

Frequently Asked Questions

The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are provided to assist schools, local education agencies (LEAs), parent, guardians, and others regarding Hospital/Homebound (HHB) services. The answers supplied are general in nature and may vary depending upon other facts involved in an individual case.

1. What is the purpose of Hospital/Homebound (HHB) instruction?

The purpose of Hospital/Homebound (HHB) instruction is to sustain continuity of instruction for students who will be absent from school for medical or psychiatric reasons for a minimum of ten consecutive school days per year (five school days on an approved block schedule) or intermittent periods of time for a minimum of ten days per year (five school days on an approved block schedule), and to facilitate the student's return to school.

2. Can I request homebound services for a child having mental health issues?

Yes. Students with absences due to psychiatric and/or emotional disorders as defined in the latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) are eligible for HHB services for a length of time as determined by the Educational Service Plan (ESP) provided that they satisfy the eligibility requirements as set forth in the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31

Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services.

3. How do parents request HHB services?

The actual procedure for requesting homebound services is not determined by the state, but by each education agency (LEA).

4. Who provides HHB instruction?

Instruction is provided by a Georgia certified teacher.

5. Is homebound instruction the same as home schooling?

No. In home schooling parents are responsible for their child's education. The local education agency (LEA) provides HHB services to enrolled students with medical or psychiatric conditions that prevent them from attending school for a minimum of ten consecutive days per school year.

6. Can private school or home school students receive HHB services?

No. The student must be enrolled in the public school system in which he or she is requesting this service.

7. If a student lives in one LEA in Georgia and attends school in another LEA, which LEA has the responsibility for providing HHB services?

The LEA in which the student is enrolled must provide HHB services.

8. Is a pregnant student eligible for HHB services?

Students with absences due to pregnancy, related medical conditions, services or treatment; childbirth; and recovery are eligible for HHB services provided that they satisfy the eligibility requirement for HHB service. [The Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services reflects the following Title IX, statement: Pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery shall be treated as any other temporary medical condition/disability. If the school does not have a leave policy for students, or in the case of a student who does not otherwise qualify for leave under the policy, the school shall treat pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery as a justification for a leave of absence for so long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the student's licensed physician, at the conclusion of which the student shall be reinstated to the status which she held when leave began. Regulations implementing Title IX, 34 C.F.R. § 106.40(b) (4).

9. How much instructional time is provided for a student eligible for HHB services?

Although the local school team or IEP team determines the number of hours necessary to meet the instructional needs of the student, the student must receive a minimum of three hours of HHB instruction per school week to be considered present by the school system. This requirement does NOT apply to students receiving instruction via the Georgia Virtual School or other online/telecommunication courses.

10. When students enrolled in a public school are hospitalized in health care or psychiatric facilities that do not provide education services, is the LEA obligated to provide HHB instruction in the health care facility?

Yes. Each LEA must provide academic instruction to students who are confined in a health care facility for periods that would prevent them from attending school based upon certification of need by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is treating the student for the condition for which the student is requesting HHB services.

11. When students are hospitalized in out-of-state health care or psychiatric facilities, is the LEA obligated to provide HHB services in the out-of-state facilities?

Yes. The LEA is obligated to provide services even if the student is hospitalized out-of-state. The LEA must arrange with or contract directly with the health care facility, the LEA in which the health care facility is located, or the appropriately certified teachers in the geographic area in which the health care facility is located.

12. What courses are available for students approved for HHB services?

Core subjects (reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) are the focus of instructional delivery with students' receiving hospital/homebound services; however, elective courses may be included for graduating seniors.

13. Who will provide the grades for HHB students?

The classroom teacher (in collaboration with the HHB teacher) is responsible for assigning grades. 14. Is it permissible to use medical information/referral submitted by a nurse, dentist,

chiropractor, social worker, licensed professional counselor, or psychologist to determine eligibility for HHB services?

No. Only the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist treating the child for the presenting diagnosis can provide the certification of need (medical referral form) for students to receive HHB

15. Does the LEA have to provide services if a pregnant student submits a referral from a psychiatrist stating that the student should be placed on HHB services due to emotional issues related to the pregnancy, but the OB-GYN indicates that the student can attend school?

Yes, the LEA must provide services because the psychiatrist is licensed to treat mental disease and to assess the student's psychiatric and/or emotional condition.

16. Can HHB services be denied if there is reason to believe the medical condition identified for the student to miss school is not legitimate?

Only a person licensed to practice medicine under state law can determine if a student is unable to attend school because of illness. School personnel can discuss the situation with the doctor if the parent or guardian has signed the medical release. The school may also request a second medical opinion. It is best for the LEA in this situation to consult its local board attorney for advice.

17. Can the LEA provide more than three hours of instruction?

The number of hours of instruction is determined by the local school team or IEP to meet the specific needs of the individual student as identified in the ESP.

18. Does the LEA have to provide HHB services during the summer?

Services do not have to be provided during the summer unless the student is in the special education program and the IEP requires it.

19. Are LEAs required to make-up sessions?

Make-up sessions are provided at the discretion of the LEA.

20. It is difficult to get doctor's input into the medical referral plan, it will be impossible to get input into a reentry plan.

The input of the licensed physician or psychiatrist regarding the student's current physical or psychological condition is important and is part of the medical referral plan; if the attending physician or psychiatrist fails to provide such information, the school team can proceed to develop a reentry plan without the input.

21. How are students counted for attendance purposes?

A student is counted present for the week if he or she receive three hours of instruction. If the student is unable to receive a scheduled HHB instructional session during the school week due to his or her medical condition as documented by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist

who is treating the student a make-up instructional session may be provided. Once the student completes the instructional session the student shall be counted in accordance with the attendance rule.

22. Is there ever a time when a child is counted present but no HHB service is provided?

No. The student must receive a minimum of three hours of instruction to be counted present for that week.

23. Can students participate in extra-curricular activities while on HHB?

The decision should be based on the student's ESP, the physician's statement, and the LEA if there is not a stated policy.