

Toms River Regional
School District

Homebound Instruction

Parent Manual



2021-2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
Eligibility.....	3
Re-eligibility.....	3
Exceptions.....	3 Course of
Study.....	4 Request for Home
Instruction.....	4
Guidelines for Implementation	
Parent	
Responsibilities.....	
5 Home Instructor	
Responsibilities.....	6
Classroom Teacher	
Responsibilities.....	7 School
Guidance Counselor/Home Instruction Liaison Responsibilities.....	7 School Nurse
Responsibilities.....	7
School Physician	
Responsibilities.....	7
Instructional	
Time.....	
8 Concluding Home	
Instruction.....	8
Returning to	
School.....	
8	

This handbook is presented to the parents and guardians of Toms River Regional students who have been approved for or are being considered for eligibility for homebound instruction, in an effort to ensure a smooth transition into the home instruction program, provide quality instruction, and give direction for re-entry into the regular school setting.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of homebound (home) instruction is to provide students with an appropriate level of instructional services during a temporary period of absence so that they can re-engage successfully with their instructional purpose upon their return to school. Homebound instruction is designed to provide continuity of instruction between the classroom and home or health care (outside) facility, for students who are unable to attend school for a limited period of time. It is not intended to supplant school services and is by design temporary. Guidelines for instruction in lieu of classroom instruction are governed by NJ Administrative Codes 6A 14-4.8, 16-10.1, and 14-4.9, and Board policies #2412 and #2481.

Homebound instruction may be provided under the following circumstances:

- 1. Homebound instruction: Medical Reason.** Any pupil with a temporary illness or injury which makes attendance in regular day classes or alternative education program impossible or inadvisable may receive home instruction. To qualify for home instruction, the student's illness or injury must be diagnosed and verified in writing by a licensed physician/specialist in the field. The term "temporary disability" means disabled by accident or by physical, mental or emotional illness for a minimum period of ten consecutive school days or twenty cumulative school days during the school year.
- 2. Homebound instruction: Non-Medical Reason.** Any pupil who is mandated by state law for placement in an alternative program for violations of NJAC 6A:16-5.5 and 5.6 but placement is not immediately available; any pupil placed on short term or long term suspension from participation in the general education program pursuant to NJAC 6A:16-7.2 or 7.3; any pupil who has a court order requiring that the student receive instructional services in the home or other out of school setting.
- 3. Homebound instruction: Individual Education Plan (IEP) Driven.** Any pupil who is recommended by the child study team to receive homebound instruction. Home instruction beyond 30 school days requires an IEP meeting to determine possible revisions of the IEP.
- 4. Intermittent homebound instruction.** Any pupil who has a chronic medical condition and is expected to be out of school more than twenty cumulative days. The student should be classified "Other Health Impaired" or have a 504 Plan.

Instruction in the home or other alternate setting will be provided by the Toms River Regional School District or by a facility approved by the Toms River Regional School District.

ELIGIBILITY

The student's physician shall have determined, in writing, that the student is unable to attend school for a period of two (2) weeks or longer or if a student's medical condition causes intermittent absences of substantial lengths and appears to be having an impact on their ability to access a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). Under these circumstances a student should be referred for consideration of eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) or Section 504. Students on suspension will receive instruction within five (5) days of the suspension.

Home instruction for medical reasons is limited to 60 days unless the re-approval process is begun.

RE-ELIGIBILITY

If additional time is required beyond the 60 days, a new Medical Report for Home Instruction is required from the same physician, unless referred to a specialist for further assessment. Additionally, any extension requires an IPP or "Individualized Program Plan." The IPP is a written plan developed for a general education student who has been assigned by the district board of education to home instruction, an alternative education program, or who is being provided other educational services either in or out of school that are comparable to those provided in the public schools for students of similar grades and attainments, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25. The IPP sets forth the student's present level of performance, measurable goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks that encompass behavioral and social competency as well as curriculum, and individually designed instructional activities to achieve the goals and objectives. Furthermore, when the provision of home instruction will exceed 60 calendar days, the school physician shall refer the student to the child study team for evaluation, pursuant to NJAC 6A:14.

EXCEPTIONS

1. A home instruction teaching assignment cannot expose the home instructor to any contagious disease (i.e., measles, chicken pox, mononucleosis, tuberculosis, Covid, etc.).
2. Home instruction would not be denied to students with Hepatitis B, Herpes, or AIDS, as long as the home observes current preventive protocol as determined by the U.S. Center for Disease Control and a copy of that protocol is provided to the home instructor. Parents must supply preventive protocol information for the specific disease as provided by their physician.
3. A change of venue may be necessary should it be determined that safety or health conditions in the home make home instructor visits inadvisable.
4. Home instruction will not be assigned when there are less than ten (10) days remaining in the student's school year.
5. For a home instructor to be assigned to a special education student, a completed Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is required. If a parent or a medical doctor requests that a special educational student be placed on home instruction for a period longer than 30 school days, the IEP must be amended to reflect this change of placement.
6. Refusal or failure by a parent to participate in the development or revision of the student's IPP as required or to be present in the home shall be deemed a violation of compulsory education laws pursuant to NJSA 18A:38-25 through 31, and child neglect laws pursuant to NJSA 9:6-1 et seq. 7. Failure to keep all appointments or reschedule appointments with less than 24 hours may result in suspension of services.

COURSE OF STUDY

1. Every effort will be made to maintain continuity in the course of study for each class or subject area taught.
2. In developing a student's home instruction plan, consideration is given to the physician's orders.
 - a. Health of the student.
 - b. Ability to replicate a course in the home environment (e.g., AP, IB, Honors, lab sciences, some science and some language courses cannot be replicated. **NOTE:** These courses not only have rigorous requirements, but many offer activities that may only be completed using the equipment and/or facilities available on campus. These activities cannot be duplicated away from campus. If your child will be absent for an extended period of time --i.e. more than 6 weeks-- please speak with your student's counselor to discuss what classes would be more appropriate while on the Home Instruction Program.)
 - c. Courses necessary for the student to maintain their academic status.
 - d. The course of study for a special education student will be consistent with the instructional objectives of the IEP.

REQUESTS FOR HOME INSTRUCTION

Requests for temporary home instruction may originate from multiple sources, depending on the cause: Student Assistance Counselors (typically for drug addiction), Child Study Teams (for children with disabilities), medical facilities (inpatient injury or condition), or parents themselves (severe illness or injury that may make the child unable to be in school). SACs and CSTs are educated on the procedures for requesting homebound instruction.

For parents, the procedure is as follows:

1. Parent/Guardian obtains application for Home Instruction from the student's school or the district's website.
2. The completed application includes and must provide:
 - a. Name of physician.
 - b. Name and address of physician's facility.
 - c. Statement by physician identifying the nature of the temporary disability.
 - d. Expected duration of absence.
 - e. Treatment plan including how student will transition back to the school.
 - e. Is the condition contagious?
3. Parent returns the completed Request for Home Instruction to the Home Instruction Coordinator/Guidance Office/Nurses Office at the student's home school.
4. Home Instruction Coordinator/School Home Instruction Administrator, in coordination with the school nurse/case manager, sends request to School Doctor for approval.
5. Within 5 days of the School Doctor's approval, the Home Instruction Coordinator in coordination with the guidance office assigns home instructor(s).
6. The parent and student's teachers are notified when home instruction is to begin and end.
7. See below for Tutor and Parent responsibilities.

Residential Facilities

Occasionally a student may be placed in a residential facility for a condition such as drug addiction or a psychiatric episode. This placement must be either recommended or reviewed by the school Student Awareness Coordinator/School Counselor and the district physician, who will determine if the cause warrants the full time or part time placement. All external facilities providing tutoring must meet the same requirements for staff certification, payment rates, etc. See Appendix F.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the desire of the Toms River Regional School District to provide a positive and meaningful educational experience for your child while he/she is on Home Instruction. We will provide a credentialed teacher for up to ten (10) hours per week. The teacher will work closely with the student's regular classroom teacher(s) to ensure a current and relevant curriculum is being offered.

The District reserves the right to cancel enrollment if the student is not benefiting from the program, or the conditions in which instruction is provided are not conducive to learning, or if the number of student absences is excessive.

In order to provide the best possible instructional program during this time, we are requesting that the parent participate in the following ways:

1. Submit an original signed and completed copy of the Physician's Request for Home Instruction.
2. If approved, work with the home instruction tutor to arrange a schedule for instruction.
3. Ensure that you or an adult age 21 or over be present in the home during the instructional time.
No instruction can take place without an adult present.
4. The parent or adult will need to sign the Record of Home Instruction hours at the conclusion of each session, verifying that instruction for the specified period of time was provided each day. DO NOT SIGN BLANK SHEETS. Work must be completed and for the times noted prior to signature.
5. Provide an environment for study that is quiet, well lit, and free from interruptions. Pets should be secured in an area away from the student/teacher study area. No siblings should be present in the room during lesson time. If other arrangements need to be made, please discuss this with the home instructor.
6. Supplies left for the student by the instructor should be on the table ready to use when the home instructor arrives to begin instruction.
7. The student should be rested and ready for instruction.
8. Supervise the student in following through with assignments.
9. The home instructor shall be in charge when instruction begins.
10. Inform the home instructor of any academic or health-related problem your child may be experiencing that may affect the home instruction.
11. If your child is unable to take instruction at the scheduled time, please contact the home instructor or Homebound Coordinator at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled time. Make-up hours must be arranged **within a week of the absence**.
12. Meet and confer regularly with the home instructor to discuss your child's progress.
13. Contact the school's Homebound Coordinator should you have any questions or concerns.

14. If your child requires an extension of homebound instruction, you must submit another request form from the same physician prior to the end of the home instruction. You must also participate in the development of an IPP. The IPP sets forth measurable goals and short-term objectives or benchmarks and individually designed instructional activities to achieve the goals and objectives. Furthermore, when the provision of home instruction will exceed 60 calendar days, the school physician shall refer the student to the child study team for evaluation, pursuant to NJAC 6A:14. 16.
15. Participation in school-based activities is prohibited unless a clearance letter is received from the student's physician and approved by the home school coordinator in coordination with the chief school physician.
16. Students may not receive working papers nor be employed while on homebound for medical reasons.

HOME INSTRUCTOR (TUTOR) RESPONSIBILITIES

The home instructor for your child has been selected from properly credentialed teachers previously approved by the Board of Education. These home instructors will be assigned by the Home Instruction Coordinator in coordination with the guidance department. Selection of the home instructor for your child will be based upon established and approved practices.

1. Develop and coordinate with the parent a schedule for the student that will incorporate up to five (general education programs) or ten (IEP-driven special education programs) full hours of instruction per week.
2. Maintain an effective and ongoing working relationship with the student's classroom teacher(s) in order to obtain instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, worksheets, tests, and course objectives) that provide for a program as consistent as possible with the program available in the school setting.
3. Obtain the student's schedule and/or IEP goals and strategies from the Home Instruction Coordinator.
4. Maintain a contact log detailing all communication (phone, email, text) of conversations and appointments. This log must be turned into the home instruction coordinator at the conclusion of home instruction or upon request.
5. Only one missed home instruction session will be paid provided the home instructor has provided a copy of the contact log detailing communication and confirmation of session.
6. After two unsuccessful attempts to communicate with the parent or to deliver home instruction (student is not present or parent/parent designee over 21 is not physically in the home) contact the home instruction coordinator.
7. Submit required forms in a complete and timely manner to the Home Instruction Coordinator. Vouchers for payment may be submitted weekly or biweekly, but must be submitted no more than one week after the tutoring has taken place.
8. At the end of the home instruction period or the end of a grading period (no exceptions). Grades must be submitted to the guidance counselor for each student in each subject in which the student received instruction.
9. All home instructors must pick up student schedules and all other pertinent information from the Home Instruction Coordinator and guidance department prior to their first home instruction visitation. The home instructor will maintain all attendance records for each student on their roll, and submit to the Home Instruction Coordinator at the designated times.

10. During the period of home instruction, the home instructor will be considered the teacher of record. The home instructor will be responsible for the grading of the student and the submission of assignments and grades to the Home Instruction Coordinator unless other arrangements are made between the classroom teacher and the home instructor.

11. Have the parent sign the Record of Home Instruction Hours at the conclusion of **each** home instruction session.

12. When a special education student is placed on home instruction, the case manager will remain in place.

CLASSROOM TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Coordinate assignments, testing materials, and answer keys with the tutor.

2. Grading is to be done according to the following:

- a. If the student has attended school for half or more of the marking period when home instruction becomes necessary, the classroom teacher, in consultation with the home instruction tutor and the guidance counselor, is responsible for the student's grade.
- b. If the student has received instruction by the home instruction tutor for more than half of the marking period, the home instruction tutor in consultation with the guidance counselor is responsible for the student's grade.
- c. All students are required to take quarterly assessments.

SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELOR/HOME INSTRUCTION LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Work with the home instruction tutors and the home instruction coordinator in the delivery of home instruction, assuring that tutoring meets the minimum required hours and subjects.

2. Assist the tutor with any problems or questions arising from home instruction.

3. Is a liaison between the student's family and the school and will monitor the progress of home instruction, including appropriately responding to excessive cancellations as outlined below.

4. Will maintain a communication log (ex. Genesis notes) with families receiving home instruction.

5. Assist with the IPP and IEP as needed.

6. Has the final responsibility to ensure grades are submitted for the student.

SCHOOL NURSE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide parents with the Physician's Request for Home Instruction if requested.

2. Refer parents to the home instruction coordinator regarding home instruction matters.

3. Participate in the student's IPP or IEP conference when requested.

SCHOOL PHYSICIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Review the medical home instruction requests.

2. Approve or deny the home instruction based on doctor's notes from the student's treating physician. Communicates concerns of requests with the home instruction coordinator.

3. Request IPP and/or referral to child study team upon request for an extension pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25 and NJAC 6A:14.

4. Review and approve student's physician approval for attendance in school based activities.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

1. In home instruction, one hour (general education) or two hours (special education) is/are equal to one (1) day of school.
2. Each student is allowed up to a maximum of five (gen ed) or ten (special ed) hours of instruction per week (excluding weeks where there is a holiday, staff development, etc. and the student would not normally be in the regular classroom). These hours constitute instructional time only.
3. Parents will be asked to sign off daily at the conclusion of the session on the Record of Home Instruction Hours to confirm instruction hours received.
4. Within these guidelines, home instruction sessions should be scheduled cooperatively between the parent and the home instructor at times that are conducive to quality home instruction.

CONCLUDING HOME INSTRUCTION

1. Each Home Instruction application must include an anticipated date of conclusion.
2. The school of residence will make every effort to return the student to the same classroom/class schedule upon student's return to campus.
3. At the conclusion of home instruction, parents should contact the school health and attendance office (Gr. K-5) or the school counseling office (Gr. 6-12) to make an appointment for the student's re-enrollment at the regular school of attendance.
4. All home instruction placements automatically terminate at the end of the student's instructional school year. Should the need for home instruction still exist for the next school year, **the parent must reapply for the services.**
5. Upon conclusion of home instruction, the home instructor will provide progress grades for each subject in which the student received instruction. Grades must be submitted to the Home Instruction Coordinator on the Home Instruction Grade Report for distribution to the school.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL

When the doctor releases the student, they may return to school.

- a. If a student is returning to school *at the end of the term originally prescribed by the physician*, no doctor's release note is required.
- b. If a student is returning to school **before the end of the term originally prescribed by the physician, a doctor's release note is required.** The doctor's early release certification will need to be brought to the Home Instruction Coordinator. [need for specialist?]
- c. Any recommendation for a partial return requires both a physician's note and 504 Plan team or IEP team consideration. Determination will be made on a case-by-case basis, by an Individual Accommodation Plan team composed of those knowledgeable about the student.
- d. Parent/Guardian **must** meet with school personnel prior to the student's return to school.

