



Questions Answered from the NYS Best Practices Webinar

Q. Medical Certification Unit is sending Non=Compliance and License Downgrade what should we do?

A. Contact them for advisement.

Q. Should districts be paying providers during the shutdown? How do we address per-pupil-decimal if school does not open could this be delayed a year?

A. SED researching this answer.

Q. Will SBDI be able to get the Refresher's for Fall so we can work on them now? My PDS class for 4/1 in Ashville has been postponed like other classes.

A. By our current projections (subject to change) the PDS materials will be available to you approximately late June or early July. However, we are looking for ways to shorten this timeline.

Q. Should you drop driver's before the test date if it can't be completed?

A. I am not DMV, but my advice is to not drop drivers based on my operations experience. If you do, when schools start up you may not have the staff levels you need. If I were in operations, I would note in the driver's file the date of school shutdown due to COVID-19 and the date operations resume and then get the driver compliant as quickly as possible - in the first 5-10 days. The DMV messaging is vague, so in the absence of specific direction, you should do what makes the most sense -use your judgement and experience on operations. Again – this is my personal advice – not a directive from DMV.

Q. My district has 4 contracted transportation vendors; all have laid off their employees due to no payment from the district. As the contract states no service; no payment. I'm afraid that by

the time classes resume the contractors won't have the workforce to meet our demands. I'm requesting assistance from NYSED; as the vendors claim that other districts are paying them and we failing to meet our end of the contract. Please advise.

A. SED is currently researching this answer.

Q. In regards to student transportation contracting, are districts in NY state required to pay the contractors for work not rendered.

A. SED is currently researching this answer.

Q. Does use of the federal bill funds allow us to pay our contractors?

A. I don't know.

Q. Is there any decision regarding a percentage reduction or non-payment in the monthly billing if bid specifications don't outline any information?

A. I would consult my attorneys and the original RFP for interpretation of the contract.

Q. Will there be different dates for on-line PDS programs? Will they be interactive or presenter speaking only? Or pre-recorded?

A. The current plan will be for it to be a video of an MI or two MIs teaching a reduced portion of the PDS. The pre-session assignment will be expanded to include all three topics. The online verification document and your expanded pre-session assignment will then be sent to PTSI for review. Once approved, the PDS manual and your SBDI/MI identification card will be shipped to you.

Q. How about DOT inspections that will expire during the shutdown?

A. Contact DOT.

Q. If we drop our drivers for Defensive Drive, we have 30 days to complete the test once you add the driver back, correct?

A. Correct. But you may find yourself in a situation where you do not have enough driver's on your roster when schools open. Think through the process carefully.

Q. Will the 30 day LOA drug testing requirement be required for drivers when school reopens?

A. I don't know.

Q. One of my driver's will have his medical cert. expired soon. Will DMV downgrade his license because we can't get our 19A physical's done?

A. DMV has said that "accommodations will be made". So based on that, I believe the answer is no. But contact DMV.

Q. DMV has recommended we try to keep current with our 19-A. Most of my upcoming 19-A tests are defensive driving that requires passengers. Any thoughts as we don't have passengers currently?

A. You must postpone the test. If you perform this test differently than regulated, with students, it is falsification of the test and it will not qualify for compliance. Do not change the test just so you can perform it.

Also, if you are determined to be an essential business. If you are shut down, you should not be performing any task related to your business.

Q. Define a passenger. We are using other drivers to act passengers.

A. No – this will modify the test and it will not qualify. Passenger in your industry means students. If you are determined to be an essential business. If you are shut down, you should not be performing any task related to your business.

Q. Do you know how long DMV is extending license expirations?

A. I don't know.

Q. We are delivering meals to our rural students, will the bus miles for this be aidable or will the miles go in as "Other Miles" that are not aidable?

A. SED is researching this answer.

Q. What are districts obligated to do with state funds earmarked for transportation costs. If they do not pay contractors the 188 day obligation?

A. SED is researching this answer.

Q. What should be done with contracts that are waiting for school board approval to send to the state? Are they also extending the 120 day to send to the state?

A. SED needs to answer this.

Q. McKenny Vento will escalate from recent events. How can districts meet this demand when zero extra funding is available?

A. SED needs to answer this.

Q. Has there been any conversations regarding the budget vote dates?

A. SED needs to answer this.

Q. If our drivers are out of compliance due to the virus, do we have to drop them from DMV?

A. I am not DMV, but my advice is to not drop drivers based on my operations experience. If you do, when schools start up you may not have the staff levels you need. If I were in operations, I would note in the driver's file the date of school shutdown due to COVID-19 and the date operations resume and then get the driver compliant as quickly as possible - in the first 5-10 days. The DMV messaging is vague, so in the absence of specific direction, you should do what makes the most sense -use your judgement and experience on operations. Again – this is my personal advice – not a directive from DMV.

Q. What about the 30 hour course? We have done half of it before this.

A. Simply postpone the remainder of the course until schools open. When you get it rescheduled, modify your NPO and send it to PTSI, and then complete the course.

Q. What about the 10 hour basic attendants class and the 30 hour basic drivers course?

A. Simply postpone the course until schools open. When you get it rescheduled, modify your NPO and send it to PTSI, and then complete the course.

If you are determined to be an essential business. If you are shut down, you should not be performing any task related to your business.

Q. If we schedule the physicals following strict social distancing rulings, allowing only minimal drivers at a time, are we considered in violation of the Governors stay home?

A. I don't know.

Q. Has the PDS schedule been changed?

A. The current plan will be for it to be a video of an MI or two MIs teaching a reduced portion of the PDS. The pre-session assignment will be expanded to include all three topics. The online verification document and your expanded pre-session assignment will then be sent to PTSI for review. Once approved, the PDS manual and your SBDI/MI identification card will be shipped to you.

You will be notified by SED when this modified process is available.

Q. Has there been conversations on when or if schools will reopen?

A. SED needs to answer this.

Q. What is the expected timeframe for drill completion?

A. SED needs to answer this.

Q. Is there any info from DOT on inspections and also SED as far as 19A?

A. This question involves 3 different agencies...confusing.

Q. If I have a driver out starting late Feb. do I count the days we've been closed due to COVID against his time?

A. I don't know.

Q. If a driver who has become non-compliant and dropped from the driver roster - can they drive a school bus during that time?

A. No, not if you drop him/her. However, if you leave them on, and note the file due to the COVID-19 issue, in my opinion you could. HOWEVER, I am speaking from my personal operational experience – I am not DMV.

Q. Is it possible to mail in our power points to SED along with copies for our PDS for renewing our SBDI compliances?

A. No do not do this – your pre-session assignment is going to change and more will be required. Just wait to be notified please.

Q. In the Tri agency meetings can the need for road tests being accelerated be addressed and is there a way 19A examiners can help?

A. I don't know.

Q. When we come back we will be inundated with possible summer schools, setting up next year etcetera. Will you take that into account when setting up the PDS?

A. We are doing the best we can but will certainly take that under advisement.

Q. Doing defensives or behind the wheel tests will having different drivers use a bus for these tests. Would this not spread the virus?

A. DMV question. Defensives require students on the bus, so that cannot be done.

If you are determined to be an essential business. If you are shut down, you should not be performing any task related to your business.

Q. If transportation does not open until summer or September do we certify that we are in compliance? Affidavit is due before July 1.

A. I don't know.

Q. Would you recommend continuing training new bus drivers?

A. Only if you are determined to be an essential business. If you are shut down, you should not be performing any task related to your business.