

## **HOSPITAL & HOMEBOUND SERVICES**

### **Ouachita Parish School System**

#### **PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES (Updated for 2025–2026)**

Hospital-Homebound is an alternative setting for a student enrolled in a public school who, because of physical illness, accident, emotional crisis, or treatment thereof, is not able to be moved from the hospital or home environment for the provision of educational services for at least 10 operational days. The 10 days can be projected by the referring physician or psychiatrist. According to the Louisiana Department of Education guidelines, “homebound instruction should be used as a last resort after all other options and/or alternative schedules, (i.e., half days, work packets) have been exhausted.” **All attempts shall be made to return the student to the school setting as soon as possible.**

Because the specific illness or injury is viewed as temporary under Section 504, the **SBLC Committee** at the school **must** meet to determine how to best meet the criteria of F.A.P.E. The school nurse is a mandated member of this SBLC. This could include:

- Arranging the student’s schedule to accommodate illness or injury.
- Having all classes downstairs if mobility is affected.
- Sending work home to be completed.
- Attending school for part of the day or week.

*If it is not possible to arrange any of the above, the student may be eligible to apply for Homebound Services and have a Homebound teacher sent to the home or on a consultative status.*

#### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Department of Student Support Services for the Ouachita Parish School System provides Hospital/Homebound Instruction/Placement services to students in grades K-12, who met the eligibility criteria of the Hospital/Homebound Instruction/Placement Services program. Instruction will continue while a student is at home or hospitalized within the jurisdiction of the Ouachita Parish School System because of medical, healthcare treatment, physical illnesses, accident or the treatment thereof. Only a parent/legal guardian can apply for a student to receive homebound services. Applications must be obtained from the student’s guidance counselor at his/her home-based school or from Student Support Services located at 800 Claiborne in West Monroe, LA.

Hospital/Homebound Instruction/Placement Service provides instruction in core required subjects (English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies) for grades K-12. A minimum of four hours of homebound instruction shall be provided per week, unless the student's health requires less. Consideration shall be given to the individual need for services beyond the core academic subjects for students with disabilities. The classroom teacher is responsible for providing the homebound teacher a list of curriculum content that should be covered, including coursework, outlines, textbook, and any other materials necessary to support the student's instructional program. When possible, students will be enrolled in online instruction. The homebound teacher will provide completed coursework to the classroom teacher for all subjects taught outside of his/her area of certification for the classroom teacher to review and determine the student's nine-week grade(s). Homebound teachers will provide grades in their area(s) of certification and submit to the teacher and guidance counselor.

The completed application and physician's documentation for the Hospital/Homebound Instruction/Placement services must be submitted to the District appointed Hospital/Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor at Student Support Services prior to approval of services. Maximum duration of Hospital/Homebound Instruction services is nine weeks. The physician will need to recertify the student to continue receiving services at the end of each nine weeks period. (Exceptions for eligible IEP/IAPs)

## **CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY**

- The student must be enrolled in the Ouachita Parish School System. The student must live or be hospitalized within jurisdiction of the Ouachita Parish School System.
- There is certification by a physician that the student is expected to be home or hospitalized for at least 10 operational days for a qualifying illness and will be able to participate in and benefit from an instructional program in the homebound setting.
- The student is under constant medical care for illness or injury which is acute or catastrophic in nature or has a chronic physical condition which has acute phases requiring homebound instruction during the acute phases. If the student is pregnant, a medical evaluation must verify there are complications in the pregnancy or recovery which could be detrimental to the health of the student.
- The student must be free of infectious or communicable diseases. If the student is not free of such disease, other appropriate instructional arrangements must be made such as instruction by school to home telephone, or an online format.
- The parent or legal guardian signs parental agreement concerning homebound or hospital policies agreeing to terms and cooperation.
- The child's parent must contact the school's counselor or SBLC Chairperson at the child's homebased school to request a Hospital/Homebound Application. The school counselor will submit a "Hospital/Homebound Screening Form" to the District Homebound

Coordinator/Supervisor to initiate the referral process. Upon receipt of the screening form, the parent will be given a Hospital/Homebound application via mail, email, or in person which is to be completed by both the parent and the physician. A physician or psychiatrist must recommend in writing that the student needs homebound instructional services on the **Ouachita Parish School System Application for Hospital/Homebound Instruction**. Upon receipt of the completed application, an SBLC meeting will be scheduled.

- This meeting will determine what accommodations or modifications can be made to the child's schedule, setting, etc. to attempt to keep the child in school.
- If the SBLC committee determines there is no accommodation or modification which can help the child to remain in school, the school counselor or the SBLC Chairperson will contact (by email) the District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor to discuss the need for hospital-homebound services.
- Upon approval, the eligible student's parents/legal guardian and the appropriate school principal/counselor will be contacted by a Hospital-Homebound Teacher, and the student will be placed for services within 5 working days of receipt of notification by the District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor.
- Copies of students with disabilities (504/SPED) Hospital-Homebound Physician's Report, Pregnancy Report, and/or Psychiatrist/Psychologist Report are to be sent to the District Homebound Coordinator /Supervisor at the office of OPSS Student Support Services located at 800 Claiborne, West Monroe, LA. Copies of all paperwork shall be filed at Student Support Services as well as the student's homebased school.

### **Bulletin 741-Compulsary Attendance §1103**

A student who is enrolled in regular or special education and who, as a result of healthcare treatment, physical illness, accident, or treatment thereof, is temporarily unable to attend school, shall be provided instructional services in the home or hospital environment.

1. Homebound instruction shall be provided by a properly certified teacher on the eleventh school day following an absence of more than 10 consecutive school days for a qualifying illness.
2. After a student has been absent for 10 days for one of the above reasons, the student shall be referred for review by the SBLC, to determine need for referral for section 504 services if the student has not previously been identified as a student with a disability.
3. Homebound instruction, at a minimum, shall be provided in the core academic subjects:
  - a. **English**; b. **Mathematics**; c. **Science**; and d. **Social Studies**.
4. A minimum of four hours of homebound instruction shall be provided per week, unless the student's health as determined by a physician requires less.
5. Homebound services may be provided via a consultative model (properly certified regular or special education teacher when appropriate, consults with the homebound teacher delivering instruction) for students needing such services less than 20 days during a school year.

**REMEMBER – There is no substitute for the classroom instruction provided at your child’s school. Please discuss all options with your child’s teachers and other educational providers before making the final decisions about Homebound Services.**

### **SPED/504 (STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES)**

For students receiving special education services/504 services, hospital-homebound is a change of placement; therefore, an *IEP/IAP* meeting shall be required for this change of placement. The decision for a change in placement will require a re-evaluation *IEP/IAP* to be completed to address the needs of the student. This meeting should include the Homebound Teacher to receive and give input on the instructional setting and outcomes. The student’s *IEP/IAP* will have to be revised by the special education teacher (*IEP Team*)/504 school coordinator upon the student’s return to school.

### **PREGNANCY**

Hospital-Homebound services for pregnant students begin on the actual delivery date or upon medical documentation of complications. Feeling tired, uncomfortable, and hurting to walk are all symptoms of late pregnancy and not a medical complication. The student and/or her family are responsible for notifying the home-based school contact (counselor/principal) and the District Homebound Coordinator /Supervisor once she has delivered her baby. The inability to secure childcare (babysitting) services is not an acceptable reason to file for an extension for homebound services.

### **ABSENCES**

A student is counted absent at school until receipt of the official notice of hospital-homebound eligibility (not the school nurse program). This official notice from OPSS Student Support Services will have two pertinent dates:

- Date from which to allow excused absences (this information comes from the medical form completed by the physician)
- Date from which the student is to be counted present.

Approval of absences incurred before the official date will not be handled by the OPSS Student Support Services but will be a matter handled by the school principal.

Once the student has been approved for Hospital/Homebound Services, a district appointed employee at OPSS Central Office (Ann Killian or designee) will be notified by the District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor of the change in placement and will code the student in the district database.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Teachers will provide the assignments to the Homebound Teacher for students on a weekly basis. Google classroom can be an option but will be at the discretion of the school in a case-by-case situation. In addition to the homebound teacher, it is the responsibility of the school counselor, regular education teacher, primary provider (SPED), or the 504 facilitators to communicate and assist the student at least once a week or based on the terms of the IEP/IAP. The contact person must document contact dates and times using the Homebound Contact Form/Folder.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Students that are academically capable will be placed in courses via Edgenuity (Imagine Learning) or an online program selected by the LEA. Google classroom can be an option but will be at the discretion of the school in a case-by-case situation. In addition to the homebound teacher, it is the responsibility of the school counselor, regular education teacher, primary provider (SPED), or the 504 facilitators to communicate and assist the student at least once a week or based on the terms of the IEP/IAP. The contact person must document contact dates and times using the Homebound Contact Form/Folder.

## **FAMILY & STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- To provide the District Hospital/Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor with physician's orders on the application documenting the need for Hospital/Homebound instruction services in a timely manner. **Only original documents are accepted with the original signature from physician ONLY. (Signatures from other medical providers such as RN's, PA's, Nurse Practitioners, Psychologists, etc. WILL BE ACCEPTED)**
- Parent must notify the student's home-based school and the District Hospital/Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor as soon as the student has missed school more than 10 days due to a planned or unplanned prolonged illness.
- Homebound instructors are assigned according to certification and the instructional needs of the child. It is critical that the family and the assigned instructor work together to ensure student success. Should the family be unwilling to accept the assigned homebound instructor, the **Ouachita Parish School Board** shall not be held responsible for providing this service. Instructor assignment concerns should be brought to the attention of the District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor.
- The Parent/legal guardian is responsible for picking up student's textbooks, workbooks, Chromebook, etc. from the school and paying any school fees if applicable.
- The parent/legal guardian is responsible for making sure the student has submitted any assignments missed before entering the homebound program. Homebound teachers are not responsible for any assignment before the official entry date.
- An adult family member (21 years or older) shall be on the premises and available during the entire teaching time.
- Regular study periods should be established for the student as suggested by the teacher.

- All parties in the home should be appropriately dressed throughout the homebound session.
- The space provided for instruction shall accommodate the student's physical needs and be a distraction-free learning environment conducive to academic engagement.
- A parent, guardian or adult family member in attendance is responsible for initiating the monthly time sheet for homebound instruction unless the student is of legal age.
- The student shall receive any necessary medical care before the instructor's arrival. Doctor appointments shall be scheduled at times other than those set aside for instruction.
- Homebound students are considered present for the school day. If the student is not home to receive instruction at the designated time, the absence will be reported to the school. Parent/guardian must contact homebound teacher at least one (1) hour in advance when student needs to miss a homebound session. If the call is not made, this absence will be listed as unexcused. **Three unexcused absences will result in the termination of homebound services and the school will be notified.** Any cancellation of the teaching sessions must be reported by the Homebound Teacher to the District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor.
- If an extension of services is required, the "Notice of Hospital Homebound Extended Eligibility" form must be resubmitted to the SBLC Committee by the parent or legal guardian.
- Because the student is placed on homebound because of a physical or psychological inability to attend school, it is understood that the student shall not be away from the home environment unless it is for medical attention.
- Homebound students shall not participate or attend school-sponsored events without a full medical release from their primary care provider.
- Homebound students seen at school-sponsored or public events for reasons other than medical services will undergo a hospital-homebound eligibility review with termination of services as a possibility. Exceptions of long-term care students will be made through submission of a written doctor's request to the Superintendent.
- Hospital-Homebound instructors do not administer mid-term exams, final exams, or state assessments in the home. These tests shall be taken at school. Arrangements must be made between the family and the school. Medical verification of the student's inability to go to school to take a test must be presented to the school principal and testing coordinator for state assessments. Arrangements will be made for alternate testing sites in a case-by-case situation.
- If the student moves while receiving services in a hospital/homebound placement, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school and follow proper drop procedures.



#### **NOTE TO SCHOOL OFFICIALS\***

The student receiving hospital-homebound services shall remain on school and class rosters and shall be accounted for in any reports submitted by personnel to the LEA/LDOE. Assignments, tests, and grading are the responsibility of the classroom teacher(s) once the homebound teacher submits to the school. If a student is receiving hospital-homebound services during state testing, school test coordinators are responsible for providing information to the parent and students and accommodations should be made to include the student in testing when possible. Homebound teachers shall not administer these tests. The District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor will update the designated school contact (principal, counselor, testing coordinator, etc.) with a current list of homebound students each 9 weeks period. When a student returns to their home-based school setting, please notify the District Homebound Coordinator/Supervisor.