
Issue Date: January 15, 2026

Medical Emergency Exemption Request from Statewide Assessments Guidelines

All publicly funded students (at public schools and independent schools) in select grades are required to participate in Vermont's statewide assessments. However, there may be instances where a student is unable to participate in one or more assessments because of an acute, unusual, and/or significant medical emergency. When this occurs, the medical emergency exemption request can be submitted.

What is a Medical Emergency Exemption Request?

A medical emergency exemption request is submitted by district staff on behalf of a student who was unable to complete testing during the test window. This request is to waive inclusion of the student in school and district participation rate calculations. If the request is approved, the student will be removed from both the numerator and denominator of participation rate calculations. If the request is not approved, the student will be included in participation rate calculations as a non-participant.

Conditions that generally qualify for exemption:

A medical emergency means a severe or life-threatening illness, injury, emotional trauma, or chronic medical condition requiring hospitalization, placement in hospice care, or the student to be receiving active medical treatment. Examples of circumstances include, but are not limited, to:

- Placement in out-of-state residential treatment facility for medical/mental health reasons for the duration of the testing window.
- Hospitalization after a car accident for the duration of the testing window.
- Hospitalization in a mental health facility due to significant and fully incapacitating emotional trauma.
- Inability to interact with others without serious risk of infection or contamination.
- Death or life-threatening injuries to, or significant medical emergency of, an immediate family member or caregiver.

Circumstances of this kind must be identified and verified in writing by a licensed physician and kept on file by the school district.



Conditions that generally do not qualify for exemption:

- Medical Fragility
 - All medically fragile students are expected to participate in statewide assessments, unless a significant and documented medical emergency exists in addition to medical fragility.
- Chronic absenteeism or truancy
 - These are not considered a medical *emergency*, even if these are due to medical reasons, due to their chronic nature.
- Acute, short-term minor illnesses (e.g., the flu) or injuries (e.g. broken arm(s))
 - These students can usually participate during the makeup window and/or with temporary accommodations.
- Refusal to test, either by the student or the parent/caregiver

Schools may provide allowable accommodations and designated supports for students with illnesses or injuries through the use of temporary accommodations. Schools may also test these students later in the testing window during the make-up window.

Medical emergency exemption requests are not for students with ongoing barriers to instruction and assessment; we would expect discussions to happen around implementing accommodations and/or pursuing an IEP or 504 plan.

A guiding statement is *“If the student is receiving instruction, the student is expected to participate in statewide assessments”*.

How to Request a Medical Emergency Exemption

The medical emergency exemption request form can be filled out and submitted at this link: [Medical Emergency Exemption Form](#).

There are a number of questions including a section to justify or explain why a medical exemption is being sought. Additionally, there is a place to upload official documentation from a physician (i.e., on official letterhead) to provide more details and context to the AOE that would be helpful for decision making.

Medical Emergency Exemption Request Flowchart

Below are a table and a visual flow chart to help determine if a medical emergency exemption request is the right path for a student.

Question	If Yes	If No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the student publicly tuitioned in a Vermont public or independent school? 	Continue to the next question.	Stop here. Exemption not applicable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the student receiving instruction during the testing window? 	Stop here. Student is expected to participate in statewide assessments.	Continue to the next question.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the medical situation acute, unusual, and/or significant? 	Continue to the next question.	Stop here. Exemption does not apply.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the medical emergency verified in writing by a licensed physician? 	Submit the medical emergency exemption request.	Consider obtaining a physician’s note to support the explanation of the student’s medical emergency. Then, submit the medical emergency exemption request.

Medical Emergency Exemption Request Decision Flowchart

