Medical Exemptions Toolkit

Chronic Absenteeism

To benefit from instruction, students must have regular access to learning; therefore, attendance is a leading indicator in assessing student competency, as chronic absences negatively affect student achievement and the likelihood of graduating on time or not at all (Attendance Works, 2016).

Exempting Students

The Chronic Absenteeism Medical Exemption Window allows school leaders to submit exemptions for specific students who meet specific rules. Any day that a student was absent due to a significant medical condition may be exempted from the current school year's Chronic Absenteeism reporting. If these exemptions align with conditions specified in OAC § 210:10-13-25, local policy, and are approved by the local exemption committee, absences will be excluded from reporting. Among other scenarios, this exemption applies to students who are receiving treatment for a chronic or terminal disease or students who have lost an immediate family member.

OAC 210:10-13-25:

- Chronic Absenteeism means students are absent from school at least ten percent (10%) of the time that school is in session. For example, a student who is absent for 19 instructional days at a school with a 180-day instructional calendar would be considered chronically absent.

- Medically exempt absences must constitute a "**significant medical condition**" meaning they are a severe, chronic, or life-threatening physical or mental illness, infection, injury, disease, or emotional trauma.

- Absences classified as "excused" related to military deployment activities or homelessness under the McKinney-Vento-Act do not qualify for medical exemption unless they are determined to meet the criteria of a "significant medical condition".

Establishing Local Policies and Local Processes

Before submitting an approved exemption within the Accountability Reporting application, ensure the following processes have taken place:

1. **Adopt a local Board Policy** for Medical Exemptions for the current school. [Sample Board Policy](#)

2. **Establish an Exemption Review Committee (ERC)** for the current school year. This committee is responsible for approving exemptions and establishing eligibility for exempting students' chronic absences.

   o The ERC must utilize the [Medical Exemption Review Committee Process for Eligible Exemptions and Documentation for Decision](#) form when processing decisions.

3. Review the [Enrollment and Attendance Guidance](#) and [Students with Disabilities Chronic Absenteeism FAQ](#).

Getting Started in Single Sign-On

Go to the Accountability Reporting Application

District User

The district's superintendent is the default "district admin" user in the Accountability Reporting application for Medical Exemptions. The district admin user is responsible for 1) approving medical exemptions submitted on behalf of a site, and 2) closing out the appeal; note, this is a **two-step** process. District superintendents may add or remove site/building users to and from sites in the Accountability Reporting application.

Site/Building User

The site user uploads documentation and creates a DVR that goes on to be approved and closed out by a district user. If you need access to a site within the Accountability Reporting application, reach out to your district superintendent. The Office of Accountability is not authorized to provide access.

Establish A Board Policy	Gather Documenation	Exemption Review Committee Meets	Site User Submits DVR	District User Approves and Closes Out the Appeal

Gathering Documentation

Identifying student absences that may qualify to be medically exempted should be completed throughout the school year. These absences are approved or denied by your local ERC. Therefore, it is essential to assemble documentation for absences and to have that documentation in place so that the requests are reviewed and processed by the ERC without delay.

All documentation reviewed during the ERC's consideration of potentially eligible absences must be maintained by the district or charter school and shall be available to the State Department of Education for auditing purposes.

Exemption Process in the Accountability Reporting App

Site users *may* provide exemptions to be reviewed or that have been approved by the Exemption Review Committee through the Accountability Reporting application. However, the district admin user (separate from the site user) must approve the DVR and close it out for the exemption to be final.
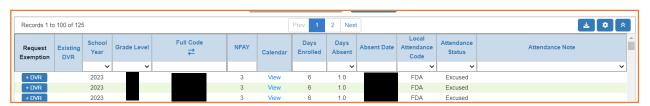
- At the end of each quarter, only <u>one</u> (1) DVR is submitted per student with qualifying dates per qualifying circumstance.
- The Chronic Absenteeism Medical Exemption window is set to close on June 30th at 4:30pm.

Submitting an Exemption as a Site User

To submit a medical exemption approved by the local Exemption Review Committee, sign into your Single Sign-On account and choose Accountability Reporting.
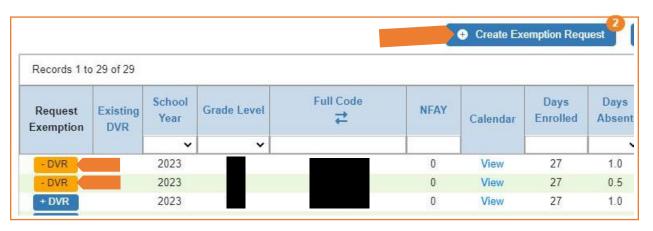
If you have access to more than one site within your district, you will select the site where the student is enrolled. Next, select the Student Data tab and the Attendance tab.

Ensure you have selected the current school year. Find the student you wish to submit a DVR for and click on their State Testing Number (STN). This will open a window that displays the student's attendance history, as shown in the example below.

Records 1 to 100 of 125					Prev	1	2	Next					
Request Exemption	Existing DVR	School Year	Grade Level	Full Code ⇄	NFAY	Calendar	Days Enrolled	Days Absent	Absent Date	Local Attendance Code	Attendance Status	Attendance Note	
		∨	∨					∨		∨	∨		∨
+ DVR		2023	▮	▮	3	View	6	1.0	▮	FDA	Excused		
+ DVR		2023	▮	▮	3	View	6	1.0	▮	FDA	Excused		
+ DVR		2023	▮	▮	3	View	6	1.0	▮	FDA	Excused		

Next, select the +DVR button that corresponds to the student's approved medical exemption date(s); select "Create Exemption Request."

Upload the [Medical Exemption Review Committee Process for Eligible Exemptions and Documentation for Decision](#) form. Medical records are to be maintained locally. **DO NOT** upload documentation that would result in a HIPPA violation.

Provide a description that includes the date(s) the student was absent.

Approving Exemptions and Closing Out Appeals
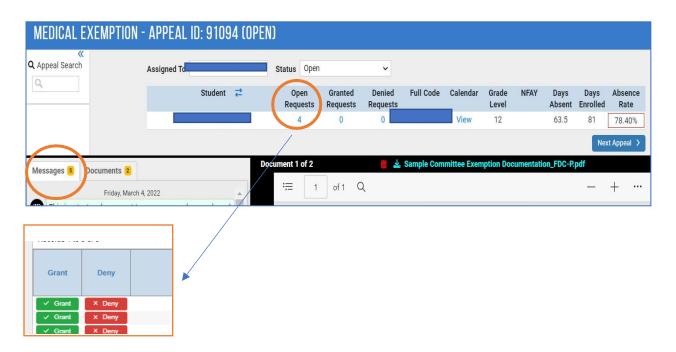### District Admin Users

The district admin user grants or denies Chronic Absenteeism Medical Exemption appeals in the Accountability Reporting application. To grant an exemption, select the Appeals icon and click Attendance Medical Exemptions Request under the Appeal Type heading.

Closing Out an Appeal

After granting the appeal, it must be closed out. To close out an appeal, click on the *Open Requests* number to grant or deny each absence in the request record and the screen below will open. Once granted or denied it will show in the status column.

Change the Status to "Closed – Pending Update." Repeat this process as necessary.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Office of Accountability at Accountability@sde.ok.gov or call 405-522- 5169. Visit the OSDE Accountability Home Page for more resources.