



OFFICE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Assistant Commissioner

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Dear HEOP Directors,

Considering the current public health crisis (COVID 19), we recognize there are some time-sensitive decisions that your institutions will have to make in order to effectively plan for the incoming class of Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) students. As you know, the conditions, circumstances, and information regarding this pandemic are constantly being updated and we will keep you apprised when we anticipate changes that will impact the HEOP projects across the state. The purpose of this communication is to provide preliminary guidance as you plan.

Summer Programming

As per the HEOP request for proposals (RFP), there is a requirement for a minimum of a four-week summer program for incoming HEOP students. However, due to the current emergency crisis, we understand that there are some conditions that you as HEOP directors cannot control. If your campus will not be open to receive students for your summer program, you should plan on how you are going to replace the missed time or provide an alternative means for the on-campus summer program (based on the campus availability). The alternative offering (such as hybrid virtual online and on-campus summer program) must seek to provide all elements required for students to be successful in school as with the regular summer program.

Additional Semester for HEOP Students

Many students, including HEOP participants, may have been impacted by COVID-19 as noted in the following HESC guidance: <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/partner-access/financial-aid-professionals/covid-19-webinar-q-a.html> and <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/coronavirus>. As such, HEOP students may be allowed one additional semester of HEOP eligibility concurrent with the additional semester of TAP eligibility in circumstances noted in the HESC guidance. Please note that this additional semester of student eligibility for HEOP does not involve additional funding to the institution beyond the contractual HEOP awards.

As more information becomes available, we will update our guidance. Additionally, you can expect this and other formal communications to be shared via email and posted on our website under the

Memorandums and Guidance for NYS Opportunity Programs section:

<http://www.nysed.gov/postsecondary-services/higher-education-opportunity-program-heop>.

Thank you for your commitment to the students of New York State.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anael Alston
Assistant Commissioner