**COVID-19 Initial Evaluation Quick Guide**

### General Guidance

The Idaho Special Education Manual provides that the 60-calendar-day timeline for conducting an initial evaluation does not include periods when regular school is not in session for 5 or more consecutive school days.

The State Board of Education’s (SBOE) order of a “soft closure” has resulted in regular school not being in session, for most brick and mortar schools. However, if a particular school provided virtual education prior to the SBOE’s order for a “soft closure,” and little has changed on how the school is providing services, then the 60-calendar-day timeline may still be in force.

### Resource

| Idaho Special Education Manual, Chapter 4 |
| Guidelines for Providing Special Education Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic, “School Closures”|

### Team Considerations

**My team was working on a new referral prior to COVID-19. We do NOT have written consent yet.**

- If face-to-face assessments are required for this evaluation, your team should consider whether obtaining written Consent for Assessment is reasonable.
  - If no, document your decision in a Written Notice, indicating when the referral and consent process will resume.
  - If face-to-face assessments are not required for this evaluation, your team should consider whether you have or can gather sufficient evidence for an eligibility decision and whether circumstances allow for meaningful parent participation in the evaluation and eligibility process.
    - If yes, written Consent for Assessment is still required, and agreement/disagreement with the Eligibility Report must be noted for each team member once a decision is made.

**My team obtained written consent for assessment for an initial evaluation prior to school closures for COVID-19.**

- For schools operating in “soft closure,” COVID-19 closure days are likely not considered regular school days and may be removed from the 60-day calendar days allowed for eligibility determination.
  - If face-to-face assessments are required for this evaluation, your team may consider suspending the evaluation and resuming when regular school and the 60-day calendar days resume.
    - Document your decision in a Written Notice, indicating when the assessment/evaluation process will resume.
  - If face-to-face assessments are not required for this evaluation, your team should consider whether you have or can gather sufficient evidence for an eligibility decision. The team should also consider whether circumstances allow for meaningful parent participation in the evaluation and eligibility process.
    - If yes, the team would move forward with determining eligibility.
    - If no, the team would need to document their decision in a Written Notice, indicating when the assessment/evaluation process will resume.

**My team has completed the evaluation and is ready to determine Initial Eligibility.**

- Teams are not required to meet in person while schools are closed. Parents may give consent to participate over the telephone or in a virtual format.
  - If the team decides to hold a meeting via phone or virtually, ensure that each team member verbally indicates agreement/disagreement and document the decisions on the cover page of the Eligibility Report and within team meeting notes. (Signatures are never a required component when determining eligibility.)
    - If the team decides to determine eligibility without a meeting, document how team member’s input was gathered, and indicate agreement/disagreement with report for each team member on the cover page of the Eligibility Report.