

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Procedures for Homebound Instruction



**Department of Student Services
Office of Special Education**

August 2013

APS Homebound Instruction Manual

Purpose

The purpose of Homebound Instruction is to meet the educational needs of students who are unable to leave the home or hospital, and therefore, unable to attend school. The APS Office of Special Education strives to provide excellent service to students, their parents, and the schools, to include overseeing the process for Homebound Instruction.

Instruction that occurs within the environs of the child's home may fall in several categories, to include **home-based** (which includes students prohibited from attending school due to administrative reasons, such as expulsion), **home instruction** (also known as home schooling), and **homebound**. Please note that this guidance document addresses only students requiring **Homebound Instruction**, and that the term **includes those students confined to a hospital**.

Topics Addressed in this Document

- [What is Homebound Instruction?](#)
- [When should Homebound Instruction be considered and how is eligibility determined?](#)
- [What state and local regulations apply to Homebound Instruction?](#)
- [What are the roles and responsibilities involved in Homebound Instruction?](#)
- [What is the application process?](#)
- [What are the considerations for students with disabilities?](#)
- [How are services provided and for how long?](#)
- [When do services end and how does the student transition back to school?](#)

Overview of Homebound Instruction

APS is responsible for providing instructional services for enrolled students who must be temporarily confined at home or in a health care facility. The school division is also responsible for providing homebound services to a student enrolled in the Arlington school division who is confined in another county or city in Virginia and to qualified students confined in another state, if those students meet homebound eligibility requirements. Students must be enrolled in a public school in Arlington in order to receive homebound instruction from APS.

The goals of homebound services are to sustain continuity of instruction and to facilitate the student returning to school. Homebound instructional services are not a guarantee that the student will progress in the academic program.

Homebound instruction is designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and home or health care facility, for students whose medical needs, physical and/or psychiatric, do not allow school attendance for a limited period of time. Homebound instruction may be used to supplement the classroom program for students with health impairments whose conditions may interfere with continuous daily school attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis or radiation/chemotherapy; or students with other serious health conditions). See **Figure 1** below.

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

Figure 1

Homebound instruction is not intended to supplant school services and is by design temporary. While no specific number of days can be set due to the many complex situations that arise for students, instruction should take place in the school setting to the fullest extent possible. The student’s inability to attend school for medical reasons, physical or psychiatric, must be certified by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist.

Consideration of Homebound Services

Homebound Services should be considered when it becomes known that a student will be unable to attend school for an extended period of time, or if a student’s medical condition causes intermittent absences of substantial lengths.

Students who are experiencing difficulties attending school may be referred by staff or parent/guardian for consideration of eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)/Special Education or Section 504, if their medical condition appears to be having an impact on their ability to access a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). Such referrals should be directed to the school principal or designee.

Eligibility for Homebound Services

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 (8VAC20-131-180). 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 of 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 or the Individualized Education Program (IEP) (if applicable).

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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. For eligible students, these options may include accommodations and modifications as identified through the Special Education or Section 504 process. For students not identified as having a disability, a referral to Special Education or Section 504 may be considered. If homebound services are needed, approval of services is based upon a completed application form, which includes a medical certification of need.

The medical certification of need is the health care provider's documentation of the student's illness, treatment plan, and the estimated length of recovery time. The certification must be fully completed, **including** parental permission for APS staff to contact the treating physician or licensed clinical psychologist, in order for the student to be considered for homebound services. The Supervisor of Special Education reviews all requests for completeness of information and appropriateness of the request and will follow up with the treating physician or licensed clinical psychologist to clarify the need for homebound instruction versus school-based instruction with appropriate accommodations, as necessary. Homebound services are for student illness/injury only; services are not appropriate to compensate for absences related to family care or illness.

Requested homebound instruction for students receiving special education services shall be subject to review by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). As part of its review and determination of a change in placement, the IEP team must review the approved medical certification of need for homebound instruction and determine the appropriate placement for the student based on the student's educational needs. Parental consent must be obtained to amend the IEP, prior to initiation of homebound services.

If the IEP team determines that homebound services are appropriate, the team must include language in the IEP that clearly defines the time period for the frequency and duration of the homebound services. The IEP may also include a statement that the IEP team will reconsider the need for continuation of services by a specified date. The IEP team should add a statement that addresses the fact that these services are temporary and thus **do not constitute a permanent change in placement and are not the "stay put" placement** should the IEP team and parents later disagree over the continuation of homebound services.

State and Local Regulations

Homebound Instruction is guided by regulations from the Virginia Board of Education and APS School Board Policy 25-4.2. Specifically, the *Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* requires in 8 VAC 20-131-180 that:

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 based upon certification of need by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist. For students eligible for special education or related services, the Individualized Education Program committee must revise the IEP, as appropriate, to direct off-site instruction. Credit for the work shall be awarded when it is done under the supervision of a teacher licensed by the Board of Education and meets the requirements of 8 VAC 20-131-110. Schools

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are encouraged to pursue alternative means to deliver instruction to accommodate student needs through emerging technologies and other similar means. Standard units of credit shall be awarded for successful completion of such courses when the course is equivalent to that offered in the regular school program and the work is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher. Verified units of credit may be earned when the student has successfully completed the requirements and passed the SOL test associated with the course.

Roles and Responsibilities

Identifying and serving students through Homebound Instruction is a shared responsibility and requires collaboration between parents, schools, and central office staff. The following roles and responsibilities are identified in state and local regulations.

APS responsibilities in the provision of homebound instructional services include:

- Designating an individual to coordinate the services for the school division, including supervision of instruction provided;
- Employing teachers licensed to teach in Virginia;
- Facilitating the return of the student to school;
- Providing services in a timely manner;
- Ensuring the continuity of instructional services to the student;
- Ensuring that students who receive homebound services are included in Virginia's State Assessment program.

The **Supervisor of Special Education** is designated as the program coordinator responsible for administering the homebound program.

The Supervisor has responsibility for the following actions:

- Documenting the receipt of requests for homebound instruction;
- Determining eligibility for Homebound Instruction;
- Validating requests for homebound instruction for students with IEP's, submitting such requests to the IEP team for determination of a change in placement;
- Communicating the status of the request to appropriate school personnel;
- Coordinating the overall provision of services in a timely manner;
- Considering the possibility of available technology (distance broadcasting, robotics, etc.) for the student to participate in certain classroom activities from home;
- Verifying ongoing treatment and/or therapy and monitoring progress towards transition back to the school setting;
- Facilitating the student's return to instruction in the classroom;
- Completing an annual report to VDOE;
- Providing oversight of instruction;
- Documenting that students who receive homebound services are included in Virginia's State Assessment program.

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The School Administrator

The elementary Principal or middle or high school Director of Counseling Services (or designee) is responsible for coordinating the procedure for working with the homebound teacher and parent/guardian and for providing the following:

- A record of the student's program to date, including a schedule of classes, grades, and such other information as may be necessary;
- A proposed program to be followed by the student under the direction of the homebound teacher;
- Textbooks and other instructional materials; and
- Tests or examinations for the subject areas and instructional program pursued, including answer keys for grading.

The school administrator is responsible for ensuring that the school test coordinator (STC) is aware of students who are receiving Homebound Instruction. The STC will assist in coordinating the administration of SOL's, along with the school administrator, the Supervisor, Special Education, and the homebound teacher.

When the student returns to school, the homebound teacher shall prepare, in duplicate, a report of the student's academic progress and submit one copy each to the Supervisor, Special Education and the school administrator.

The School-based **Homebound Coordinator** and **Classroom Teacher**

The school administrator (elementary school Principal or the Director of Counseling Services in the middle and high school), the student's teacher(s), and the homebound teacher have joint responsibility in implementing the homebound program, including determining the manner and location in which the student will take any state assessments.

A student receiving homebound instruction is maintained on the rolls of the original attending school. The classroom teacher, with the assistance of the designated school-based homebound coordinator, will:

- Provide the homebound teacher with appropriate instructional materials and information (Note: Homebound Instructors may not have usernames or personal access to Blackboard);
- Be responsible for grading procedures in collaboration with the homebound teacher, including providing scoring rubrics and answer keys for assignments and tests;
- Maintain close contact with the homebound teacher or the program coordinator supervising online instruction to monitor the instructional progress of the student;
- Collaborate with the homebound teacher about the curriculum and appropriate instructional strategies;
- Collaborate with the school's test coordinator (STC) and the homebound teacher regarding state assessments.

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The Homebound Teacher

Persons serving as homebound teachers must:

- Maintain close contact with the student's teachers, counselor, and the program coordinator to receive and implement appropriate educational programs;
- Use assignments and materials provided by the classroom teacher or designated supervisor of instruction;
- Maintain an accurate record of the hours of instruction provided for each assigned student and file such information with the Supervisor, Special Education;
- Submit the student's completed work to the designated school representative prior to the end of the grading period and maintain written documentation of work completed with the homebound records, or in cases where online instruction is used, provide a written record;
- Document any instructional time that is interrupted because of the child not being available for the instruction period;
- Obtain necessary training for administering state tests (SOL's), if it is determined that SOL's will be administered by the homebound teacher.

The homebound teacher is an essential part of the team of persons who provide materials and instruction to enable the homebound student to maintain academic progress while not attending the regular school program. Homebound instruction is a modification of the general education program. It is the shared responsibility of the classroom teacher and the homebound teacher to grade academic assignments during the time the student is receiving homebound services. If work is returned to the classroom teacher for grading, prompt feedback to the homebound teacher and student is expected, and necessary, in order to ensure progress in the academic program.

The Student/Parent/Guardian

The student and parent/guardian are expected to work cooperatively with the assigned homebound teacher and school personnel to comply with school division policies and procedures for:

- Notifying the school division that homebound services may be needed, discussing the process for initiating services, and signing a release of information form so the school can share information with the physician about homebound services prior to the official request being made;
- Obtaining the medical certification of need from the physician or licensed clinical psychologist requesting homebound services and completing parental signature forms in order to begin homebound instruction, and returning the completed application form to the administrator at the student's school;
- Having a responsible adult in the home during the entire period of instruction;
- Providing adequate facilities for teaching (quiet room without interruptions, with a table, chairs and appropriate supplies) or provide transportation to another agreed upon facility;
- Having the student ready for instruction at the time designated by the homebound teacher;
- Supervising daily homework;
- Notifying the teacher, prior to the scheduled visit, if there is a contagious illness in the home or if there is an emergency;

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- Keeping all appointments with the homebound teacher (excessively missed appointments may result in suspension of services for general education students and may relieve the school division from providing make-up services to students with disabilities);
- Making every effort to complete school assignments;
- Advising the homebound teacher of any change in the student's status that would necessitate modification or termination of homebound services;
- Notifying the Supervisor of Special Education of missed appointments or tardiness by the homebound teacher;
- Following the health care provider treatment plan by keeping appointments, therapy sessions, and so forth.

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 (8VAC20-131-180). 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 of 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 or the Individualized Education Program (if applicable).

The Certifying **Physician or Clinical Psychologist**

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 must complete the APS certification of medical need as provided by the parent/guardian.

Since homebound instruction is not intended to supplant school services, if it is necessary to extend homebound instruction beyond the initial time frame or longer than nine calendar weeks, a transition plan is required outlining the following:

- Name of the student
- Justification for the extension of homebound instruction
- Additional time homebound instruction is anticipated
- Specific steps planned to return the student to classroom instruction
- Changes in amount and kind of activity for the student during extended homebound instruction
- Signature, date, office address, and phone number

The **School Nurse**

The school nurse plays an essential role in the identification of students who may be eligible for Homebound Instruction due to medical conditions. Therefore, requests for Homebound Instruction

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which are based on medical conditions will be submitted via the school nurse. The school nurse will review the information provided on the medical certification prior to forwarding the application to the Office of Special Education for approval. This process may include reviewing the student's Clinic file and/or contacting the certifying physician.

For students with medical conditions, the school nurse will be requested to participate in planning for a student's return to school subsequent to a period of Homebound Instruction. This role may be consultative or advisory, but will serve to assist the student's IEP or 504 team, or other support staff, in understanding the student's need for accommodations and modifications in the school environment.

The Homebound Instruction Application

The following steps comprise the application process:

1. Parent/guardian requests the Homebound Instruction application form from the student's attending school.
2. Application is completed by a medical doctor; for psychiatric conditions, a psychiatrist or a licensed clinical psychologist is acceptable. A completed application will include:
 - current diagnostic information,
 - treatment plan, including description of plan for return to school (may be on separate document, attached to the application),
 - projected duration of need for Homebound Instruction, and
 - contact information for the certifying professional.
3. The application is submitted to a school administrator, specifically the Principal (elementary) or Director of Counseling Services (secondary) at the student's school. For students with medical conditions, the application is routed to the school nurse for review prior to submitting to the Supervisor, Special Education.
4. The school administrator identifies a staff member to be the Homebound Coordinator (point of contact) for the Homebound Instruction process, to include following up on the application and coordinating services if the student is determined to be eligible for Homebound Instruction. If the student is receiving Special Education or Section 504 services, it may be appropriate to designate the case manager as the point of contact.
5. The Homebound Instruction application form, with identified school-based Homebound Coordinator, is signed by a school administrator and forwarded to the Supervisor, Special Education for processing.
6. The Supervisor will review the application, and contact the parent/guardian and the certifying medical professional.
 - If all information is complete and accurate, the Supervisor may approve the application.
 - If more information is needed, the Supervisor will notify the parents and the school-based Homebound Coordinator (as identified on the application) that the application is incomplete. The Supervisor will identify the type of information needed in order to consider the application for approval.

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- If the application is denied, the parent may appeal the decision by contacting the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, in accordance with APS School Board Policy 25-4.2.

Considerations for Students Identified with Disabilities

Students with disabilities have rights and protections under Section 504 and the IDEA. If a student with a disability is found eligible for Homebound Instruction, the responsibilities for planning, implementing and monitoring the academic program remain with the student's IEP or 504 team.

Hours of Homebound Instruction

The following represent the minimum hours of instruction to be provided. These hours may not be applicable in all instances (i.e., for students with IEP's, the IEP team determines the hours required in accordance with the student's educational needs).

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

Review and Termination of Service

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. If it is necessary for homebound instruction to continue beyond nine weeks, an extension or reauthorization form, including treatment plan, progress towards treatment goals, and specific plans to transition the student back to the school setting, will be required from the treating health care provider to document the need for extended services.

The homebound teacher will assist the student, family, and school personnel with the student's transition back to the classroom setting. However, other support staff, such as the school nurse, school counselor, IEP case manager, or school psychologist, may be more appropriately assigned to the student for transition purposes depending on the nature of the student's needs.

If a student has an IEP, the IEP team must amend the IEP upon the ending period of homebound services in order to either return the student to the school setting or continue the homebound placement. Homebound instruction is designed so the student does not fall significantly behind during the period of confinement. It is necessary for the student to participate in the instructional process and complete assignments. Homework should be expected. Not all work will be completed in the presence of the homebound teacher. Every effort will be made to ensure academic progress; however, course credit must still be **earned** according to class requirements. Priority will be given to core academic subjects. Specialty classes (i.e., those requiring labs, special facilities or equipment) may not be comparable. Elective courses are not guaranteed (**see Figure 1**).

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Parents/guardians have a responsibility to keep all appointments with the homebound teacher and excessively missed appointments may result in suspension of services for general education students, and may relieve the school division from providing make-up services to students with disabilities.

In some circumstances, students may receive Homebound Instruction on an intermittent basis. Students with episodic conditions may receive Homebound Instruction when they are unable to attend school for more than two consecutive weeks. In these cases, the parents should notify the school as soon as they suspect that the student's condition is such that they are entering a period of extended absence. For students who are intermittently unable to attend school for shorter periods of time, schools should follow typical practices for excused absences. In both of the above circumstances, schools may initiate processes to consider eligibility under IDEA or Section 504.

For students who are returning to school after a period of Homebound Instruction, school staff, parents, and the Homebound teacher should coordinate closely to assure that the student attends school to the maximum extent possible. The determination of when to terminate Homebound Instruction is based on the student's attendance in core subjects (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies). Once the student is able to receive instruction in the core classes in the school setting, Homebound Instruction should be terminated. Students may continue to require an adjusted school day, but that modification in itself is not sufficient to justify Homebound Instruction. Rather, the school staff and family should collaborate to determine workload adjustments and other necessary accommodations.

In all instances, if a student is identified as a student with a disability under IDEA or Section 504, then that team will determine services and accommodations.

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APPLICATION FOR HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

To be completed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school administrator or designee

Student: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Home and/or Cell Phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Student address: _____

Acknowledgement/Release: I acknowledge this request and agree with the need for homebound services. I further acknowledge that the requested homebound services for students receiving special education services shall be subject to review by the student's IEP team pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

I will provide an environment conducive to learning, ensure that a responsible adult is in the home for the duration of instruction, or provide transportation to another agreed upon facility. I will keep appointments with the homebound teacher or contact the teacher or homebound coordinator if an appointment must be missed.

I understand APS School Board Policy 25-4.2 provides guidance for homebound instruction.

By my signature, I authorize the release and exchange of medical information between the health care provider, listed separately, or his/her designee, and school division personnel. My signature provides the health care provider(s) with the authorization necessary to disclose protected health information and records regarding said student as it pertains to the condition for which homebound instructional services are being requested. This authorization may be withdrawn at any time in writing.

Please note: This form, along with the additional sections listed below, must be fully completed in order for the student to be considered for homebound services:

- Medical Certification of Need (completed by physician or licensed clinical psychologist), and
- School Information page (completed by school staff).

Return this form, along with the completed and signed Medical Certification of Need, to the administrator at your student's school.

If you have questions about completing this form, please contact the Office of Special Education at 703-228-6051.

Signature of Parent/Guardian or Adult Student

Date

If it is necessary for homebound instruction to continue beyond nine weeks, an extension or reauthorization must be requested by submitting a new application form, including treatment plan, progress towards treatment goals, and specific plans to transition the student back to the school setting.

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MEDICAL CERTIFICATION OF NEED

To be completed by the licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist providing care to the student for the condition for which the services are requested. Attach additional sheets where needed.

Name of Student: _____

Nature and extent of illness: _____

Medical/physical condition Psychiatric/psychological condition

Date of diagnosis of illness and recent examination: _____

Is the student confined at home or in a health care facility? YES NO

Is the illness/treatment intermittent in nature (e.g., sickle cell anemia, chemotherapy for childhood cancer)? YES NO

Could this child attend school if accommodations are made by the school?

YES. Please list the accommodations required (attach additional sheet, if necessary):

NO. Please explain (attach additional sheet, if necessary):

Explain ongoing treatment and/or therapy being provided: _____

Frequency of treatment: _____

Estimated date of return to school: _____

Signature of Licensed Physician/Clinical Psychologist

Date

Print Physician/Psychologist Name

Telephone Number

Office Address City, State and Zip Code

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

The following documents comprise an application and all three must be completed prior to submission to the Office of Special Education:

- Application for Homebound Instruction, completed by parent/guardian
- Medical Certification of Need, completed by appropriate professional, obtained by parent/guardian (reviewed by school nurse for medical/physical conditions)
- School Information form (this sheet), completed by school-based Homebound Coordinator/school point of contact for this student

Student Name/ID: _____

School/Grade: _____

Is this student identified with a disability under IDEA or Section 504?

YES. Please indicate the special education or Section 504 case manager: _____

NO.

Will any state or local assessments be administered during the time that this student is potentially receiving Homebound Instruction?

YES. Please notify School Testing Coordinator (STC) of this application.

NO.

School Nurse/Clinic Aide (for medical conditions):

Does this student have a Health Alert or Plan of Care that is maintained by the school Clinic?

YES.

NO.

Signatures:

Clinic (for medical/physical conditions)
Nurse/Aide name and Contact Information

Date

School-based Homebound Coordinator
Name/Position and Contact Information (phone and e-mail)

Date

To be completed by the Office of Special Education

Date received: _____ Date of Decision: _____ Supervisor Initials: _____

Approved

Request for more information

Denied