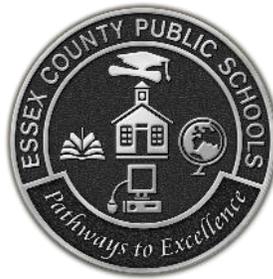


Handbook for Homebound Instruction



**Essex County Public Schools
Department of Student Services**

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Introduction

This section of the handbook provides information to schools and families about the temporary provision of homebound instruction. The goal of homebound services is to keep the student current with classroom instruction and facilitate the student's return to the current classroom setting.

Essex County Public Schools (ECPS) seeks to provide homebound instruction in a seamless manner for students who must use this service. Students are expected to attend school to the fullest extent possible, but homebound services may be provided to students who are confined to home or a health care facility and are unable to attend school based upon certification of need by a licensed physician, a licensed clinical psychologist, or a licensed nurse practitioner.

Homebound instruction is not intended to supplant school services and is, by design, temporary. It is not a remediation program and is not designed to provide students with time to make up previously missed assignments. The goal of homebound instruction is to keep the student as current as possible with classroom instruction. It is expected that the family and school will minimize academic work missed due to absences prior to the initiation of homebound services.

Communication among the school, the family, homebound teachers, and the Department of Student Services is vital to the success of homebound instruction. This handbook provides a description of responsibilities for each individual involved in the implementation of services. When all parties work together, students are able to benefit from the provision of services and return to the school environment when services are no longer needed.

Application for Homebound Instruction can be found on the Essex County website, on the Student Services page under the Department section of the webpage.

Questions about homebound instruction may be directed to the Director of Student Services, who also serves as the School Homebound Coordinator, at 804-443-3959.

General Information

Eligibility

A student must be enrolled in an ECPS school in order to be considered for homebound instructional services. Students receiving homebound instruction may not work or participate in extra-curricular activities, non-academic activities (such as field trips), or community activities unless these activities are specifically outlined in the student's medical plan of care or the Individualized Education Program (if applicable).

Eligibility for homebound instruction is determined on the basis of medical evidence submitted by a licensed physician, a licensed clinical psychologist, or a licensed nurse practitioner. A diagnosis with an explanation of how symptoms affect school attendance is **required**. A specific treatment plan and a plan for returning the student to school is *requested*; however, this information is **required** if the student is expected to miss more than nine weeks of school. In no case will full homebound instruction be provided when a student can participate in a less restrictive school setting.

Physical condition: Students with physical conditions causing them to be unable to attend school may include those with serious or terminal illnesses, those undergoing treatments that compromise their immune systems, those undergoing surgery, or in postpartum recovery (up to six weeks). The student must be free of infectious or communicable disease.

Mental health condition: In order to consider homebound instruction for students with psychiatric disorders, a mental health professional must be treating the student, and a psychiatrist or a clinical psychologist must provide the medical documentation. It should be noted that in some instances when a student is experiencing psychiatric difficulties, homebound instruction may exacerbate the student's problems and would, therefore, not be approved. Other school-based alternatives may be appropriate.

The Director of Student Services will determine eligibility for homebound instruction based on the Virginia Department of Education Guidelines. Approval of students for homebound instruction is based on medical documentation submitted by a licensed physician, a licensed clinical psychologist, or a licensed nurse practitioner, and information provided by school staff members. ECPS will request that the parent or guardian sign a release of information form allowing the medical professional to share information or clarify information provided for approval of homebound instruction. Approval is determined by the Director of Student Services on the basis of the documented need for service.

Levels of Homebound Instruction

Full Instruction: A student who will miss 20 consecutive days or more of classroom instruction because of a medical condition, either physical or psychiatric, may be considered for full homebound instruction.

Partial Instruction: A student who has a medical condition that significantly affects his or her stamina or ability to function in a full-day academic setting may be considered for partial homebound instruction, while continuing to attend school for one or more classes. A collaborative plan must be developed and other less restrictive alternatives must be considered first.

Partial homebound instruction may be part of the process of reintegrating a student who has been on full homebound instruction or may be considered for a student who will miss more than 20 partial days of school due to a certified medical condition.

Intermittent Instruction: A student who undergoes medical treatment protocols that affect the student's ability to consistently function in a school setting may be considered for intermittent homebound services. For example, a student who is receiving a series of chemotherapy treatments

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for cancer may be able to attend school between, but not during, the treatment phases. Other students having chronic conditions, such as sickle cell anemia or severe seasonal asthma, which cause significant, yet intermittent, school absences may also qualify for homebound instruction. To qualify, the doctor must anticipate that the student will miss a significant amount of school. The school, homebound office, family, and doctor shall develop a collaborative plan to include conditions under which homebound or classroom instruction can be implemented. Whenever possible, the student's classroom teachers will be assigned as the homebound teachers.

Courses Supported

Instructional support is provided for core academic classes: English, science, social studies, and mathematics. For secondary students, foreign language may also be supported if required for the diploma being pursued. In order to ensure that students meet the graduation requirement for Economics and Personal Finance, the course will be offered to high school students receiving Homebound.

Instruction for physical education (P.E.), fine arts and practical arts, and elective courses must be coordinated with the student's school. Homebound teachers do not provide instruction in these subjects. The decision concerning the completion of these courses rests with the school. Parents or guardians may discuss this with the student, school counselor, and school administrator.

Hours of Homebound Services

The number of hours of instruction per week per student will be based on a student's individual needs. Based on a regular five-day school week, elementary students receive one (1) hour per day or five (5) hours per week. Middle school students can receive up to eight (8) hours per week. High school students are generally provided with a maximum of two (2) hours per week for each core class, when necessary, two (2) hours per week of Economics and Personal Finance, plus an additional two (2) hours per week for foreign language, if required for the diploma being pursued.

Every effort will be made to ensure academic progress; however, course credit must still be earned according to class requirements.

Homebound instruction is delivered during late afternoon or early evening, and only on those days when school is in session. Instruction will not be given to homebound students when ECPS students are not in attendance (i.e., in cases of inclement weather, teacher work days, winter break, spring break, and student holidays). Under special circumstances, the Director of Student Services may approve exceptions.

When scheduling sessions, homebound teachers will take into consideration parent or guardian requests, but not all requests can be accommodated.

Location of Instructional Sessions

The location of services will be designated by the Director of Student Services and may be the student's home, library, or a health care facility. If services are in the home, the parent or guardian must identify an adult who will be present at all times and agree to confine all pets prior to the arrival of the homebound teacher. If the home setting is not deemed appropriate for instruction and the student's condition allows, homebound instruction may take place at the school, public library, or other agreed upon location.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Homebound instruction is considered a school sponsored activity. The Student Rights and Responsibilities apply to all students regardless of venue. These documents are provided to students and parents at the start of each new school year.

Missed sessions

Make-up sessions will only be allowed for sessions missed due to illness or family emergencies, and when cancellations are made 24 hours prior to scheduled sessions. If possible, make-up for missed sessions must be completed within the same week the session is canceled. Requests for make-up sessions, other than those stated, will require prior approval from the Director of Student Services. The homebound teacher will notify the Director of Student Services after each cancellation when there is no prior notification by the parent or guardian. An excessive number of cancellations, i.e., three or more in the course of a nine-week period, may result in termination of homebound services. Sessions missed due to cancellation by the homebound teacher will be made up.

Special Education

If a student is eligible for special education services, the special education case manager of the student coordinates services with the Director of Student Services. For eligible students, the individualized education program (IEP) must be amended to meet the student's temporary instructional needs after the Director of Student Services has approved the referral for homebound instruction. Parental consent must be obtained to amend the IEP prior to initiation of homebound services.

The student's IEP will delineate the number of homebound instruction hours, the special education services to be delivered while the student is homebound, the goals to be pursued while the student is homebound, the service delivery option, and the placement continuum option: "homebound." The proposed school assignment would likely remain unchanged.

When the student is able to return to school, the IEP team must amend the IEP to terminate homebound services in order to return the student to the school setting.

Technology

Online courses may be used in place of, or to supplement, some homebound instruction for available classes. Online classes may be beneficial for students who are able to work well independently. For additional information, contact the student's school counselor and/or administrator. The use of available technology for the student to participate in some classroom activities from home and to support instruction will be considered when appropriate. Parents must provide Internet access for online courses offered during homebound instruction.

Grading

The student remains on the classroom teacher's roll, and the classroom teacher remains the teacher of record. Therefore, the classroom teacher is responsible for assigning the quarter, semester, and final grades to the student. In order for the classroom teacher to be informed regarding student progress, frequent, preferably weekly, communication is required between the classroom and homebound teachers, and all work completed by the student must be turned in to the classroom teacher in a timely manner. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to grade each work product and return the work to the homebound teacher in a timely manner to ensure the student is getting regular and relevant feedback on academic performance.

Since not all classroom activities will be appropriate in a homebound setting, some assignments may be eliminated, altered, or replaced for a student in the homebound setting. While the classroom teacher may modify course requirements for the individual student, the course requirements must be met in order for the student to earn course credit.

Standards of Learning Tests and Other Required Testing

The Director of Student Services, the school testing coordinator, classroom teachers, and homebound teachers will collaborate to arrange for the administration of Standards of Learning (SOL)

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testing if it is required. When a student is eligible for the Virginia Grade-Level Alternative Assessment (VGLA), the Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program (VSEP), or the Virginia Alternative Assessment Program (VAAP), the homebound teacher will work with the classroom teacher, the lead teacher, the special education case manager or the testing coordinator to provide the appropriate evidence.

Extension or Early Termination of Homebound Services

In order to continue homebound instruction beyond the specified termination date, it will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to contact the Director of Student Services five school days prior to the termination of services. The parent/guardian should contact the Department of Student Services.

If the student will not require homebound services for the initially specified period of time, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to obtain a release statement from the medical professional so that the student may return to school. This information should be provided to the Department of Student Services at least five days prior to the student's anticipated return to school.

For special education students, it will be necessary for a parent or guardian to give proper notification to the Department of Student Services and the school for an IEP team to reconvene, review the student's educational needs, and complete an IEP addendum.

End-of-Year Termination of Homebound Services

Homebound instruction for general education students will terminate on the last day of school. Homebound instruction for special education students will follow the schedule delineated by the student's IEP.

School Reintegration Process

School and homebound staff members work collaboratively with parents or guardians and medical and/or community resources to coordinate the appropriate reintegration of the student to school-based instruction, including any reasonable accommodations that will enhance the student's ability to appropriately access the curriculum.

Reporting Student Information

Information regarding a homebound student is confidential and is subject to the same restrictions as all other such information.

The Homebound Teacher

An individual employed as a homebound teacher or supervising online instruction must hold a teacher's license issued by the Virginia Board of Education (*Code of Virginia* § 22.1-299). Homebound teachers must be employed and supervised by designated officials of the school division. A homebound teacher should have a broad background of professional training and experience to adapt instruction to each student's needs. Teachers engaging in academic instruction in the home should also be able to adjust to a variety of home situations and be knowledgeable of cultural uniqueness.

Teacher Qualifications for Teaching Homebound Instruction for Students with Disabilities

In determining the appropriate teacher to provide homebound instruction for students with disabilities, the same requirements that must be met for "in school" instruction must be met for those students receiving instruction at home. Matching teacher credentials/qualifications to student needs will need to be done on a case-by-case basis.

Guidance may be found in the *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia*, January 24, 2010, 8 VAC 20-81-40, Special Education staffing requirements, pp. 36-39; the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* (Standards of Accreditation), 8 VAC 20-131-240; and *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) requirements. In addition, requirements to be designated as a Highly Qualified Teacher may be obtained from the licensing division at the Virginia Department of Education.

If the person delivering the service does not meet all of the qualifications, he or she must be supervised by someone who does and is actively involved in the child's case; i.e., the homebound teacher must receive direct supervision concerning the child and instruction from a highly qualified teacher. School division personnel should be prepared to provide documentation regarding the highly qualified teacher that provides this supervision.

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Responsibilities

The successful provision of homebound instructional services depends on the cooperation and collaboration of a number of individuals. The responsibilities of these individuals are outlined below.

School Homebound Coordinator (or designee)

1. Document receipt of requests for homebound instruction.
2. Approve requests for homebound instruction accompanied by appropriate documentation and determine termination date.
3. Communicate status of the request to all concerned parties (parent or guardian, homebound teacher, school staff members, social worker) when homebound instruction has been approved.
4. Communicate with school personnel if additional information is required in order to consider request.
5. Assign teachers appropriate to the student's educational needs to provide homebound instruction.
6. Provide IEP information to homebound teachers when appropriate.
7. Communicate to all parties when teachers are assigned.
8. Coordinate overall provision of services in a timely manner. Instruction should be initiated within five instructional days of the approval of the request.
9. Consider the possibility of available technology to encourage the student to participate in certain classroom activities from home or to support instruction.
10. With the school homebound coordinator, encourage communication between classroom teachers and homebound teachers, including supporting instruction and facilitating the exchange of assignments and materials between the homebound teacher and the classroom teacher, as needed.
11. Provide oversight of instruction provided.
12. Participate in school reintegration process.
13. Complete annual report to the Virginia Department of Education with assistance of other central office staff members.

School Counselor

1. Encourage communication between classroom teachers and homebound teachers, including making appointments, supporting instruction, facilitating the exchange of assignments and materials between the teachers as needed, and coordinating SOL or other state testing.
2. Ensure that materials and/or assignments are collected for P.E., fine and practical arts, and electives from the classroom teacher and disseminate to the parent or guardian.
3. Determine a designated location for all Homebound materials and/or assignments to be located for pick-up by the Homebound teacher.
4. Collaborate with the school testing coordinator on any high stakes testing coordination that must occur for the student.
5. Immediately contact the School Homebound Coordinator if concerns arise.
6. Participate in the student's school reintegration process.

Special Education Department Chair or Case Manager (if student is eligible for special education services)

1. Coordinate referral process with the school homebound coordinator.
2. Receive referral from the parent or guardian for homebound services.

3. Assist the parent or guardian in gathering appropriate documentation for homebound instruction.
4. Provide family information about homebound instruction.
5. Request that the social worker complete a home visit to determine needs of the learning environment.
6. Conduct IEP meeting to delineate services after request for homebound instruction is approved.
7. Encourage communication between classroom teachers and homebound teachers, including making appointments, supporting instruction, facilitating the exchange of assignments and materials between the teachers as needed, and coordinating SOL, VESP, VGLA, and VAAP testing.
8. Add the homebound teachers to the student's IEP team on IEP Online to facilitate access to the IEP.
9. Encourage school staff members to be actively engaged with the student receiving homebound services.
10. Conduct IEP meeting to return the student to school-based services when homebound services are no longer required.
11. Inform the Director of Student Services within 24 hours after IEP is completed.
12. Immediately contact the school homebound coordinator if concerns arise.
13. Participate in the student's school reintegration process, if applicable.

Parents, Guardians, or Students

1. Contact school staff members when homebound services may be required.
2. Provide required medical documentation to support the homebound referral.
3. Sign a release of information form allowing the medical professional to share information or clarify information provided for approval of homebound instruction.
4. Complete parental signature forms in order to begin homebound instruction.
5. If appropriate, participate in the IEP team decision to delineate homebound services.
6. Obtain assignments from the classroom teachers until the homebound teachers are assigned.
7. Plan the schedule of instruction with the homebound teachers. When possible, parent or guardian requests will be considered, but not all requests can be accommodated.
8. Provide an appropriate learning environment free of interruptions and with proper lighting and necessary equipment, such as a desk or table, pencils, paper, books, and other materials as needed.
9. Ensure that all pets are confined prior to the arrival of the homebound teacher.
10. Make sure the student is ready for instruction at the time designated by the homebound teacher.
11. Supervise daily homework.
12. Make every effort to see that the student completes school assignments.
13. Ensure that an adult (18 years of age or older) is in the home during the entire period of instruction. If an adult is not in the home at time of instruction, the teacher will cancel the session. Even though a student may be 18 years old and/or married, it is required, and absolutely necessary, that there be a third person (adult) in the home during the entire teaching time.
14. Keep all appointments with the homebound teacher.
15. Notify the homebound teacher at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled session if the student is unavailable because of a contagious disease or an emergency.
16. Request make-up instruction for sessions missed because of illness or family emergency. If possible, make-up for a missed session must be completed within the same week the session is canceled. Requests for make-up sessions, other than those stated, will require approval from the Department of Student Services. Continued cancellations could result in termination of homebound services.
17. Notify the Director of Student Services of an excessive number of missed appointments or of excessive tardiness by the homebound teacher.

18. Request and obtain materials or assignments for P.E., fine arts and practical arts, and elective courses from the school counselor for the student to complete assignments. Homebound teachers do not provide instruction in these subjects.
19. Contact the Director of Student Services to obtain *Request an Extension of Homebound Instruction* and submit the request to the Director of Student Services no later than five school days prior to the termination of services.
20. Immediately contact the Director of Student Services if concerns arise about instruction. Questions regarding grading are directed to school staff members.
21. Advise the school homebound coordinator or the program manager of any change in the student's status that would require a change or termination of homebound services.
22. If the student will not require homebound services for the initially specified period of time, provide the Department of Student Services with a release statement from the medical professional at least five days prior to the student's anticipated return to school.
23. Participate in the student's school reintegration process.

Classroom Teacher

1. Make available, within 48 hours of being notified of the need for homebound services, information and instructional materials, which may include a syllabus, textbooks, materials, on-line information, assignments, handouts, readings, quizzes, and tests.
2. Work collaboratively with the homebound teacher to exchange information, strategies, assessment tools, and instructional materials relative to the student's instructional needs and to facilitate use of technology for instruction (if applicable).
3. In collaboration with the homebound teacher, make modifications and accommodations regarding assignments and activities as necessary for the homebound setting without compromising educational integrity. Since not all classroom activities will be appropriate in a homebound setting, some assignments may be eliminated, altered, or replaced for a student in the homebound setting.
4. Communicate with the homebound teacher, preferably weekly, but at least biweekly, to remain informed about the student's academic progress, effort, and circumstances and to keep the homebound teacher informed about classroom activities.
5. Receive all completed work from the homebound teacher within one week of its completion, unless other arrangements are made.
6. Grade work within an appropriate timeframe to ensure that the student is provided with timely feedback on academic progress.
7. Determine the student's quarter, semester, and final grades based on completed work, even if the student has not attended school during the school year. Note: Homebound students are marked as attending even if they do not come to the school. If the student received both classroom and homebound instruction during a given grading period, the quarterly, semester, and final grades assigned by the classroom teacher reflect grades earned in both settings.
8. If the student is expected to take a final examination, coordinate with the homebound teacher and provide a copy of the exam and all preparatory materials.
9. If the student is eligible for the VGLA, VSEP, or VAAP work with the homebound teacher to provide the appropriate evidence.
10. Inform the homebound teacher of the SOL testing schedule, when applicable.
11. Sign for "coordinating time" on the *Worksheet for Homebound/Home-based Teachers*.
12. Encourage student engagement in appropriate and medically approved school activities.
13. Provide instructional materials and/or assignments for P.E., fine arts and practical arts, and elective courses to the designated school staff member. Homebound teachers do not provide instruction in these subjects.
14. Immediately contact the program manager or educational specialist from (OSS) and the school homebound coordinator if concerns arise.
15. Participate in the student's school reintegration process.

Homebound Teacher

1. Within 24 hours of accepting a student assignment, contact the parent or guardian and schedule homebound instruction. When scheduling sessions, take into consideration, when possible, the requests of the parent or guardian.
2. If contact is not made with the parent or guardian within 48 hours of assignment, document all attempts and contact the Department of Student Services.
3. Within 48 hours of accepting the student assignment, initiate a conference with classroom teachers for the purpose of exchanging information and materials related to the curriculum.
4. Notify the Department of Student Services of time and location of scheduled instructional sessions and immediately notify the program manager or educational specialist of any changes in scheduled sessions.
5. Provide instruction to student and administer tests, exams, or other assessments with the goal of keeping the student as current as possible with classroom instruction.
6. After each instructional session, assign work to be completed by the student before the next instructional session.
7. In collaboration with the classroom teacher, make modifications and accommodations regarding assignments and activities as necessary for the homebound setting without compromising educational integrity.
8. Communicate with the classroom teacher, preferably weekly, but at least every other week to remain informed about classroom activities and to keep the classroom teacher informed about the student's academic progress, effort, and circumstances.
9. Return all work to the classroom teacher within one week of its completion, unless other arrangements are made, keeping a record of all returned work.
10. Determine jointly with the classroom teacher how and by whom individual work products will be graded.
11. Provide data regarding progress toward meeting IEP goals and objectives, if applicable, and participate in IEP meetings with prior approval from the program manager or educational specialist from the Department of Student Services.
12. If the student is expected to take a final examination, coordinate with the classroom teacher to obtain a copy of the exam and all preparatory materials.
13. Administer Standards of Learning (SOL) or other state tests after consultation with the homebound program manager, the school homebound coordinator, or the school testing coordinator.
14. If the student is eligible for alternative state assessments, work with the classroom teacher, the lead teacher, the special education department chair, or the testing coordinator to provide the appropriate evidence.
15. Provide the allotted instruction for each student. Homebound teachers may not shorten approved instructional time, even at the request of the parent or guardian, and then request payment for the full time allocated. The time indicated on the time sheet must be the same as that provided unless it is a "cancellation/no-show" situation.
16. If student is unavailable or the required adult is not in the home, wait 15 minutes before leaving, mark the session as a "cancellation/no show," and contact the Department of Student Services.
17. Refrain from providing private tutoring to students whom the homebound teacher is currently serving.
18. Immediately contact the Director of Student Services if concerns arise.
19. Participate in the student's school reintegration process as appropriate.
20. Participate in staff development activities associated with homebound instruction.
21. Provide documentation regarding instructional activities as request by the Director of Student Services.

Role of Physician or Clinical Psychologist Providing Certification

Homebound instruction is designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and home or health care facility for students whose medical needs, both physical and psychiatric, do not allow school attendance for a **limited** period of time. At the time of the initial request, the physician or clinical psychologist providing medical certification of need for homebound instruction must provide in writing to the school division the following:

1. Name of the student
2. Certification that the student is “confined at home or in a health care facility”
3. Nature and extent of the illness, including whether the condition(s) prohibit attendance for a full day or a portion of the day
4. Date of examination or diagnosis
5. Whether the illness is chronic or intermittent
6. Accommodations the school could make that would allow the student to attend
7. Any particular aspects of the illness that may impact the way in which instruction is delivered (e.g., the student will be unable to write or type)
8. Estimated date of return to school (the parent and health care provider should be informed that if this date is beyond nine calendar weeks, additional steps must be taken as outlined below)
9. Ongoing treatment and/or therapy being provided
10. Frequency of treatment and/or therapy
11. Specific plans to transition the student back to the school setting
12. Signature, date, office address, and phone number