GUIDANCE ON DIRECT FUNDING
School Year 2022-2023

Last Updated: October 24, 2022

Introduction

Thank you for your hard work in maintaining student and staff safety during School Year 2021-2022. We understand the additional work and hours you have dedicated to the development of safe and healthy environments for New Mexico students. In an effort to return some of those hours, we have created the following guidance document covering the reporting and reimbursement process of the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) allocated federal funding.

This will be a living document and will be updated as changes occur during the school year. Please refer to the website (www.nmschoolscovidtesting.com/direct-funding-info) for the latest version of this document to ensure you have the most up-to-date information. We also recommend ensuring that you are on our mailing list to receive updates to this guide.

For any questions, please reach out to our team at reports@nmschoolscovidtesting.com or join us for our Office Hours, held three times a week at 3:30 p.m. (register here: https://calendly.com/new-mexico-schools-covid-19-testing-program).

The federal grant that enables the NM DOH to provide this level of support is the 2019 Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Disease (ELC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The ELC grant - Reopening of Schools (NU50CK000548-02-06) is part of a financial assistance award totaling $63 million dollars for New Mexico schools and federal funds made available from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117- 2 The NM DOH is distributing over eight five percent of this award to support school access to COVID-19 testing providers and services, in addition to direct funding. The NM DOH and the NM PED are partnering in this effort.

Contents

New Mexico Schools COVID-19 Testing Program

Important Dates

August 31, 2022	Award Letter signature or extension request due.
September 1, 2022	Direct Funding Expense Reporting Portal opens.
January 1, 2023	Schools and Districts must report use of 75% of allocation or submit preapproval for a spending plan.
May 12, 2023	Last date to report expenses related to SY 22-23
June 30, 2023	Final Check Sent

Conditions for Funding Acceptance

In July and August 2022, schools and districts that registered for the program received an award letter detailing the total funding allocated to them. We do not accept school or school district's reports or requests for reimbursement without signature of this award letter.

As a reminder, the following conditions were included in the SY22-23 award letter. For any questions, please reach out to our team at info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com

1. School District/School will document and maintain accurate records of COVID-19 testing and screening program expenditures.
2. School District/School will expend all of the funding received through this program on allowable expenses as by June 30, 2023.
3. School District/School will submit reports using the reporting forms and instructions provided, including copy of receipts or invoices for expenditures.
4. School District/School will notify the New Mexico Department of Health via info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com should they no longer wish to continue accepting award funding or are unable to spend the funds that have been disbursed to them.
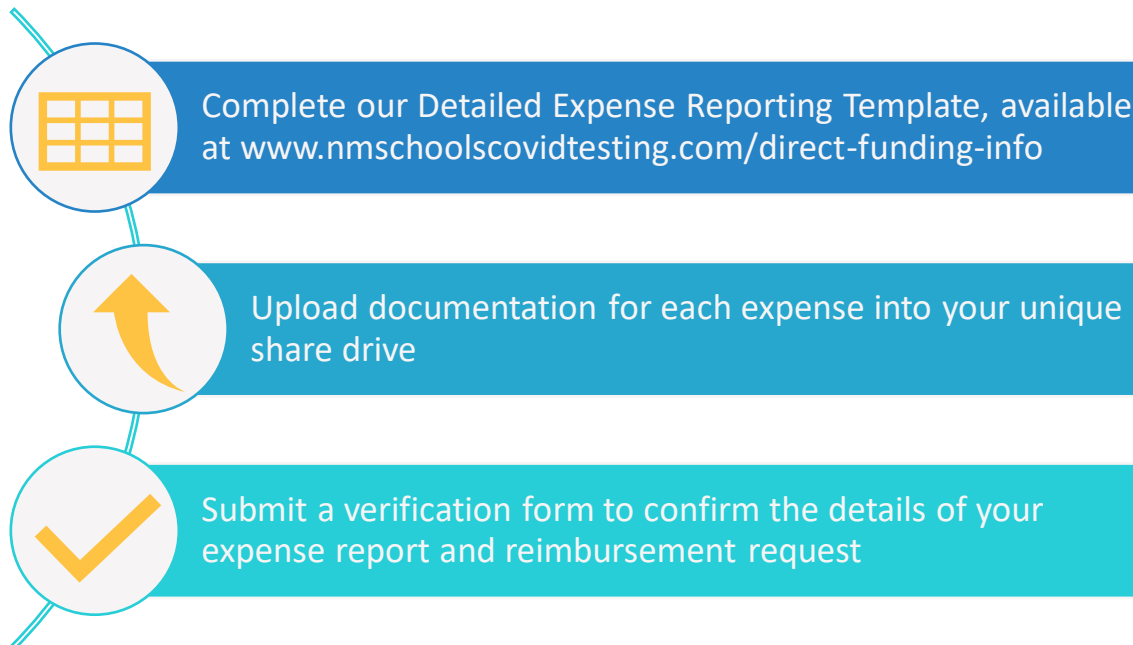
How to Submit a Direct Funding Expense Report

Schools and districts submit reporting on their expenses and requests for reimbursements through a dedicated portal on the New Mexico Schools COVID-19 Testing Program website, www.nmschoolscovidtesting.

Schools and districts who have returned a signed award letter receive a login to the Reporting Portal. **As of September 2022, each school and district has <u>one</u> login that is tied to <u>one</u> email address.** We do not send messages through this portal; the email address is required by the system and is only helpful in the case of password resets (we can also reset passwords for you). Schools and districts that participated during the 2021-2022 school year may use the same login credentials used last year.

If you have forgotten or need help retrieving your login information, please complete a Password Assistance Request Form.

There are three parts to submitting a report and/or requesting reimbursement:

Complete our Detailed Expense Reporting Template, available at www.nmschoolscovidtesting.com/direct-funding-info

Upload documentation for each expense into your unique share drive

Submit a verification form to confirm the details of your expense report and reimbursement request

Step 1: Complete the Detailed Expense Reporting Template

The Detail Expense Reporting Template (updated for SY 22-23) is a spreadsheet that documents each expense in a report and, if completed correctly, provides all of the information we need to reference your backup documentation and approve your request.

Public school districts and charters have the option to use their accounting systems in place of the Detailed Expense Reporting Template to prepare reports for upload. **However, please ensure that your submission includes the information for staffing detailed below and clearly names the expense and justification. You may find it helpful to use and submit our Template in any case.**

The reimbursements should look identical to the RfRs you submit in OBMS for federal funds. The fund code is 28211. Make sure that the total request amount corresponds to supporting documentation. Please do not submit any requests for reimbursements for this program to the Public Education Department via OBMS.

Use the Detailed Expense Reporting Template to confirm the following for each expense or service:

- Name of the Item
- Date of Purchase
- Description/Purpose of Item
- Vendor
- Total Amount Requested
- Explanation for the Relationship to COVID-19 Prevention, Mitigation, and Response (if not immediately obvious)

Please also indicate whether the expense has been preapproved (see "Requesting Preapproval" below) and confirm that backup documentation has been added to the share drive (see Step 2).

Note: We have eliminated the "Additional Justification for Staffing Document" from SY 21-22, instead adding columns to the "Staffing" tab of the report for you to indicate the status of the personnel and additional information.

Once completed, please upload the Detailed Expense Reporting Template into your school/district's share drive.

Step 2: Provide Expense Documentation

We have provided each school and district registered in the program with a unique share link to upload expense documentation, such as receipts, contracts, and affidavits. This documentation is required by NMDOH and the CDC in case of an audit.

To find your share link, log into the portal. Copy and paste the link into your browser. You will be taken to a folder, where you can upload the documents.

Please upload receipts for expenses wherever possible. Make sure that your files are clearly named – remember that we will have to match this backup to the expenses listed on your Detailed Expense Template!

If necessary, you may upload a contract or affidavit as proof of the expense.

Staffing Documentation

We are required by NMDOH to collect detailed information on the staff hired through the ELC Direct Funding. Below, please find the documentation needed for reimbursement of each type of staff.

- **Staff that only perform duties related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response:** You do not need backup documentation. Each staff member must be listed on the Detailed Expense Reporting Template, with a complete explanation of their responsibilities and how they align with the intent of the grant.
- **Staff that were granted a stipend for duties related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response**: You must upload a signed document that outlines the duties that were performed, the dates for which the stipend applies, the name of the staff member, and the amount of the stipend. Please also indicate in the Detailed Expense Reporting Template the percentage of benefits that you are claiming for each staff member.
- **Staff that spent part of their time on duties related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response:** You must upload some document that accounts for their hours, rather than providing a general percentage estimate. This can be a timesheet, documentation of weekly hours (can be an estimate), or a signed agreement for number of hours. If you are having difficulty providing documentation for this, please contact us for support. Please also indicate in the Detailed Expense Reporting Template the percentage of benefits that you are claiming for each staff member.

If this documentation is not uploaded into the folder, we cannot process your reimbursement request.

Additional Instructions for Documentation Upload

- Please upload receipts and documentation into the main folder. Do not upload into the Archive folder.
- You will be responsible for submitting documentation for all of your expenses, including those made through the advance. If you would not like to receive the full amount of your reimbursement, please note this on your final reimbursement request verification form.
- Make sure that the total request amount corresponds to supporting documentation.

- After your request is closed, we will move the documentation related to your request into the Archive folder for future reference.

Step 3: Submit

The final (and most important) step in the process is for you to submit a verification form on behalf of your school or district. This ensures that we have the correct mailing address, documents in the share folder, and contact information. This form is found on the Reporting Portal.

Please make sure that you receive a confirmation email after pressing submit. If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We will not process your report until you select SUBMIT.

Direct Funding Expense Report Review Process

After you submit your verification form, we are notified that you are ready for us to review your report. Here are some of the items that we check:

- All expenses listed in the report are allowable – *If we are unsure, we will bring the expense to the NMDOH/NMPED review committee and/or the CDC for further discussion.*
- The totals listed in the Detailed Expense Reporting Template (or, if you are a public school district/charter, your Summary Report) match the totals on receipts.
- Each expense listed has the appropriate backup.
- Each expense has not been previously submitted.
- Each expense is related to SY 22-23.

If we have questions about your documentation or an expense, we will reach out to the contact submitted on the verification form. We ask that you respond promptly so that we can continue processing your report.

Our timeline is to process the report within 15 business days unless we need additional time to communicate with your school district/school. Please do not submit a new reimbursement while an existing reimbursement is being processed.

If approved, we notify you and send a check with the approved amount to the address provided.

In order to provide the utmost transparency in the process, we have introduced an appeal option if you disagree with the result of your request.

To request an appeal, respond to this email. Include in your response the reason for your appeal and the specific expenses that it pertains to**. This appeal must be submitted within three business days of the initial closure of the report.**

Supplemental Funds and Preapproval

This year, schools and districts have two new opportunities to receive additional funding or pre-purchase reimbursement approval.

1. Schools and districts may request funds above their initial allocated amount. Supplemental funding will be allocated on a "first come, first serve," basis, according to funds available.
2. Schools and districts will be able to request preapproval for use of funds. This may be necessary if a school or district would like to first confirm they will be reimbursed for a large expense before moving forward.

To make your request, please submit a [Supplemental Funding and Expense Preapproval Form](#) to be reviewed by the NMDOH/NMPED review committee. We may take up to one month to approve your request. Requests will be approved according to:

- The total amount of funds available in this grant
- The appropriateness of the described expenses
- The level of resources available regionally
- The expediency that the school/district could expend the funds

Allowable Expenses Reference Guide

The following has been assembled to support schools and districts as they prepare to submit items for reimbursement through the ELC Reopening of Schools grant (New Mexico Schools COVID-19 Testing Program).

Please note that, regardless of what is listed below, schools and school districts must justify the intent and context of the expense and how it relates to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response.

We reserve the right to deny requests for reimbursement, even if expenses are listed in the table below if they do not meet the requirements from the NMDOH or the CDC. Please contact us or submit a Preapproval Request if you are unsure whether an expense is reimbursable.

Expense Category	Expense Detail	Examples
Staff	Salary and benefits for staff that only perform duties related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response.	Nurse, COVID-19 Coordinator, janitorial staff.
	Stipends and appropriate percentage of benefits for staff that performed additional duties related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation and response.	Staff that spent extra hours or went above and beyond their typical duties to coordinate COVID-19 programs, perform tests, participate in outreach, etc.
	Proportion of salary and benefits for staff that perform some duties related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response.	Health service staff duties related to covid-19 prevention, mitigation, and response. Covid-19 response team, meetings before or after school hours. Time needed for staff/faculty to document things like covid results, and store items like covid tests.
Supplies	Test kits	Home tests for distribution, and on-site tests.
	Equipment for testing stations/testers	Biohazardous waste bags, Technology, Storage for testing-related data (consent forms, etc.), Signage

	Community Outreach and Communication materials	Paper
Services	Behavioral health training for staff to support students with COVID-19-related trauma	Contact info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com with specific training requests.
	Testing vendors	
	Community Outreach and Communication	Paper, translation services, printing services, Covid-19 testing site signs
	Equipment, Waste Management Services, Licensing Fee	HEPA air purifiers, Items required for testing sites, Covid-19 testing disposal services, CLIA Certificate of Waiver, Pulse Oximeter Blood Oxygen Saturation Monitors, thermometers
	Biohazardous Waste Management	
Capital Improvements	Outdoor Learning Environments (must provide in-depth justification) Other expenses related to COVID-19 prevention, mitigation, and response	Umbrellas and Canopies for outside learning, lunch tables
	Isolation Room	Materials to create isolation rooms.
	Classroom/Building Improvements (must provide in-depth justification; preapproval recommended)	HEPA air purifiers

FAQs

How do I reset my login password?

If you have forgotten or need help retrieving your login information, please submit a Password Assistance Request form.

How do I submit expenses made between May 12, 2023 and June 30, 2023?

We recognize that the earlier reporting deadline may present difficulties for those that wrap up financial reporting on June 30, 2023. If you have a concern, please reach out to us sooner rather than later so that we can accommodate you. We will be unable to process anything after June 30, 2023, the end of the CDC grant period.

I am new to my position. Where do I start?

We recommend reading this guidance report cover to cover! If you still have questions, register for Office Hours at www.nmschoolscovidtesting.com.

How has the reimbursement process changed in SY22-23?

The process for requesting reimbursement will largely remain the same. You will be required to submit your backup to your unique shared drive and submit a final verification form.

However, there are some small changes in the timeline and allowable expenses, including the following:

- You will be required to spend (or have a spending plan for) 75% of your allocation by January 1, 2023.
- Testing vendors and test kits are now approved expenses.
- There is an opportunity to request additional funding through the website.
- The final deadline for reimbursement requests will be May 12, 2023.

The most up-to-date guidance will always be on the website. When you sign the award letter, you agree to follow whatever is posted there.

How do I submit expenses related to SY 21-22 if I missed the deadline?

Unfortunately, we have closed the opportunity for reimbursement for expenses related to SY21-22. Funding has been extended for the next school year. You may submit requests for reimbursement for expenses related to SY22-23 when the portal reopens. September 1, 2022.

My school did not opt into the program last year but would like to do so now. What should we do?

Please email info@nmschoolscovidtesting.com if you would like to opt in. If resources are available, we may still be able to allocate funds to your school.

When can I start using money from this grant?

Please make sure you are following your school or district's own internal budgetary process. We will accept requests for reimbursements made at any time after the signature of the award letter.

Our school received an advance payment but did not use it. How do we proceed?

Please make sure you have a plan for spending and reporting any funds you have received during SY22-23. We reserve the right to claw back funds that were not spent according to the grant requirements.