



## New York City Department of Education Guidance for In-Person Provision of Services and Assessments by Contract and Independent Providers of SETSS, SEIT, and Evaluations

Effective September 3, 2021

Beginning September 3, 2021, the policy below applies to the provision of the following in-person and/or remote services/assessments by contract and independent providers/agencies:

- Special education teacher support services (SETSS)
- Special education itinerant teaching (SEIT) services
- Preschool multi-disciplinary evaluation providers (MDE providers)
- School-age evaluation providers

Multiple COVID-19 prevention strategies must be implemented, as further described below, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. These are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the New York State Education Department (NYSED), and public health experts at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).

### Remote Services/Assessments

Until further notice<sup>1</sup>, services and/or assessments should be provided in person, and may be provided remotely only at the parent's request, which must be documented and specify that remote services are being requested for the 2021-22 school year. Services cannot be provided remotely during time that the student is physically present in a DOE school or program. If remote services are currently being provided, services should resume in person as soon as possible in any setting.

### In-Person Services/Assessments

Providers/agencies must follow any health/safety protocols in place in the location in which the service is provided or assessment conducted (e.g., school, child care location). At minimum, providers/agencies must comply with the health and safety measures below.

**Screening protocols:** All providers must implement ongoing self-screening before working in-person with students. If the school/location has screening protocols in place, the provider can rely on those screening procedures and does not have to conduct their own screening of the student/family. If the school/location does not have screening protocols in place or the service is being provided in the student's home, providers and families must implement ongoing self-screening prior to any session, including the following questions:

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<sup>1</sup> We anticipate that remote services/assessments will be very limited in the Fall as schools transition back to school-based in-person instruction. Providers/agencies should plan to resume in-person services in the Fall unless otherwise advised.

- 1. Have you (or anybody who will be present for the in-home session) experienced any symptoms of COVID-19, including a fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, a new cough, new loss of taste or smell or shortness of breath that started in the past 10 days?
  - No. Go to the next question.
  - Yes, and I have received a lab-confirmed negative result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test (not a blood test) since the onset of symptoms AND have not had symptoms for at least 24 hours. Go to the next question.
  - Yes, and I am not in the category above. No further screening is needed. The service should not be provided in-person.
- 2. In the past 10 days, have you gotten a lab-confirmed positive result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test (not a blood test) that was your first positive result OR was AFTER 90 days from your previous diagnosis date? (Please note that 10 days is measured from the day you were tested, not from the day when you got the test result.)
  - No. Go to the next question.
  - Yes. No further screening is needed. The service should not be provided in-person.
- 3. Are you considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by CDC guidelines OR were you recently (within the past three months) diagnosed with COVID-19 and finished isolation in the past 90 days? (Please note that to be considered fully vaccinated by CDC guidelines, two weeks must have passed since you received the second dose in a two-dose series or two weeks must have passed since you received a single-dose vaccine.)
  - No, I am not considered fully vaccinated or was not diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 90 days. Go to the next question.
  - Yes, I am considered fully vaccinated or was diagnosed with COVID-19 and finished isolation in the past 90 days. The employee/guest should skip question 4 and the service may be provided in-person.
- 4. To the best of your knowledge, in the past 10 days, have you been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes over a 24 hour period) with anyone who is currently diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been told they have symptoms of COVID-19? Clinical staff who were in appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) are not considered close contacts in these scenarios.
  - No. The service may be provided in-person in the home.
  - Yes. No further screening is needed. The service should not be provided in-person.

**Face coverings:** Providers must wear a face covering at all times during the service, regardless of vaccination status. Everyone who will be present for the session who is 2 years old or older must wear a face covering if it can be tolerated, regardless of vaccination status. Providers should monitor the student's ability to keep the face covering on and adjust intervention strategies to best meet the student's needs. Acceptable face coverings include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings (e.g., homemade, sewn, or quick cut masks), and disposable surgical masks that cover both the mouth and nose. Bandanas and neck gaiters are not permitted. Face coverings with an exhalation valve or vent are not permitted as exhalation valves allow unfiltered exhaled air to escape to others. Face coverings that completely cover or hide an individual's face, such as ski masks, are not permitted. Unless otherwise approved, clear face shields cannot be worn unless accompanied by a face covering. Providers may use alternate PPE (e.g., coverings that are transparent at or around the mouth) for therapies or interventions that require visualization of the movement of the lips and/or mouths (e.g., speech therapy) or as needed when supporting certain students (e.g., students with hearing impairments) who benefit from being able to see more of the adult's face.

***Physical distancing:*** To the extent possible while maintaining the efficacy of the intervention/service, providers should generally attempt to keep 6 feet of physical distance from the student and any other person present in the home.

***Healthy hand hygiene before, during, and after session:*** All providers, parents, students, and others present for the session must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or use a hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol before and after the session. All providers who practice more hands-on interventions/services should put on gloves and leave them on for the entire session. After removing their gloves, providers must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water or use a hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol. If the provider touches their face or needs to remove their mask momentarily for any reason, they must increase the distance between themselves and the student and sanitize hands before returning to close contact with the student.

***Disinfecting space and materials/equipment:*** Before each session, any materials/equipment used during the session must be cleaned/disinfected by the provider.

### **Changes from Prior Guidance**

The previous limitations on group size, location of service, and parental consent for in-person services/assessments no longer apply, as follows:

***Group Size:*** Services may now be provided in-person in groups in compliance with the maximum group size associated with students' IEP recommendation. They may be provided in a smaller group size if they cannot be provided in the maximum group size consistent with goals for physical distancing.

***Location of service:*** Whenever possible for an IEP-recommended service, the service should be provided in the location indicated on the student's IEP. If doing so is not possible due to physical distancing or other health/safety requirements, the service may be provided in an alternate location. The actual location of service must be reflected in any logs or records relating to the service (e.g., encounter attendance).

***Parental consent for in-person services/assessments:*** Parental consent for in-person services/assessments is no longer required for in-person services/assessments provided in a school, child care setting, or private therapeutic setting. Parental consent for in-person services/assessment is required if the service is being provided in another setting, including a home setting. The Consent for In-Home Services should be explained to the parent and received prior to the provision of any in-person in-home services. (Note: As addressed above, parental consent is also required for remote services.)

***Hours/days of service:*** For approved Special Education Itinerant Service (SEIS) agencies, services must now be provided within the service hours outlined in the 2021-2026 Non-exclusive Requirements Agreement for the Provision of Services for Preschool Students with Disabilities.

**Consent for In-Home Services**

Student's Name:	Student ID#:	DOB:
Address:	Apt #:	
City:	State: New York	ZIP:
Name of Provider:	Phone #:	
Provider Agency:	Phone #:	

**Instructions:** This consent form must be completed before initiating or resuming in-home services.

I, (Parent/Guardian's Full Name) \_\_\_\_\_, consent to have my child's services/assessment provided in person, in my home. I agree to the conditions below so that these services can be provided in the safest way possible.

1. Anyone who will be present for the session and is 2 years or older will wear a face covering, regardless of vaccination status.
2. My child will wear a face covering during sessions unless it is not medically or developmentally appropriate or the provider determines that it significantly interferes with the service being provided.
3. Everyone present but not directly involved in the session will remain at least 6 feet away from the provider at all times.
4. Everyone present will wash their hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer immediately before the session begins and immediately after it ends.
5. I will provide the provider access to a sink, soap and paper towels to wash and dry their hands after arriving, immediately before beginning the session and after the session ends.
6. Before each session, I will monitor the health of myself, my child and others in my household for COVID-19 symptoms, such as fever of 100.0 degrees F or greater, a new cough, new loss of taste or smell or shortness of breath that started in the past 10 days. I will notify the provider if anyone in my household is sick or has any of these symptoms in advance of the session or when I am asked by the provider before the session.
7. I will notify the provider if any of the following occur for any member of my household:
  - a. Having lab-confirmed positive result from a COVID-19 diagnostic test (not a blood test) in the past 10 days
  - b. In the past 10 days, having been in close contact (within 6 feet for at least 10 minutes over a 24 hour period) with anyone who is currently diagnosed with COVID-19 or who has been told they have symptoms of COVID-19.
8. If an in-person session must be cancelled and is replaced with a remote session, the remote session is instead of and not in addition to the in-person session.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date