

MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS FOR STAAR

With the implementation of the new accountability system in 2018, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will more closely monitor participation rates for campuses, districts, and charter schools. To ensure that students who have experienced a significant medical event do not impact participation rates, a new process has been developed for a medical exemption from the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®).

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered to receive a medical exemption from STAAR, the student must be absent during the testing and makeup window and all efforts to assess the student have been unsuccessful. Medical exemption requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for students who meet one of the specific medical conditions listed below. The information used to make the medical exemption determination must reflect the student's situation throughout the testing and makeup window.

- The student is unable to receive sufficient or consistent homebound services due to medical issues. (This means that the student is currently receiving homebound services; however, the homebound teacher is unable to provide services for the majority of the documented time due to the medical issues.)
- The student is unable to respond to test questions due to a terminal or degenerative illness. (This means that the student's diagnosis is actively/currently affecting his or her daily activities such that no available accommodations can reasonably mitigate these factors.)
- The student is receiving extensive short-term medical treatment due to a medical emergency or severe injury (e.g., coma, major head trauma, organ failure). Note: appendectomy, tonsillectomy, or broken arms/legs do not constitute a severe medical issue.
- The student is unable to interact with peers or educators without the risk of infection or contamination to himself or herself or others (e.g., measles, respiratory illness, malaria). Note: colds and flu do not constitute a significant medical emergency.

Identification Process

The information used to make the medical exemption determination must reflect the student's situation throughout the testing and makeup window. For a student who meets one of the eligibility criteria listed above, the district or charter school must review, verify, and maintain a copy of the medical documentation (e.g., licensed physician's note). To request a medical exemption, the district testing coordinator must complete a Medical Exemption Request form for each student who qualifies. The form can be found at: <http://txetests.com/medexemption>. Forms must be submitted by the Friday of the week following the test administration. Once the form is submitted, it will be reviewed by the Student Assessment Division for approval to ensure that criteria have been met. The form must be submitted for each STAAR administration.

If a student meets one of the eligibility criteria listed above, the student's answer document should be marked "A" for Absent. The Student Assessment Division will provide a file of all approved medical exemptions to Performance Reporting for exclusion from participation rate calculations.