



Johnson County School System Homebound Guidelines/Services

Services

Homebound services are available to all students who are enrolled in the Johnson County School System. The program is designed to provide continuity of educational services between the classroom and setting for students whose medical needs, either physical or psychiatric, preclude school attendance. It may also be used to supplement the classroom program for health impaired children whose conditions may interfere with consistent attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis, chemotherapy, or radiation treatments) or for children with disabilities that prevent regular school attendance.

While homebound instruction is helpful to students whose illnesses and special needs preclude school attendance for a period of time, it has limitations. Students who are injured or whose illnesses make it difficult for them to complete assignments independently may fall behind in their work. Students may not be able to complete requirements for certain classes while receiving homebound instruction. We encourage parents to work closely with the school contact person, typically the student's counselor, to make program choices that will ensure the success of their children who require homebound instruction. For students receiving services through a 504 plan or an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a 504 or IEP meeting should be scheduled to discuss any needed accommodations.

Eligibility

Students may be found eligible for homebound instruction if medical evidence shows that they are physically or emotionally unable to attend the regular public school. Eligibility is determined on the basis of information submitted by a physician, psychiatrist, licensed clinical psychologist through the homebound referral form. A treatment plan must also be submitted with any request for homebound instruction. Homebound instruction will be available to those students whom it is anticipated will be absent a minimum of 10 consecutive school days. Any student illness that prevents regular school attendance for less than two weeks is best handled at the school level rather than with homebound services.

In order to maintain a student's eligibility for medical homebound instruction, he/she is not allowed to sustain outside employment or participate in extracurricular activities, unless the physician, psychiatrist, or clinical psychologist specifically states the need for these activities in writing. Participating in school activities during the school day is not allowed and after school activities will require permission from the school principal and homebound coordinator. Homebound instruction is not provided after the completion of the school year beyond the final report card issue date. Any question regarding the approval of homebound services in unusual situations should be directed to the homebound supervisor at (423) 727-2640.

If a child suffers from an emotional disorder and the attending psychiatrist or licensed clinical psychologist recommends homebound instruction, such instruction may be approved. A treatment plan must accompany the homebound referral packet for students suffering from an

emotional disorder. The treatment plan must outline the child's mental health diagnosis, treatment history, current treatment, and a date for returning the child to school. Weekly counseling is recommended for students who receive homebound instruction for emotional disorders. A mandatory review at the end of the twenty-day period and written documentation is required to extend homebound services.

Homebound services are available to students who are pregnant following the birth of the child and in cases where the physician determines that school attendance would present a health risk to the student prior to delivery. Six weeks of homebound services are provided post-partum.

In order to evaluate the need for homebound instruction, the parent/guardian of the student is requested to grant the Johnson County School System written permission to consult with the physician, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical psychologist. The exchange of information is essential in determining the initial eligibility of the student in receiving homebound services. The homebound referral packet contains a statement form for a parent to sign, granting the Johnson County School System permission to consult with the appropriate medical professional.

Procedures for Obtaining Homebound Services

In order to obtain homebound instruction, the parent or guardian must obtain a copy of the homebound referral packet. Contact the homebound office for a copy of the packet. The packet must be completed to its entirety, signed by the attending physician, and returned to the Homebound Supervisor located at the Johnson County Board of Education at 211 North Church Street, Mountain City, TN 37683. The fax number is 423-727-2663. All requests for homebound instruction must be approved before homebound services can begin. Prescription notes and letters from physicians in lieu of the initial medical referral form will not be accepted. When homebound instruction is requested for children who are emotionally unable to attend school, a treatment plan must accompany the homebound referral packet. Once the request has been reviewed and approved, approval will be indicated by a signature and a copy will be returned to the front office at the school of record. A phone call will be made, and a letter will be sent to the parent to confirm homebound approval or denial.

If homebound services are approved, the parents/guardians will be required to meet with the Homebound Supervisor and the homebound teacher before services will begin. Homebound instruction, expectations, recertification, and termination of services will be discussed at this meeting. All parties will be required to sign a document of understanding.

Review Team

The review team shall consist of members of school staff who are familiar with the health and educational needs of the student for whom homebound instruction is being requested, including the student's 504 Team, if applicable. The review team shall consider the student's grade level, academic status, physical abilities, individual academic needs, period of homebound instruction, and similar factors when determining the amount of instruction time. The student's physician may recommend, in writing, the period for which the student is eligible for homebound instruction; however, the determination of the initial homebound instruction period shall be made by the review team.

Homebound Instruction Program and Recertification

The homebound instruction program shall consist of a minimum of three (3) hours of instruction per week while school is in session for the period of homebound instruction, plus any authorized extension(s). The three (3)-hour instruction time shall not include travel to and from homebound sessions or student preparation time. If the student is in need of more instruction, it may be arranged with the coordination between the homebound teacher and the homebound supervisor. Students receiving homebound instruction shall not be counted absent from school. Instruction shall be provided by a teacher holding a valid Tennessee teacher license as provided in T.C.A. Title 49, Chapter 5. Due to various reasons, all homebound sessions will be held at Johnson County Board of Education Central Office located at 211 North Church Street. All time allotments for homebound instruction are dependent upon the physical and emotional condition of the student. Every effort should be made to ensure academic progress; however, course credit must still be earned according to class requirements.

Homebound instruction is designed so that 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 for instruction will be given to core academic subjects.

The program for homebound instruction follows the calendar for the regular school year. Homebound teachers are not permitted to meet during school vacations, holidays, or snow days. School personnel need to work closely with the student, parent, and homebound teacher to determine an appropriate education plan for the student to complete assignments. It is expected that the homebound teacher and the parent will agree on an appropriate schedule.

All initial homebound instruction shall be for the period certified by the review team. In order for a student to be recertified for homebound instruction to continue beyond the initial certification period, the student must receive another certification in writing from his or her treating physician stating that the student has a physical or mental condition that, in the treating physician's judgment, prevents the student from returning to regular classes.

Prior to expiration of the period of homebound instruction and return to school, the review team shall develop a treatment plan and strategy for the student's reentry into the school environment. An IEP team may choose to return a homebound student to the regular classroom on a gradual basis, if needed. In such a plan as this, the student should be marked as homebound until that student is in the regular classroom for at least 50 percent of the scheduled school day.

Review and Termination of Services

The duration of homebound instruction depends on the nature and extent of the illness or disability of each student. Students should return to school when medically able, whether or not the assignments are complete and up to date.

If a student is medically unable to return to school and requires extended homebound services, the parents/guardians of said student are required to provide an updated homebound medical form signed by the physician to the Homebound Supervisor. It is not the responsibility of the

Homebound Supervisor to ask the physician, psychiatrist, or the clinical psychologist for updated forms for extension of services. This is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Homebound recertification paperwork must be completed in a timely manner. Recertification must be obtained upon the expiration of each additional medical homebound instructional period if medical homebound instruction is to be continued beyond the initial medical homebound instructional period. If the student does not return to school at the end date noted on the homebound form and an updated homebound form for recertification has not been given to the Homebound Supervisor, he/she will be counted as absent (unexcused). If five (5) unexcused absences are accumulated, the student will be found truant by law (TCA 49-6-3007), and the Progressive Truancy Process will begin.

Homebound Placement for Students with Disabilities

A student with a disability may be eligible for a homebound placement if the student qualifies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Board rules and regulations. In the case of a student with a disability, the IEP team will determine if the student is in need of a homebound placement.

The IEP team shall consider a medical homebound placement only upon certification by a licensed doctor of medicine or osteopathy that a child with a disability needs a homebound placement, is expected to be absent from school due to a physical or mental condition for at least (10) consecutive school days and that the child can receive instruction in a homebound placement without endangering the health of personnel providing it.

A homebound placement for a student with a disability shall be temporary, and shall not exceed thirty (30) school days. The student's IEP shall contain a goal of returning the child to a less restrictive environment within the school year, unless there is a medical necessity that requires extended homebound instruction, in which case additional homebound placements of thirty (30) school days or less may be instituted. The student's IEP shall also be reviewed by the IEP team every thirty (30) school days to ensure the continued appropriateness of instruction and of the homebound placement.

All guidelines of homebound must be followed if the referral for the services is a result of a recommendation from a medical professional. If services are a result of an IEP decision, the special education supervisor must be notified and involved in the IEP process for children receiving homebound services.

Each school is responsible for ensuring the delivery of appropriate educational services for students who have IEPs. The homebound program for these students should be monitored by the special education case manager. The special education case manager is responsible for ensuring that legal responsibilities for implementing the IEP are followed. This includes the revision of the IEP services, implementing accommodations, monitoring due dates for IEP, and updating IEP progress. Eligibility for homebound instruction is determined through the IEP process and does not require approval from the homebound supervisor. The supervisor for special education should be involved in any meeting where homebound instruction is discussed. A copy of the prior written notice should be sent to the homebound office for documentation.

Responsibilities of the Classroom Teacher

The classroom teacher is essential to the team of persons whose function is to provide the materials and instruction that will enable the homebound student to maintain academic progress while recovering. This role requires accurate and timely communication.

The teacher of record is responsible for grading.

In addition, the student's 504 coordinator or IEP case manager will perform oversight of student progress.

Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardian and Student

We expect the parents/guardians and the student to work cooperatively.

Parents/Guardians and student are required to:

- Work with the school to set reasonable goals and make necessary changes to the student's instructional program as necessitated by the student's condition. Make every effort to keep up with school work as assigned.
- Provide updated medical documentation at the end of the approved period of time (alert the homebound instructor and the student's school of any change in the medical status that might result in the modification or termination of homebound services).
- Ensure that students attend the scheduled homebound sessions on time and stay the allotted time.
- Have access to a computer and reliable Internet service (if classes/assignments are on Google Classroom or working with the PLATO platform).

Students are required to:

- Participate in the instructional process, work at home independently, and complete all assignments.
- Bring completed assignments to his/her homebound session.
- Be respectful to homebound teacher.
- Take responsibility for their own education.

Contact

Edna Miller, Homebound Supervisor
423-727-2640