



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Remote Learning Support Grant Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) November 2, 2020

The following information is provided to assist Remote Learning Support Grant Lead Applicants, as well as Designated Recipients of grant funding, with completing the grant application materials and understanding grant requirements. Please continue to refer to the Request for Response (RFR) for all grant requirements.

If you need additional assistance, please e-mail RemoteLearningSupportGrant@mass.gov.

Allowable Uses and Timing of Grant Expenditures

1. Is transportation for students an allowable use of grant funding?

Yes, transportation is an allowable use, as long as it is offered at no cost, and as a form of assistance to enable low-income families to participate in the program.

2. Could funds be used to purchase furniture to provide age-appropriate learning spaces?

Yes, as long as that furniture is necessary to make the space suitable to provide remote learning support services or expand those services to more children.

3. Could funds be used to purchase technology equipment for when students forget their individual devices?

Yes. However, that technology must be supplemental and cannot permanently replace the individual technology device provided by the student's school. Additionally, the equipment should meet the specifications and requirements of the student's school.

4. The "Designated Recipient Agreement Form" states "I agree that my program will be open at appropriate times...through the end of the school year...". Does that contradict the Allowable Use period, which ends December 30, 2020?

The Designated Recipient Agreement Form is meant to confirm that the Designated Recipient meets the eligibility requirements for grant funding. All programs must offer services through the end of the school year to be eligible. Grant assistance is provided for expenses incurred through December 30, 2020 to help establish and expand program services.

5. The "Designated Recipient Agreement Form" states, "I agree to not use funding from any other source, including local, state or federal agencies, for costs supported by this grant." Does that mean that an expense already paid for, or budgeted to be paid for, from another local, state or federal agency cannot be paid for through this grant? Can additional items that might have initially been paid for through another source be paid for through this grant (for example, if an agency needs additional PPE items, are we correct in assuming that these funds could be used to purchase additional PPE items)?



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It is allowable to use grant funds to pay for items that were initially paid for through another source, as long as all appropriate finance protocols are followed to ensure that those charges are refunded to the original source, and the same cost(s) are not charged twice to different sources.

6. **The RFR states “Allowable uses of funding include expenditures from September 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020”. Is December 30, 2020 the date when funds need to be disseminated by, or by when all services need to be rendered? Must expenditures be incurred and spent during this period?**

Programs need to have received the “beneficial use” (e.g., goods delivered and in use, services rendered) of funding by December 30, 2020, in accordance with the federal Coronavirus Relief Fund requirements. Please keep in mind that recipients can use grant funding for expenditures incurred beginning September 1, 2020. Please refer to page 5 of the RFR for more information related to allowable uses and timeframes.

7. **If a designated recipient is using funds for tuition assistance to families, can that only be applied to tuition assistance costs between September 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020?**

Yes.

Funding Allocation

8. **Is it allowable to allocate funds on a per-pupil basis, or is the preference for funds to be allocated per classroom or student cohort?**

There is no preference for how funds are allocated. Please refer to page 4 of the RFR, “Methods for Allocating Funding”. Lead Applicants may choose one of several approaches, a combination of approaches, or an approach that is not outlined in the RFR, depending on local needs, capacity, and provider interest and feedback.

9. **Are there specific criteria for tuition assistance that designated recipients should use if they would like to use some of their allocation for that purpose?**

Reducing the costs for economically-disadvantaged families to enable students to attend remote learning support programs is an acceptable use of these funds. The Lead Applicant and the Designated Recipient(s) should determine the best approach for using grant funds to meet that need.

Lead Applicants & Designated Recipients

10. **Can both licensed providers and entities receiving the “Remote Learning Enrichment Program Exemption (RLEP)” apply to be a designated recipient of these funds? If RLEP is allowed, is there a list on the EEC website?**

Yes, licensed providers serving school age students during the school day and approved RLEP can both be Designated Recipients. If you do not know which programs are approved as Remote Learning Enrichment Programs in your community, please reach out to Blair.Brown@mass.gov.

11. **If a municipality designates an EEC Licensed provider to be the “Lead Applicant”, can that entity also receive funds as a “Designated Recipient”?**

Yes.



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Reporting

12. What type of reporting is required of the Lead Applicant and the Designated Recipients after the funds are awarded and distributed?

Lead Applicants will be expected to work with Designated Recipients to confirm that funding was expended in accordance with the grant requirements at the conclusion of the grant program. The Executive Office of Education (EOE) will coordinate that reporting through the Lead Applicants.

Disbursement

13. Will funds be distributed to Designated Recipients from CCR&Rs or FCCs, or from EEC?

Please refer to the "Funding Distribution" section of the RFR. The Commonwealth will distribute funds either through intermediaries that serve as Community Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) and Family Child Care Systems (FCC Systems) or, if a Designated Recipient does not have an agreement with a CCR&R or FCC System, they will be paid directly by the Department of Early Education and Care in its role as the fiscal administrator of the grants.

Other

14. If an agency has multiple sites with various license numbers, is a different Designated Recipient Agreement Form needed for each site/license number?

No. Since the umbrella organization is the one that will receive payment, the umbrella organization can send in one Designated Recipient Agreement Form for all of their sites.

15. Will electronic signatures work, or do they need to be wet signatures on the agreement form?

An electronic signature or typewritten name at the bottom of the form is acceptable.

16. Are Pre-K students eligible for financial assistance through this funding, or just K-12 students?

The Designated Recipient, in coordination with the Lead Applicant, can determine which students qualify for financial assistance. The RFR specifies that funds can be used for "financial assistance to economically-disadvantaged families who would not otherwise be able to afford enrollment in remote learning support services". Please note that the Designated Recipient Agreement Form also requires all Designated Recipients to confirm that Remote Learning Support Grant funding will not be used to pay for the same costs twice, as noted in FAQ #5.

17. Are charter school students eligible for funding from this grant?

The Designated Recipient, in coordination with the Lead Applicant, can determine which students qualify for financial assistance. The RFR specifies that funds can be used for "financial assistance to economically-disadvantaged families who would not otherwise be able to afford enrollment in remote learning support services". Please note that the Designated Recipient Agreement Form also requires all Designated Recipients to confirm that Remote Learning Support Grant funding will not be used to pay for the same costs twice, as noted in FAQ #5.



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16. The Designated Recipient Agreement Form states "I agree that this is a one-time payment, and I may not request additional funds from EEC to cover additional costs incurred related to the Remote Learning Support Grant." Does this mean we would be precluded from any other EEC funding related to remote learning support services if we accept this grant?

No. This statement was meant to affirm that this grant funding is one-time and does not obligate the Commonwealth to provide any ongoing funding for these services. Designated Recipients may receive additional funding from EEC, provided that it is not used to cover the same expenditures that the Designated Recipient funds from this grant.