

Special Education during COVID-19 FAQs: *COVID-19 Compensatory Services*

What are COVID-19 Compensatory Services?

- Services to address a student's loss of skills or knowledge, or lack of progress during COVID-19 because IEP services were not provided, or because the student could not access remote IEP services.
- The services are **in addition to** services on your child's current IEP.
- The services are based on information provided by parents, the school, and others.
- The school must decide with you whether your child needs COVID-19 Compensatory Services and specify the type, amount, and duration of services based on your child's needs.

Who will decide if my child needs COVID-19 Compensatory Services?

- The IEP Team, including the parent, decides whether your child needs COVID-19 Compensatory Services, what services they need, and how much they need in order to make up for what they lost.
- This can happen in a full IEP meeting or in an IEP meeting without all Team members present if you sign a consent form saying you agree to hold the meeting without certain team member(s).
- You can also decide on Compensatory Services by talking informally to the IEP Team Leader or other administrator at the school. The school should encourage and fully consider your input as the parent.

How soon will an IEP Team Meeting be scheduled to decide if my child needs COVID-19 Compensatory Services?

- Schools must hold IEP meetings as soon as possible (no later than December 15, 2020) for students who are likely to need compensatory services, including:
 - Students with disabilities who did not receive or were unable to access any special education services during school closures
 - Students with disabilities who are:
 - Marked "high needs" through the IEP process on a form called, "[Primary Disability/Level of Need-PL 3](#)";
 - Unable to engage in remote learning;
 - Homeless;
 - In foster care or congregate care;
 - Use AAC (Augmentative Alternative Communication);
 - English Learners;
 - Preschoolers with evaluation or service delays; or
 - Students who turned 22 between March 15-December 23
- For all other students with disabilities, the school should schedule a meeting after your child has transitioned back to school and there has been some time to observe how your child is doing. You can also request an IEP meeting at any time. The school should consider parent input about any loss of skills or lack of progress.

Are there any other supports that will be provided to my child when schools re-open?

- Yes. Schools may also provide “recovery support.” This is general education support to address learning gaps, skill loss, and emotional needs. These supports are not an IEP Team decision. However, the IEP Team might discuss whether accommodations are needed for your child to access recovery support and consider whether recovery support is enough to meet your child’s needs or whether your child also needs compensatory services.
- Schools may also provide your child *new* IEP Services if the IEP Team determines that your child has new disability-related needs resulting from the school closure. For example, a child who has a new anxiety diagnosis since COVID-19 may need new IEP services or an evaluation to determine the need for additional services.

What should I do if I think my child needs COVID-19 Compensatory Services?

- Email the IEP Team Leader or principal. Make sure to tell them if your child couldn’t access remote learning, didn’t make progress, has experienced regression (lost skills), has new areas of need, or other areas of concern.
- Gather information about any IEP services that were not offered or were not accessible to your child.
- Keep documenting what school is offering and how your child is doing. This is an app you can use to keep track: <https://log.education/>

Contact MAC’s Helpline for further information.

MAC Helpline:
617-357-8431
massadvocates.org/helpline

This information is based upon the guidance document issued by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education entitled Coronavirus (COVID-19) Special Education Technical Assistance Advisory 2021-1: *COVID-19 Compensatory Services and Recovery Support for Students with IEPs*, dated 8/17/20