



Office of Facilities Planning
Room 1060 Education Building Annex
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COVID FAQ's – September 23, 2021

The following Q&A are intended to provide clarifications and additional information to the [NYSED Health and Safety Guide for the 2021-2022 School Year](#).

1. Are COVID related projects still being expedited?

Yes, they will receive an expedited review. LOI's will continue to be received in SED LOI mailbox. A project number will be assigned and communicated. Note: Enter **"COVID 19 REOPENING"** in the subject line of related email.

2. If physical barriers are provided (ex: plastic sneeze guards), are teachers / students / staff still required to wear a mask?

The CDC no longer recommends physical barriers for contraction mitigation. A preferred approach is enhanced ventilation and air filtration to dilute and remove any SARS-Cov-2 particles from the air as described in the CDC school guidance. Physical barriers are not a suitable replacement for mask wearing. The presence of barriers does not alter the stipulations of a mask mandate when one is in effect.

Note: per previous SED guidance, clear plastics must comply with 2020 Building Code of New York State, Section 2606, Light Transmitting Plastics. Districts must be sure the specific plastic product they are considering has documentation to show it has been tested to meet all the applicable fire test requirements listed in 2606.4.

3. Does a tent under 400SF require a building permit?

No, tents not greater than 400 SF as well as tents open on all sides and less than 700 SF per NYS Building Code 3103.2 do not require a building permit. All work performed on school district property must conform with the Building Code and Commissioner of Education Regulations.

4. What are the requirements for a tent above 400SF?

- Tents are regulated by code and require a building permit, (see FAQ #3 for exclusion). Two types are available to the district – "temporary tent" or "permanent tent".
- **A temporary tent** is regulated under Chapter 31 of the Fire Code and may be erected or commissioned for a maximum 180 days within a 365-day calendar year. Permit days are carefully tracked by SED Fire Safety.
 - SED issues a **non-renewable** Operating Permit effective until its days are exhausted.
 - When the canopy is raised, it is a "recommission", when the canopy is lowered, it is a "decommission". Unlimited days are permitted during decommissioned period.
 - Each time the temporary tent is commissioned or decommissioned, the district must coordinate with SED Fire Safety to record its inspection and the balance of days.
 - Note: Enter **"EXISTING TENT- RECOMMISSION"** (or decommission) in the subject line of related email.



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- The School superintendent or a licensed professional for the school district must email the following certifications to Fire Safety prior to occupancy:
 - Provide “commission/decommission/recommission” dates.
 - Provide certification that the recommissioning is compliant with the original approved conditions.
- **A permanent tent** is a tent regulated under Chapter 31 of the Building Code and which can remain erected more than 180 days.
 - SED issues a Certificate of Occupancy which can be renewed. The tent is subject to periodic FSR and BCS. Upon final decommission, follow typical SED protocol to remove it from the SEDREF system.
- Districts must contractually engage a licensed design professional to prepare construction documents for approval by SED OFP. For either type of tent, provide sealed and signed drawings and should include at minimum the following information:
 - District name, location, SED Project Control #, a specific project identifier- i.e., project name.
 - Site plan – Locate tent, building separation(s) and setbacks, fire access road, dimensions.
 - Floor plan – Tent plan, stake/guy cables, furniture and equipment layout, clearances, fire extinguisher locations, exit path, exit signage, dimensions. When provided, denote HVAC, power/ lighting/ generator, and other accessory equipment.
 - Elevations – Materials, stake/guy cables, dimensions. When provided, denote side curtains.
 - Notes - Applicable Code(s), proposed and legal use (BC Chapter 3), occupant load, construction type, materials, commission time-period.
 - Designated weather monitor empowered to permit or deny occupancy of the tent in accordance with climate conditions, manufacturer’s recommendations, and the Code.
 - Product literature: Canopy fabric flame propagation performance certification and labeling, applicable live and dead loads, erecting instructions, warranties, and limitations. Certificate for canopy fire proofing: Applicator name, address, email, telephone, product used, date applied.
 - Tent owner name, address, email, telephone.
 - NFPA additional information link:
<https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Coronavirus/CoronavirusTentFactSheet.ashx>

5. Does SED issue a permit to erect a temporary adjacent school building without plumbing?

Yes, SED permits such a building to be erected without plumbing provided:

- Building functions as overflow space for remedial learning use only (i.e.: not regular full classroom).
- Building serves no student as home room.
- Building is provided with solid overhead canopy connection and paved walk surface linkage to a school building where code compliant plumbing facilities exist.
- Plumbing facility location satisfies BC 2902 & 2902.3.3. and is in close proximity to the classroom.