



# Montgomery County Public Schools

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## Homebound Guidelines

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## Introduction

This section of the handbook provides information to schools and families about the temporary provision of homebound instruction. The goals of homebound services are to meet the educational needs of students who are unable to leave the home or hospital, and therefore, unable to attend school.

Montgomery County Public Schools seeks to provide homebound instruction in a seamless manner for students who must use this service. It is designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom, home or health care facility for students whose medical needs, both physical and psychiatric, do not allow for school attendance for a limited time period.

Homebound instruction is not intended to supplant school services and is, by design, temporary. Students are expected to attend school to the fullest extent possible. The student's inability to attend school for medical reasons, both physical and psychiatric, must be certified by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist.

The Student Services office manages homebound instruction for general education students. The office of Special Education services manages homebound and home-based instruction for students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Questions about homebound instruction may be directed to a school's homebound coordinator by calling the school or the MCPS Student Services office, 540-382-5100.

## Consideration of Homebound Instruction

Homebound services should be considered when it becomes known that a student will be unable to attend school for an extended period of time due to a medical condition. A referral may be made by a parent, guardian or a member of the school staff. Parents should **immediately** notify the school home coordinator and submit the Parent Request Form (*Form A*).

## Eligibility

Homebound instruction shall be made available to students who are confined at home or in a health care facility for periods that would prevent normal school attendance. The term "confined at home or in a health care facility" means the student is unable to participate in the normal day-to-day activities typically expected during school attendance; and, absences from home are infrequent, for periods or relatively short duration, or to receive health care treatment. ***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 students medical plan of care.***

## **Application for Homebound Instruction**

Application for homebound instructional services should be a collaborative process between the treating health care provider, parent/guardian, and school personnel. Prior to requesting homebound services, the parent/guardian should explore options for school-based instruction with school personnel.

If homebound services are needed, the medical certification of need is the health care provider's documentation of the student's illness. The certification must be **fully completed** and submitted by a licensed physician, clinical psychologist, licensed nurse practitioner or psychiatrist. The certification of need shall also include a treatment plan, and the estimated length of recovery time.

The parent/guardian will submit the Parent Request for Homebound Instruction to the student's home school. A release of information, allowing the medical professional to share or clarify information provided for approval of homebound instruction is included on the form.

The school's homebound coordinator will complete the school information form, and submit to the Student Service's office. The Homebound Coordinator in Student Services will review the application, and determine whether the request should be approved or denied.

**Include information about each form.**

## **Types of Homebound Services/Settings for Services**

Full Homebound: For students whose acute illnesses prevent them from attending school for a short period.

Intermittent Homebound: For students who have chronic illnesses that may "flare up" necessitating shorter, more frequent periods of time away from school. These are services that would start and stop, based on pre-defined triggers.

Partial Homebound: For students who can tolerate less than a full day in the classroom setting.

## **Extension or Early Termination of Homebound Instruction**

Students receiving homebound instruction should return to school-based instruction as soon as possible. Homebound services should not be approved for periods in excess of nine calendar weeks.

In order to continue homebound instruction beyond the specified termination date, it will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to submit a completed Request for Extension of Homebound Instruction form to the Student Services office five school days prior to the termination of services.

The extension should include a treatment plan, progress towards treatment goals, and specific plans to transition the student back to the school setting. This information will be required from the treating health care provider to document the need for extended 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 Student Services office prior to the student’s anticipated return to school.

**End of Year Termination of Homebound Services**

Homebound instruction for general education students will terminate one week prior to the date final grades are due.

**Hours of Instruction**

Homebound instruction will follow the regular academic school year calendar (defined as the period of time between the opening day of school in the fall and the closing day of school for that school term). Priority will be given to core academic subjects. Elective courses are not guaranteed. The following represent the minimum hours of instruction to be provided.

<b>Elementary school students</b>	<b>one</b> hour per <u>day</u>
<b>Middle school students</b>	<b>eight</b> hours per <u>week</u>
<b>High school students-</b>	<b>two hours per core academic subject per week;</b> other accommodations on an individualized basis

Homebound Instruction <b>IS</b> :	Homebound Instruction <b>IS NOT</b> :
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designed so that the student does not fall significantly behind during the period of confinement</li> <li>• Interactive; the student is expected to participate in the instructional process and complete assignments</li> <li>• Expected to include homework</li> <li>• Intended to make every effort to ensure academic progress</li> <li>• Intended to provide priority to core academic subjects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intended to supplant school services</li> <li>• Expected to have all work completed in the presence of the homebound teacher</li> <li>• A substitute for course credit that must be earned according to class requirements</li> <li>• A guarantee that specialty classes (i.e., requiring labs, special facilities or equipment) will be comparable</li> <li>• Automatically inclusive of elective courses</li> <li>• A guarantee of on-time graduation; all diploma requirements must be met for graduation</li> </ul>

**SOL Testing**

The school homebound coordinator, division testing coordinator, classroom teachers, and homebound teachers will collaborate to arrange for the administration of SOL testing, if it is required.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Identifying and serving students through Homebound Instruction is a shared responsibility and requires the cooperation and collaboration of a number of individuals. The responsibilities of these individuals are outlined below.

### **Student Services Coordinator of Homebound Instruction**

Document the receipt of requests for homebound instruction once it is received by the Student Services office

Determine if requests are valid and ready for approval

Notify parents and school the status of the request (Approved/Not Approved)

Secure a homebound teacher in a timely manner

Receive and review the homebound agreement for the student

Verify ongoing treatment or termination of services

Notify schools, parents and homebound teacher when homebound instruction has been terminated, and when the student should return to school for classroom instruction

Ensure that students participate in the Virginia State Assessment program

### **Building Principal or Designated School Coordinator**

Serves as the contact person for the homebound teacher, classroom teacher and the parent

Provides homebound forms to parents, upon request

Documents the receipt of requests for homebound instruction

Coordinates the overall provision of services by meeting with teachers, the counselor and homebound teacher for the purpose of reviewing the written agreement and obtaining teacher signatures

Provide the homebound teacher with appropriate instructional materials and information

Resolve any problems related to homebound cases

Receive grades from the homebound teacher

\*\*\*Appointed designees by schools will be identified in August with the names sent to the Supervisor of Student Intervention Services\*\*\*

### **Classroom Teacher**

Provide instructional materials and information to the school coordinator on the subject matter, skills and units to be covered during the time period in which the student is receiving services.

Understand the roles and responsibilities outlined in the agreement and sign the agreement

Share resource materials and handouts with homebound teacher

Return graded work to the homebound teacher in a timely manner

Collaborate with the homebound teacher to determine roles and responsibilities with respect to grading assignments

Collaborate with the homebound teacher about the curriculum and appropriate instructional strategies

### **Homebound Teacher**

Meet with the school homebound coordinator to discuss classes to be taught, and roles and responsibilities of the teacher

Present the signed agreement to the Student Services office

Contact the student and parent to arrange a mutually agreed upon weekly schedule and place to provide instruction  
Gather all materials and assignments from the school  
Turn in all grades at the end of the marking period according to the schedule  
Assign grades when instructed  
Provide the minimum hours of instruction per week  
Contact the school coordinator and the student services office if there are concerns or changes  
Notify the student's school or the Student Services office if a student **misses three pre-scheduled appointments** or is **unavailable for homebound services for three consecutive days**  
Maintain a log indicating contact hours, activities, and grades. The log should be initialed by the parent after each meeting

### **Students/Parents/Guardians**

Complete the request for homebound services form and submit to the student's school  
When instruction occurs in the home, a responsible adult needs to be available in the home when the homebound teacher is scheduled to be present  
Provide adequate facilities for teaching (quiet room without interruption, with a table, chairs and appropriate supplies).  
Have the student ready for instruction at the time designated by the homebound teacher  
Notify the homebound teacher, prior to the scheduled visit, if there is a contagious illness in the home, if there is an emergency, or if the student cannot be available for homebound services  
When instruction occurs outside the home, ensure the student keeps all appointments with the homebound teacher as scheduled. Broken appointments can result in termination of homebound services.  
Make every effort to see that the student keeps up with assigned work and completes homework  
Advise the homebound teacher of any changes in the student's status  
Notify the Student Services office of excessively missed appointments or tardiness by the homebound teacher

Reference: Virginia Department of Education Homebound Instructional Services Guidelines, Virginia Department of Education, Division of Special Education and Student Services, Office of Student Services, February 2012

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