

Clarification on Medical Waiver Regulation

Annual Summative Content Assessments

Alaska regulation 4 AAC 06.820 provides for an exemption from a state standards-based assessment in the event of an unexpected severe medical condition. The regulation language is:

4 AAC 06.820. Participation

(g) Notwithstanding any provision in this chapter, a district may, on a case-by-case basis, exempt an individual student from a state standards-based assessment described in 4 AAC 06.737 if an **unexpected severe medical condition** prevents the student from participating in the administration of the assessment. The student will not be included as part of measures of school and district accountability under 4 AAC 06.800 - 4 AAC 06.899, including measurements of participation, attainment of a long-term goal or measure of interim progress, and inclusion in the Alaska school performance system. The district shall retain documentation regarding the exemption, including medical records of the condition, with the student's permanent record and provide it to the department upon request.

This guidance provides considerations for medical waivers in the context of a five-week testing window for the Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) Assessment and the Alaska Science Assessment:

- The testing window will include scheduled testing days determined by each school and district. If a student misses scheduled testing days, it is expected that the student is assessed upon returning to school. For example, if a grade 3 student is scheduled to take the math content assessment during the second week of the window, but is absent due to an illness, the school must schedule make-up testing sessions for the student during week 3, 4, or 5.
- The make-up window for PEAKS and the Alaska Science Assessment is the entire test window. Test windows are determined annually and published on the department's website.
- Upon approval, districts can arrange for secure administration of the assessment in alternate locations, such as the student's home, when appropriate.

Further clarification on the definition of "unexpected severe medical condition":

- Unexpected: not planned or sudden; outside of the student's control
- Severe: uncommon, life altering, serious
- Medical condition: physical or mental condition or illness

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The left column of the chart below provides examples of students who would still be eligible for and expected to participate in PEAKS and the Alaska Science Assessment. The right column provides examples of students who would qualify for a medical waiver. These are provided as examples only. For specific questions of eligibility, please contact the Assessments Administrator, Isaac Paulson, at 465-8431. In direct communication, please maintain the confidentiality of the student’s specific medical condition.

Example of student remaining eligible to participate in annual summative content assessments	Example of an unexpected severe medical condition
Student receiving treatment or in a treatment center for drug rehabilitation	Student receiving treatment or in a treatment center for drug rehabilitation <u>and</u> has a severe episode that prevents participation in education during the entire test window
Student has a diagnosed mental illness	Student has a diagnosed mental illness <u>and</u> has a severe episode that prevents participation in education during the entire test window
Student is in a car accident at the beginning of the test window and unable to test on scheduled testing days, but attends school later in the assessment window	Student is in a car accident at the beginning of the test window <u>and</u> unable to attend school or participate in education (either in the hospital or at home) during the entire test window
Student is pregnant	Student is pregnant <u>and</u> has a pregnancy-related emergency or complications with the birth that prevents participation in education during the entire test window
Student has a chronic illness	Student has a chronic illness <u>and</u> is currently in treatment that prevents participation in education during the entire test window (such as chemotherapy)