



Frequently Asked Questions Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund and Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund

Use of Funds for COVID-19 Vaccinations and Testing

Listed below are frequently asked questions about acceptable uses of ESSER and GEER funds¹ to State educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) to support COVID-19 vaccinations and testing.

Other than statutory and regulatory requirements included in the document, the contents of this guidance do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

1. May ESSER and GEER funds be used to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to teachers, staff, and eligible students?

Yes. Because ESSER and GEER funds may be used to implement public health protocols, including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, providing COVID-19 vaccinations is an allowable use of ESSER and GEER funds. Allowable vaccination outreach efforts in general could include activities to create awareness and build confidence, facilitate clinics, and provide incentives such as paid time off for staff to get vaccinated. In cases where administrative fees are required to obtain a vaccination, ESSER or GEER funds may be used to offset the cost as long as the cost is reasonable.

2. Is COVID-19 testing for students and school staff an allowable use of ESSER and GEER funds?

Yes. Because ESSER and GEER funds may be used for public health protocols, including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, providing COVID-19 testing is an allowable use of ESSER and GEER funds.

SEAs and LEAs should consult with State and local health officials to ensure the adequacy of any SEA or LEA COVID-19 testing program and that testing procedures comply with all applicable laws and requirements, including those related to privacy, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), and the confidentiality of information

¹ For purposes of this document, references to ESSER and GEER funds include funds awarded under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (ESSER I and GEER I); the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act (ESSER II and GEER II); and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act (ARP ESSER).

requirements under Part B and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Please note that the Department of Health and Human Services separately provided \$10 billion under the ARP Act to States as Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) Reopening Schools awards to support the implementation of COVID-19 testing programs, as recommended by the CDC, in K-12 schools. This funding was deployed quickly through State health departments in order to help LEAs safely reopen schools in the remaining months of school year 2020-2021, during summer activities, and in the subsequent school year. State and local health departments will provide technical assistance to LEAs and schools in establishing COVID-19 testing programs. More information on the program can be found at: www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dpei/pdf/guidance-elc-reopening-schools-508.pdf.