



## Education Services in CA During COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

As coronavirus (COVID-19) continues to impact communities globally, we wanted to ensure that you or the young people in your lives are receiving adequate educational instruction. We've created this document so that you may be informed on common questions that community members may have, however, the list is not exhaustive.

If you are facing a situation or obstacle in a school environment that is not covered in this FAQ, please call our intake line for a consultation; we are happy to provide guidance, referrals and resources. While our office is still closed to the public, we continue to offer services over the phone. Our intake line can be reached at:

**Open Hours: Mon, Wed, Thurs 1:30pm – 4:30 pm**

**English Intake Line: 415-323-5814**

**Spanish Intake Line: 415-484-8173**

### **What is the Corona Virus (COVID-19)?**

COVID-19 is a new disease that has not been previously seen by humans. It's a virus that causes mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. While some people show some or all of these symptoms, there are others who can carry the virus and show no sign of illness.

**Keep yourself and your family safe** - follow these guidelines:

- Clean your hands often
- Cough or sneeze in your bent elbow – not your hands!
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid close contact with anyone who's sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Only leave your home for essential items like food or medicine
- Wear a facemask to protect yourself and others
- Withhold from gathering with people who are not part of your home

If you or a family member have experienced these symptoms, please call your local health nurse for a screening over the phone. They will let you know if you need to visit your local hospital for medical attention.

For up-to-date news and detailed coverage of COVID-19 please visit:

- English: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/index.html>
- Spanish: <https://espanol.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

### **Why are schools closed?**

Schools are currently closed because of how contagious COVID-19 virus is. In order to slow the spread, California Governor Gavin Newsom has opted to have everyone stay home to help lessen COVID cases. Schools will resume their normal function once the virus is contained via social distancing and/or vaccination.

### **How long will schools be closed? When will they open up?**

The Governor has recently announced that because of the spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in CA the state will now regress to a stricter guideline tier (purple tier) to help slow the spread and keep its residents safe.

For more information about the states tiered guidelines and how your specific county is affected by this response, please [click here](#).

That being said, schools will remain closed until further notice. To get updated information on your school's reopening plan, please visit your school district website.

Some examples:

- [San Francisco Unified School District](#)
- [Oakland Unified School District](#)
- [West Contra Costa Unified School District](#)
- [Alameda County Unified School District](#)
- [San Leandro Unified School District](#)
- [Antioch Unified School District](#)

### **Do young people still have a right to an education during the pandemic?**

**YES:** Although your education may look much different than in-person learning you still have the right to an education. At this moment, schools cannot offer in-person instruction for the majority of students, so they must offer alternate options for instruction. For example:

- Providing a computer or tablet for online learning
- Providing mobile hotspot so you can access online classrooms and assignments
- Pre-loading learning materials on to a device that it issues so you can continue your education without the need for internet, or
- Providing you with printed learning materials so you can do work, and incorporating written and oral feedback

### **What Education minimums must my school meet?**

Even if you don't have access to the internet, at minimum, your teacher must reach out to you by phone to see what your educational needs are. Even during the public health safer at home order, it is not okay for your school to give you no instruction. The minimum instruction time that your school must provide per day for the state of CA is:

- 180 instructional minutes for Kindergarten (approx. 3 hrs)
- 230 instructional minutes for grades 1 - 3 (approx. 4 hrs)
- 240 instructional minutes for grades 4 - 12 (approx. 4 hrs)
- 180 instructional minutes for students enrolled in continuation H.S. (approx. 3 hrs)

If your school is not providing an adequate amount of instruction per day/week, please submit a complaint with your school district or call Legal Services for Children's intake line for consultation and guidance.

### **Do I still have a right to an education if I am an English learner?**

**YES:** Just like any other student you have the right to receive education as an English learner. More specifically your school must provide language development instruction and your school is given the flexibility to determine how best to ensure your advancement towards English language proficiency required for your grade-level. This means that while the instruction may look different than it normally did during the school year, your school must make an effort to provide continued services either virtually, online, or over the phone.

If an English Language Proficiency Assessment was not administered because of the response to COVID-19, you have the opportunity to take an optional Summative ELPAC beginning on August 20, 2020. Please contact your school for more information on how to take this assessment.

### **Can my school discipline me for being late or absent from class online?**

**MAYBE:** Your daily participation during distance learning is required. For each day you attend school online, your school should not count you absent from class if:

- You have regularly completely your assignments
- You have completed an assessment of some kind
- You are regularly in contact with a teacher or other school staff
- There is evidence showing that you've participated in school related online activities

If you have been disciplined by your school (e.g. kicked out of class by teacher, suspended for not being able to access online classes, marked absent event when you've completed school work, etc.) and you believe that it was unjust, please contact our intake line for consultation and guidance.

### **Legal Services for Children (Intake Line)**

**Mon, Wed, Thurs 1:30pm – 4:30 pm**

**English: (415) 323-5814**

**Spanish: (415) 484-8173**

**If I qualify for free or reduced-price meals during the regular school year, do I still have a right to receive school provided meals while in distance learning?**

**YES:** California law requires school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to provide nutritional breakfast and lunch options for students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals even if students are not receiving in-person instruction.

For information about pick-up sites near you please visit the district website for more information or visit one of the following links:

- [San Francisco School Lunch Pickup Locations](#)
- [Oakland Unified School Lunch Pickup Locations](#)
- [East Bay School Lunch Pickup Locations](#)
- [West Contra Costa Unified Lunch Pickup Locations](#)
- [Antioch USD Lunch Pick-Up Locations](#)

If your school district is not included in the list above, please visit your school district website for information about school meal pick-up sites.

**What about children who have special needs? Does my child have a right to special education services while school campuses are closed?**

**YES**, whether or not your child is physically present in school, they have the right to an education. While instruction and/or services may look different during the safer at home order, every student reserves the right to instruction and services that support their development.

**Is my child's IEP or 504 plan still in effect while we remain in distance learning?**

Yes, IEP or 504 plans are still valid during this time. However, the way you access these services may look different during distance learning. The government has not waived any special education or disability related laws, but they are being flexible with how schools meet these requirements. This can mean administering services and instructions online or over the phone.

**Will my child's school still hold annual IEP meetings?**

Yes, special ed laws have not been waved during the pandemic, schools are still required to hold IEP meetings. IEP meetings in most cases will be virtual, but the same people still have to attend (teacher, counselor, vice principal, parent/guardian). Written consent from your parent or guardian is still required, but this can be done electronically.

For a letter to request an IEP meeting during the COVID-19 remote learning periods, please visit [DREADF](#)

**Where can I get more information about rights during distance learning?**

If you are unsure of how to respond to a situation you are facing, please feel free to reach out to our intake line. Our staff members are happy to connect with you and offer guidance.

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You are also more than welcome to visiting one of the following websites for more information regarding student rights.

- [ACLU](#)
- [CRLA](#)
- [DREDF](#)
- [Learning Rights Law Center](#)