

Part II, Section B.7

Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students who are Homebound or Hospitalized

Homebound or Hospitalized (H/H) is the most restrictive environment and is meant to be a short-term program. The goal of the H/H program is to meet the student's educational needs during confinement to the home or hospital.

Sarasota County School's Hospital/Homebound Program will ensure that eligible students who are hospitalized in out-of-county hospitals and/or rehabilitation centers receive education services.

A licensed physician (as defined in State Board Rule) must provide the medical diagnosis.

Psychiatric Diagnosis – must be made by a licensed physician. A psychologist or counselor may not refer students to the H/H program but may work with the referring physician to provide pertinent information needed in order to determine eligibility and develop the IEP. The nature and extent of the psychiatric condition, the treatment schedule, goals for the student's return to school, behaviors that inhibit the student from attending school, and school based modifications needed must be included in the application. Students are encouraged to participate in ongoing therapy in order for H/H to continue.

For all psychiatric H/H referrals, the school must have a conversation with the physician to validate the recommendation for exclusion from school.

Pregnancy - Pregnancy is not considered a medical condition that meets eligibility criteria for H/H services unless a licensed physician certifies that a student's medical condition confines her to the home or hospital and restricts her activities for at least 15 consecutive school days. The eligibility criteria for students who are pregnant are the same as for students who are not pregnant. Individual student needs guide eligibility decisions for the H/H program. If the diagnosis is pregnancy, additional medical information needs to include; 1) the specific medical complications that confine the student to the home or hospital (example: bed rest due to pre-term labor), 2) the estimated delivery date, and 3) the estimated length of time the student will be confined to the home.

Referral Process

A referral may be initiated by a parent, student, physician, or school personnel when a student appears to meet eligibility criteria. There is no waiting period to apply. Application forms are available at each school from the designated H/H contact.

Parent and student complete the H/H Application and fax, mail, or deliver it to the designated contact person at the districted school. The Medical Referral must be completed by physician/psychiatrist and must be faxed directly to the designated school H/H contact.

Eligibility Criteria

A student is eligible for the H/H when the following criteria are met:

1. A licensed physician for medical conditions or a psychiatrist for psychiatric conditions must certify:
 - a. That the student is expected to be absent from school due to a medical or psychiatric condition for at least fifteen (15) or more consecutive school days from the date the physician's referral reaches the designated H/H contact person;
 - b. That the student is expected to be absent from school due to a chronic condition for at least fifteen days (15) which need not run consecutively;
 - c. That the student is CONFINED to home or hospital;
 - d. That the student will be able to participate in and benefit from an instructional program.

NOTE: H/H services may not be used as a credit retrieval program.

2. Student is under medical care for illness or injury which is acute or catastrophic in nature; and
3. Certification by a licensed physician/psychiatrist that the student can receive an instructional program without endangering the health of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact; and
4. Student is five years of age or older and is enrolled in a public school prior to the referral for the H/H program; and
5. A parent, guardian, or primary caregiver signs parental agreement concerning H/H policies and parental cooperation; and
6. Students are eligible for services until they graduate (receive a standard diploma) or through the school year in which they turn 22.

Eligibility/Placement Staffing:

All medical/psychiatric referrals will be staffed and placed through the school-based CARE team, which is to include the guidance counselor, parent, student, general education teachers for the core academic classes, ESE teacher and Liaison if student is in ESE program. The designated H/H contact person will complete all necessary paperwork and work with the team to schedule meetings.

IEP Development:

Once a student meets eligibility criteria, an IEP meeting must take place and an appropriate IEP must be developed. Transition planning is required for all H/H students.

Instruction:

Certified teachers provide instruction in the home or the hospital. It is the school's responsibility to assign an appropriately certified teacher to provide instruction.

It should be understood by all parties concerned that in many cases students are too ill to do the same amount of work as their healthy peers. This may result in fewer courses being taken, grades being lower than usual, etc. The amount of work is almost always modified to allow for the student to keep up to his or her best ability.

Service Model

Acute homebound – Students will be absent from school every day for a minimum of 15 days and will receive all of their instruction in the home (or hospital). 4 hours per week for high school students and 3 hours per week for middle and elementary students is recommended. *

Chronic Homebound – Students will attend school on a daily basis and receive homebound only when 3 consecutive days in a week have been missed. Homebound services are provided that week or the following week.

4 hours for high school students and 3 hours for middle and elementary students is recommended. *

* Actual hours allotted will be determined on an individual basis at the IEP meeting

Grading:

Acute and Chronic Homebound- the regular classroom teachers remain responsible for providing assignments and assessments to the H/H teachers. Final exams and course tests should be sent home with the H/H teacher to proctor for the student. The H/H teacher returns all work un-graded to the classroom teacher.

Students should not be penalized for absences directly related to their illness. If an incomplete is given, parents and students must be made aware of what is required to change the incomplete. Depending on the circumstances, modifications of assignments and the amount of work may be appropriate. This decision will be determined by the administration of the student's school.

Dismissal from the Program:

Dismissal occurs when the physician/psychiatrist provides a medical release authorizing the student's return to school.