# Homebound Instruction Guidance

## What is Homebound Instruction?

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. Homebound instruction may be used to supplement the classroom program for students with health impairments whose conditions may interfere with regular school attendance (e.g., students receiving dialysis or radiation/chemotherapy; or students with other serious health conditions). Students must be enrolled in a public school in Missouri in order to receive homebound instruction.

Homebound instruction is designed to be a temporary service and is not intended to supplant school services. The goals of homebound services are to sustain continuity of instruction and to facilitate the student returning to school. Therefore, as part of receiving Homebound services there is a treatment plan that includes timelines, expectations, and the responsibilities of every team member to ensure the student is able to access the regular education classroom as much as possible. Homebound instructional services are not a guarantee that the student will progress in the academic program, and, for that reason, the district works extensively to support the student so he/she can return to the classroom.

## What if my student has an IEP?

For students who are eligible for special education, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must amend the IEP to meet the special education student's temporary instructional needs based on the approved certification of need for homebound instruction.

Homebound  instruction may also be provided per the IEP when students with

disabilities are long-term suspended or expelled due to discipline infractions. It is also a special education placement option for students whose disability-related needs cannot be met through a less restrictive placement option. Homebound is considered the most restrictive environment and therefore great effort is placed on the district to find a placement that is of less restriction.

## Who determines when homebound is necessary?

Prior to requesting homebound services, the parent/guardian should explore options for school-based instruction with school personnel. When a parent calls into school indicating a need for an extended medical or mental health absence to the attendance secretary, that secretary will contact the school nurse. The school nurse will contact the parents and direct them to the homebound application. Once a homebound application is sent to the parent, the school nurse should contact the building principal, counselor, and Homebound Facilitator that the student is applying to go on homebound status. Eligibility for homebound instruction is determined on the basis of medical evidence submitted by a licensed physician or licensed clinical psychologist. Parents may obtain a “Homebound Application” form from the Homebound Facilitator in the District Health Services Office or lindseyubadlo@sjsd.k12.mo.us or (816-671-4007). The application must be fully completed including parental permission for the district to contact the treating physician or licensed clinical psychologist (HIPPA release) in order for the student to be considered for homebound services. Completed forms are submitted to the student’s school principal for review and to verify the appropriateness of the request. Additional information may be needed from the parent, physician or psychologist, and/or school personnel. Approval is determined by the school principal, school nurse, and counselor based on the student’s documented need for service. If this child is on an IEP, the Director of Special Services should be contacted before the approval or denial decision is made. If the child is on a 504 plan, contact the district 504 Coordinator should be contacted before the approval or denial decision is made. The principal will send a letter of approval or denial of services to the parent and the Homebound Facilitator. Any appeals to the denial of homebound services should be submitted to the Director of Student Services at 816-671-4006.

When a student with an IEP/504 plan is approved for homebound services, the IEP/504 team must convene to amend the IEP/504 to reflect homebound instruction prior to the homebound services being implemented.

If the request for homebound instruction is for a student with a disability or 504 condition and the reason is disability-related, the IEP/504 team must reconvene to consider the

request for homebound services. The IEP/504 team must determine that homebound instruction is required for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Homebound instruction is a restrictive placement and should only be considered when a student's needs are such that they cannot be met in another less restrictive setting. This placement should always be considered short-term while exploring other options.

There are legal requirements for students with disabilities who are long-term suspended or expelled. Homebound instruction is an option considered by the IEP team when students with disabilities are long-term suspended or expelled.

Homebound instruction in a student's IEP is a mandated service. It is extremely important that services be implemented exactly as listed in the IEP.

## How is the amount of services determined?

The requirement for full attendance is to complete 5 hours of homebound instruction each week as required by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The date, time, and length of the homebound session is determined by the homebound instructor as well as the parent or guardian. The student should be available for the scheduled sessions and prepared when the instructor arrives. Please be sure to have all necessary technology and supplies available at the time of the scheduled homebound instruction. If the student is not prepared, it is at the discretion of the homebound instructor to cancel the homebound session. In cases where the student has an IEP, the IEP team should consider the student's individual needs related to his/her disability.

## Review and Termination of Service

Students receiving homebound instruction should return to a school setting/school placement as soon as possible. Homebound services are always considered temporary and are based on the premise that instruction should fully take place in the school setting possible.

1. Once the HIPPA release is signed, the team (principal, teachers, counselors, nurses and other appropriate staff) will meet to determine eligibility for homebound instruction.

2. The parents will then be notified by the school principal of the decision for homebound instruction placement.
3. The team will meet every 15 school days to verify progress towards treatment plan goals. The team will determine at that meeting if homebound services are still required and if adequate progress is being made.
4. In the case that homebound instruction would require an extension of services beyond six calendar weeks (as determined by additional medical or psychological information from the attending physician or licensed clinical psychologist), the parents must submit a new “Homebound Application” form, and a new treatment plan will be created.

The school principal will assist the student and family with the student’s transition back to school. However, other support staff, such as the school nurse, guidance counselor, or school psychologist, may also be involved in the transition process, depending on the nature of the student’s needs.

If a student has an IEP, the IEP team must amend the IEP upon termination of homebound services in order to return the student to the school setting or outside placement.

## Who provides homebound and home-based instruction?

Homebound instruction is provided by teachers employed by St. Joseph School District or who are contracted on an hourly basis by St. Joseph School District. Since most homebound teachers work at schools during the school day, homebound instruction is often provided in the evening and/or on weekends. If possible, homebound is scheduled during school hours, but this is not guaranteed.

## When are services provided?

Services are to be provided during the school year. The homebound instructor contacts the parent immediately to establish a regular weekly schedule for services. It is required that an established schedule be developed and followed throughout the duration of the homebound or home-based service. It is not practical to schedule “as you go.”

Homebound providers and parents are encouraged to schedule sessions between the hours of 8:00 am and 8:00 pm. Homebound instruction may be provided on weekends if

mutually convenient for both the teacher and parent. The schedule of services will be set at the beginning of homebound services and will be included in the treatment plan.

## Attendance

The St. Joseph School District is striving to improve attendance every school year and attendance expectations with homebound instruction is important. Below you will see new guidelines for missed homebound instruction hours:

- **When 2 hours are missed in a week the homebound instructor will make a call to students' parents or guardians to discuss the student missing instruction.**
- **When 5 hours are missed, the Homebound Facilitator will make a call to parent or guardian. The Homebound Facilitator will notify the school principal, school nurse, and counselor of the missing attendance. The school will follow the attendance procedure and send out an attendance letter.**
- **When 10 hours total are missed, the student's homebound instruction may be revoked by the school principal. Written notification from the principal to the parent will occur that attendance is expected to continue homebound services. If the principal makes the decision to revoke homebound services, the student will be expected to return to in person classes the next day school is in session. If a student has not returned after being dismissed from Homebound Instruction, referrals to the Children's Division or the Juvenile Office will be reported by the principal.**
- **Further non-attendance will result in district attendance procedures being followed, which include students being dropped from enrollment and appropriate referrals being made.**

## What are the Responsibilities of the Classroom Teacher(s)?

A student receiving homebound instruction is maintained on the class roll. The school principal will ensure that the classroom teacher(s) will:

1. Provide the homebound student with appropriate instructional materials and information.
2. Be responsible for grading procedures in collaboration with the homebound teacher.

3. Maintain close contact with the homebound instructor to monitor the instructional progress of the student.
4. Collaborate with the homebound instructor about the curriculum and appropriate instructional strategies.

## What are the Responsibilities of the Student and Parent/Guardian?

The student should have frequent contact with the classroom teachers and homebound instructor to be able to access assignments and maintain grade level curriculum requirements for all classes. All teachers will be notified that the student will be receiving homebound services and will provide the assignments. It is important to communicate with all classroom teachers to provide assignments. Please be sure you know how to navigate Canvas as this is a main source of completing assignments. A classroom teacher may request paper assignments to be completed, which will need to be communicated to the homebound instructor to ensure a time is arranged to pick up the assigned work and deliver it to the student.

Other ways the student and parent/guardian are expected to work cooperatively with the assigned homebound teacher are:

1. Have a responsible adult in the home during the entire period of instruction.
2. Provide adequate space for teaching (quiet room without interruptions, with a table, chairs, and appropriate supplies) or provide transportation to another agreed upon facility.
3. Have the student ready for instruction at the time designated by the homebound or home-based teacher.
4. Supervise daily homework.
5. Notify the teacher, prior to the scheduled visit, if there is a contagious illness in the home or if there is an emergency. **(24 hours in advance)**
6. Keep all appointments with the homebound or home-based teacher (excessively missed appointments may result in suspension of services).
7. If the student is receiving homebound services, reinforcement of any therapies and special education processes necessary.
8. Advise the homebound teacher of any changes in the student's status that would necessitate modification or termination of homebound services.
9. Notify the Homebound Facilitator in the District Health Services Office (816-671-4007) of excessively missed appointments or tardiness by the homebound or home-based teacher.

10. Follow the health care provider treatment plan by keeping appointments, therapy sessions, and sharing that information with the district.

## What are the Responsibilities of the Homebound Teacher?

An individual employed as a homebound or home-based teacher must hold a Missouri teacher's license. A homebound teacher should have a broad background of professional training and experience to adapt instruction to each student's needs. Every effort is made to secure teachers licensed in secondary content areas. For this reason, it may be arranged for secondary students to have multiple homebound or home-based teachers. In addition to the above, people serving as homebound teachers must:

1. Maintain close contact with the student's teacher(s) to receive and implement appropriate educational programs.
2. Use assignments and materials provided by the teachers and/or therapists
3. Maintain an accurate record of the hours of instruction provided for each assigned student and turn into the Homebound Facilitator.
4. Each week, attendance updates for each homebound student are turned into the Homebound Facilitator and the school attendance secretary. At the end of each month, the monthly timesheet is submitted to the Homebound Facilitator.
5. Submit the student's completed work to the designated school representative (usually the student's teacher) prior to the end of the grading period.
6. Document any instruction time that is interrupted because of the child not being available for the instruction period.
7. For special education students, the homebound teacher is responsible for taking data from sessions and reporting for quarterly progress reports.
8. Communicate with the classroom teacher and principal if a student needs extra or specialized instruction for complex topics/subjects or needing additional resources to complete projects or assignments.

## What if the homebound teacher cancels a scheduled session?

If the homebound teacher cancels a scheduled session for any reason, including illness, attendance at a meeting or conference, etc., the session must be made up at a time mutually agreed upon by the provider and parent.

## What about school holidays and other days schools are closed?

Homebound instruction is provided only on days that students are in attendance at the St. Joseph School District (with the exception of weekends when there is mutual agreement between parent and homebound teacher). Services are not delivered on school holidays, snow days, or any other day when school is closed, unless the parent and homebound/home based teacher mutually agree to use a holiday or inclement weather day to fulfill hours owed. Sessions that would normally occur on these days are not made up. Teacher workdays and in-service days can only be used for sessions if teachers are not involved in meetings and/or professional development activities and their principals approve. (Teachers cannot include these hours on their time sheets since services are occurring during their contract day.)

## Who do you contact regarding scheduling difficulties and other concerns?

If there are any concerns or questions with homebound instruction, please contact the Homebound Facilitator, Lindsey Ubaldo at 671-4007, lindseyubaldo@sjsd.k12.mo.us.