

ELC Reopening Schools FAQs

As of **September 30**, 2022

Allowable Costs

1. Can *ELC Reopening Schools* funds still cover the cost of screening testing programs even though screening testing is no longer a required activity?

Yes, although screening testing is now no longer required under this award, screening testing may still be useful in certain circumstances and can be supported with this funding. Recipients with existing plans in place that include screening testing do not need to halt these activities.

2. Can *ELC Reopening Schools* funds be used to purchase tests for distributing to Early Care and Education programs* (ECEs)?

Yes, the amended guidance includes support for ECEs in addition to K-12 schools. ECEs not co-located with K-12 schools, may now receive support for COVID-19 testing, prevention, and mitigation activities under this award.

*Examples of Early Care and Education Programs (ECEs) include childcare centers, preschools, prekindergarten programs, and daycare centers.

3. Can funds be used for costs associated with distributing tests through the federal antigen distribution program?

Yes, expenses associated with storing and distributing tests for schools, school districts, or ECEs (e.g., time-limited warehouse space, staffing, shipping, etc.) are allowed.

4. Can funds be used to support staff that were previously supported using another mechanism?

Yes, expenses associated with retaining staff working on *Reopening Schools* activities that may be transitioning from another funding mechanism (e.g., CDC Foundation assigned staff) are allowed.

5. Are multiplex tests allowed?

Yes, tests that can simultaneously detect SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens (e.g., influenza, RSV, etc.) are allowable.

6. Can funds be used to support specimen collection for Operation Expanded Testing?

Yes, funds can be used to support staff conducting specimen collection for testing through Operation Expanded Testing (OpET).

7. Besides portable HEPA filters, what other mitigation measures are allowable with this funding?

Environmental assessments within schools or ECEs that provide actionable and reasonable recommendations regarding strategies for improving airflow within the facility are allowable. Also, Upper-Room Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UVGI) systems may be supported. Please see the CDC website for consideration and resources related to the UVGI implementation in K-12 or ECEs. Additional mitigation measures may be allowable, please email the ELC mailbox (elc@cdc.gov) with specific inquiries.

- 8. Are cleaning supplies for COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response an allowable expense?**
Yes, cleaning supplies for disinfection of high-touch surfaces (e.g., desks, doorknobs, chairs, handrails, etc.) are allowable expenses.

Support to School Districts and ECEs

9. Are we required to support ECEs?

While *ELC Reopening Schools* has expanded to include ECEs, it is up to the recipient to determine the level of support that is needed or feasible for ECEs within their jurisdiction. Regardless of the level of support, testing, prevention, and mitigation activities must be applied equitably throughout the jurisdiction.

10. Can *ELC Reopening Schools* resources be used for testing school district staff at the district office?

ELC Reopening Schools funds are meant to support testing, prevention, and mitigation activities on K-12 and ECE campuses and facilities. Other ELC resources may be more appropriate to support these activities at other locations, such as school district offices. If the building is serving a dual purpose and providing educational services to K-12 or ECE populations, using *ELC Reopening Schools* resources would be allowable at that location.

11. Can funds be used to cover the cost of CLIA certificates of waiver for schools and ECEs?

Yes, *ELC Reopening Schools* funds can support the cost of CLIA certificates of waiver for schools and ECEs.

12. Can funds be used for electronic health records for schools?

Expenses related to school electronic health record systems, if such systems provide testing data to the health department, may be allowable. Funds cannot be used to develop or purchase brand new systems or systems that focus solely on meeting clinical needs. However, electronic health record systems that need an upgrade to handle COVID-19 testing and/or symptom collection data, easier collection of data through mobile devices for test result collection, or to permit transmission of data to the health department would be allowable.

Reporting

13. What are the new reporting requirements?

- Recipients are required to report the total test volume (by test type) for students and staff tested at schools, camps and other organizations serving K-12 students and ECE programs within their jurisdiction.
 - PCR - Total number of PCR/NAAT tests conducted per month. This includes screening (pooled and individual) and diagnostic tests.
 - POC antigen - Total number of point-of-care (POC) antigen tests conducted per month. This includes screening and diagnostic tests.
 - OTC antigen - Total number of over-the-counter (OTC) antigen tests distributed per month. This includes screening and diagnostic tests.

- Unknown - Total number of tests conducted per month. This includes screening and diagnostic tests where the test type is unknown.
- Recipients no longer need to report:
 - Test volume by school district
 - Positive test results (Recipients should continue to report to public health authorities consistent with what is required by law).

14. When are the reporting due dates?

Monthly test volume data is due to ELC on a quarterly schedule.

- Aug, Sep, Oct reports - due Nov 15th
- Nov, Dec, Jan reports - due Feb 15th
- Feb, Mar, Apr reports - due May 15th
- May, Jun, Jul reports - due Aug 15th

15. How do I report test volume data to ELC?

Data should be reported to ELC through the Reopening Schools: COVID Award REDCap portal. The reporting page will be available no later than November 1, 2022.

16. Do I need to submit test volume data for a month in which testing was not conducted?

Yes. If testing was not conducted, this information still must be documented in REDCap.

17. Do we only need to report on tests that were purchased using Reopening Schools funding?

No, reporting should include all testing conducted in K-12 and ECE settings, regardless of the funding source.

18. How should pooled testing be reported?

Pooled tests should be reported in the PCR test type category. If reflex testing is conducted, those tests would be counted individually.

- Example: Ten samples were pooled and tested by PCR. The pool tested positive, so those 10 students were tested individually using POC rapid antigen tests. This would be reported as 1 PCR test and 10 POC antigen tests.

19. Are we expected to report tests if the student is tested at an external/non-school-related testing event?

No, you are not expected to report tests from students tested outside of school-based or school-sponsored testing events. Please focus your efforts on tests conducted at school-based programs, school-sponsored events, etc.

Terms & Conditions

20. When is the effective date of the changes?

These changes are effective as of August 11, 2022 when the [Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools and Early Care and Education Programs](#) was released.