

Regional Enrichment Center (RECs) - FAQ for Community Based Organizations

Please note, the Department of Education (DOE) will release official REC Guidance to building leaders and staff, which will be shared with CBOs. You can also find more information on the RECs on the [DOE Website](#). Please review the responses thoroughly and send any additional questions, comments or concerns your organization has to communityschools@schools.nyc.gov.

This guidance is subject to change based on evolving circumstances. CBOs are encouraged to check back often to review the FAQ and will be notified directly of any critical updates.

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Regional Enrichment Centers Sites

1. Can CBOs be centers?

No, RECs must be operated in DOE buildings.

2. How were the REC selected?

The sites were selected based on criteria including geographic diversity and proximity to public transportation as well as accessibility and capacity of the building. Whether a building houses a Community School or a DYCD program was also taken into consideration.

3. Can the REC sites be used for other CBO services (including food pantries, social emotional learning and support services, or as a staging grounds to pull together materials and resources for other students, etc.)?

The DOE will also be distributing technology to families at the RECs.

Regarding other services, more guidance will be provided on what, if any, additional activities will be permitted at the REC sites. These services / activities will not be in place starting on March 23, 2020 but may be phased in.

4. How do we navigate food pantry distribution given the mandate of reducing crowding and school closure?

See guidance from the Food Bank for New York City [here](#). The California Association of Food Banks issued Prevention Practices for Food Banks and Food Pantries, which can be found [here](#).

Student Enrollment

1. How will students be enrolled into programs?

The DOE has been reaching out to other City agencies, unions, and partner organizations to help identify and contact families of first responders, health care workers, and key transit employees who will need to send their children to the Regional Enrichment Centers. Eligible families are invited, through their unions and professional associations, to submit a Regional Enrichment Center (REC) [Enrollment Form](#). If seats are available, additional groups may be contacted about the opportunity to enroll in the Regional Enrichment Centers. Questions about the REC enrollment process can be emailed to REC_Enrollment@schools.nyc.gov.

2. How is site placement decided?

The REC Enrollment form gives families the opportunity to select the site in which they are seeking to enroll their child/children. After a family submits the form, they will receive an email “receipt” of their submission. This is not their confirmation email. Within 48 hours, families will receive a confirmation email of their site assignment.

3. Will attendance be monitored and required at RECs?

Children may attend for all - or part of the day, depending upon their family’s needs. There is no penalty for students who attend for only part of the day. Attendance will be tracked.

4. What will be the protocol for drop-off and pick up? Who is responsible?

When the family first arrives first at the school, the parent/guardian’s identification must be checked to ensure it matches information provided on the enrollment form. REC staff will have access to information from the student enrollment forms. Students can only be picked-up by contacts identified in the roster spreadsheet. Families are able to provide up to three (3) authorized drop-off/pick-up/emergency contacts. REC staff are required to check identification of anyone who is coming to pick up a child who is not the parent/guardian each time they pick-up the child.

5. Will the children of CBO staff who work in RECs be able to access these centers?

There will be 10% of seats reserved for children of people staffing the RECs. When a staffing assignment is confirmed, the staff person will be invited to enroll their children. Note, seats are not guaranteed for children of REC staff.

6. What ages are the students? Why would they not use UPK and other early childhood facilities and teachers?

The RECs will serve students grades 3K - 12. In addition to the 76 district RECs, there are an additional 17 sites solely serving 3K and PreK.

7. When will they have an estimate of need?

Student enrollment is rolling. All sites have students enrolled.

8. How will the needs of children who are medically fragile or have special needs be met?

RECs are not recommended for medically fragile students. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is making alternative arrangements for medically fragile students.

Health and Safety

1. Is the work occurring under the DOE license? Would the DOE assume liability?

Yes, DOE assumes liability for the RECs. Regular contract provisions will hold.

2. Is SACC Licensure required?

No. The Office of Children and Family Services declared that these school based child care programs are not subject to OCFS regulatory oversight. Guidance from OCFS can be found [here](#).

3. Besides daily deep cleaning what other precautions will REC take to insure the safety of staff and students?

Custodian engineers will be deep cleaning each REC site on a nightly basis. There will be guidance for on-site health checks as well.

4. What safety equipment (e.g. masks, hand sanitizer) will be available for children and staff?

The schools will be fully stocked with sanitizer and medical equipment. Note, masks will not be given out generally, but available in the health centers (or offices).

5. What's the protocol if a child or staff member at a REC tests positive for COVID-19?

If the person tests positive for the virus, the program will be contacted by the local Department of Health (DOH) and will be directed on what steps are needed. It is likely the program will be directed to close and self-quarantine the remaining staff and children. DOHMH will advise the program if it needs to close due to COVID-19.

6. Are these centers aligned to CDC Guidelines for Social Distancing?

A maximum ratio of 1 staff to 9 students will be mandated.

7. Will the school buildings designated as RECs be thoroughly sanitized before opening on 3/23?

Yes. And every night. Additional custodial staff will be present on site, during the day to wipe down common areas, doors, etc. as well.

8. What's the back-up plan should a school nurse be called away from the REC?

We will have redundancies built into staffing.

9. Who is accountable/liable for staff-related injuries/accidents?

Stipulations in your current contract will continue to hold.

10. Many of our site based staff do not have medical coverage. Would coverage be provided?

Unfortunately, no. See the [Department of Health and Mental Hygiene website](#) for tips and resources for health insurance.

11. What clearances are required for staff?

DOE clearance through the Personnel Tracking System (PETs) is required. A roster of PETs clearances for all staff must be maintained by the CBO. CBO staff should bring a copy of their PETS clearance with them when they report to a REC site. Please email PETS@schools.nyc.gov for PETS questions, including help if you have forgotten your PETS login information or are having trouble logging in.

12. How are incidents, accidents, allegations involving staff going to be handled and communicated to CBOs?

We will follow school procedures. Every site will have a safety plan and school safety agents.

Staffing, Roles, and Responsibilities

1. How will CBOs be selected for each REC?

The Office of Community Schools will match CBOs to sites and CBOs will determine staff selection based on the need per site. The CBO matching will be based on geography and pre-existing relationships.

2. Is participation in being part of the staff at the REC voluntary or is this viewed as a contractual requirement? Will CBOs be penalized if they are not able to dispatch staff to RECs?

There is no mandate that CBOs be required to staff the RECs.

3. Who will be the primary point person for the cbos during setting up RECs? Will there be a pedagogical supervisor in the building at all times as normally needed for after school and summer activities? Will a school leader need to be present at all times to comply as is during summer school? Who is the onsite supervisor?

There will be a licensed DOE supervisor on site, and the team can include more than one such person for each role, to ensure coverage during the hours of operation. In addition, the team can include additional staff in the other roles to also ensure coverage during the hours of operation, or to allow for alternating schedules and flexibility. There will also be an Office of Community Schools point assigned to each REC site and contact information will be shared with CBOs.

4. Who would be supervising CBO staff? Who do they report to?

Each REC will have two Site Supervisors - Licensed Supervisors (SBL or SDL) to cover either the AM or PM shift at the REC. The position can also be filled by an Education Administrator, a Deputy Superintendent, and Director, etc. There will also be Assistant Site Supervisors - Two administrators, who can be either pedagogical supervisors or full-time administrative staff (Education Administrators, managers or other administrative staff, e.g. Administrative Education Analyst), or CBO Directors/Supervisors.

5. What role (if any) are CSDs expected to play if one of our schools are selected?

CSDs can serve as Assistant Site supervisor or can support classroom activities or other functions, depending upon need.

6. Who is verifying staff reported to work, their hours worked?

CBO staff should follow their organization's timekeeping protocols.

7. What would be the responsibilities of CBO staff at these centers?

The DOE will be looking for staff who can:

- Supervise and support children in attendance;
- Support the site supervisor with program administration;
- Support general operations;
- Communicate with parents in languages other than English; or
- Provide related support.

8. Will staff get training on how to maintain social distancing with young children?

Yes, guidance and staff training will be provided. Preliminary information excerpted below:

- Create physical space among the students and between students and staff in the classroom. Keep at least 6 feet between one person and the next, as much as possible.
- Limit classrooms to no more than 10 students, whenever possible.
- Modify circle time and other similar classroom activities so that students can spread out. Do not gather in large crowds.
- Remain at less than 50% capacity in facility rooms and overall to encourage social distancing.
- Stagger times for arrival, dismissal, recess, breaks and other activities. These approaches can limit the amount of close contact between students in high-traffic places and times.
- Discourage students and staff from crowding or forming lines while waiting for the bathroom or getting food.
- Have meals and snacks in classrooms, instead of in a cafeteria, if feasible, avoid sharing tables whenever possible. Remind children not to share food or drinks.
- Limit visitors. To the extent possible, do not rely on volunteers for classroom activities, mystery readers, food distribution, or other activities.

9. Can additional CBO staff work in the program (supporting family outreach, social-emotional learning, artists, etc.)?

We will continue to recruit volunteers and will staff up as necessary.

10. Will a CBO be able to offer staff from both DYCD programs and Community School contracts if they are interested?

Yes, CBOs can leverage their entire organization to meet staffing needs.

11. Will staff be able to eat the hot meals provided at RECs?

Yes.

Finance and Operations ([Please also see official guidance from the Mayor's Office of Contract Services](#))

1. What funding should CBO's use to pay these staff?

Lead CBOs should utilize their CBO contracts to cover all REC staff expenses. Guidance will be provided on additional advances and budget modifications.

2. Will CSDs be paid beyond March 23?

Yes. We will continue to reimburse providers for contract expenses even if usual service delivery is suspended or modified.

3. Are staff supposed to volunteer?

All staff working in the RECs will be paid.

4. Will CBOs get reimbursed for Community School services supporting schools that are NOT RECs, or will they only be able to get reimbursed for delivering services at RECs? (e.g. a CBO that has already started remote counseling and is set up to remotely monitor students' online learning attendance and homework submission.) Will they be reimbursed for these types of services?

Yes, CBOs will get reimbursed for Community School services supporting schools that are not RECs. We will continue to reimburse providers for contract expenses even if usual service delivery is suspended or modified.

5. Is there guidance on hourly pay rates for the different roles at RECs?

Hourly staff should be paid in accordance to the city minimum wage requirement and an assessment of services. The assessment of services would need to include justification for the position and salary should be comparable to staff in the same role.

6. If CBOs provide staff who are under DYCD contracts should CBOs bill DYCD for services provided at the RECs?

Yes, if staff are working under the DYCD contract that bill should go to DYCD.

7. Can CBOs use their existing budget to fund needs that may come up at RECs e.g. art supplies, sanitizing supplies?

Yes, follow general guidance on modification of budgets, which will be forthcoming.

8. Can 21CCLC funded CBOs use their budgets to cover salaries of staff supporting RECs?

Yes.