.

Can pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students approved for distance learning participate in in-person extracurricular activities or athletics?

No. Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students approved for distance learning may not participate in any in-person activities at the school, including extracurricular and athletic activities.

Can a family member’s health condition(s) be documented as justification for the request for distance learning?

No. Only the student’s physical or mental health condition that requires distance learning, as documented on the medical certification form by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner, may be used to approve registration in distance learning due to COVID-19.

For how long is the medical certification considered active?

As articulated on page 1 of the form, the medical certification is considered active for the approval of distance learning for one academic semester (or two terms, for schools on a quarterly schedule). Families are required to submit an updated medical certification form in the event of any ongoing medical need requiring distance learning beyond one semester.

By when do I need to submit this form to be approved for distance learning in the 2021-22 school year?

DC Public Schools and each public charter LEA will define and communicate their own deadlines for submission of the completed medical certification form. Families should contact their child’s school to confirm specific dates.

If my child is approved for distance learning, is it possible to switch to in-person learning mid-semester?

This decision will be made at the discretion of the LEA/school. Schools are encouraged to allow their students to return to in-person learning as soon as their operations allow and as allowed by a student’s healthcare provider. Any student wishing to transition mid-semester from distance to in-person learning should submit documentation from their healthcare provider clearing them to return mid-semester to in-person activities, or as otherwise directed by their LEA/school.

What happens if I enroll my child at a new school, or my child develops a medical condition that requires distance learning due to COVID-19, after the deadline above?

Families should contact their child’s school to learn about opportunities to register a student in distance learning after the deadline above.

I have questions. Whom should I contact?

Families with questions about enrolling in distance learning, including the medical certification form, should contact their school.