



South Carolina Department of Social Services

Work Aid (5.10) - Foster Care Policy Work Aid: Requesting Home Schooling for Children in Foster Care

Supplemental to DSS Policy: Chapter 5: Foster Care

A. Home Schooling Children in Foster Care

The South Carolina Department of Social Services provides a process for reviewing and assessing the special circumstances that a child in foster care may have to be considered for homeschooling. A decision will be made with the child or youth's best interest in mind and considers the least restrictive options. Before making the request for homeschool to the Office of Child Health and Well Being, the Case Manager:

1. Consults with supervisor and Legal Department to determine if the educational rights of the child were retained by parent or guardian at the time the child entered foster care,
2. Consults with the Regional Well Being Team, including the Community Liaison Coordinator, to determine if homeschooling will be in the best interest of the child, and
3. Engages with the parents or guardians to determine their position on the child or youth being homeschooled.
 - a. If a parent or guardian agrees with the request to homeschool the Case Manager will continue to complete DSS Form 37553: Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form.
 - b. If parent or guardian disagrees with the request to homeschool the child or youth, and it is determined that homeschooling the child is in the child's best interest, or there is a question of educational neglect by the parent or guardian, a court order must be signed to move forward with the request for homeschooling.
4. Upon receiving a request to homeschool from a guardian, the Case Manager and Supervisor will consider the following special circumstances before making request for homeschooling.

	a. The child or youth has special needs, or b. The child or youth is a victim or survivor of Child Trafficking and is at risk for recruiting, running away, or is at risk of being trafficked, or c. Any other special circumstance that requires the child to be considered for home-schooling including but not limited to pre-adoptive placements where the adoptive resources has requested to home school, instances where parents have requested homeschooling for youth in foster care.
B. Complete DSS Form 37553: The Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form	1. Once the above circumstances have been considered, the Case Manager compiles documents listed in the checklist of items on the DSS Form 37553: Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form. These items include: a. Cover Letter written by the DSS Case Manager or Supervisor providing a brief history of the child or youth being considered for homeschool and the Case Manager's position on the educational decision that: i. Documents engagement of youth, if the youth is 14 years or older. ii. Documents engagement of biological parents or guardian and their position on homeschooling the youth. If the youth is not legally free, a court order permitting homeschooling if the parent or guardian did not agree with the decision to homeschool. b. Written justification from (1) the foster parent and (2) third party such as therapist, physician, former or current teacher, or Guardian ad Litem explaining what educational needs will be met by homeschooling that cannot be met in the public or private school setting. c. Written description of how special needs services will be delivered if the child or youth has an IEP or accommodations if the child or youth has a 504 plan. 2. Case Manager submits DSS Form 37553 to their Supervisor. 3. The Case Manager requests the following information from the child or youth's foster parent and uploads the following documents into the case screen of CAPSS: a. Documentation verifying that the foster parent has a high school diploma or GED (beginning 1989-90) or has a baccalaureate degree. b. Documentation of school schedule indication that instructional time is at least 4 ½ hours a day at least 180 days a year.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Copy of curriculum must include basic areas of math, reading, writing, science, and social studies (Grades K-6) and composition and literature (Grades 7-12) d. Demonstrate that the foster parent is a bona fide member and in compliance with South Carolina Association for Independent Home Schools with no fewer than 50 members meet state homeschooling requirements. <p>4. Upon compiling the necessary documentation for consideration, the DSS Case Manager consults with the Well Being Team to determine all other factors of homeschooling the child or youth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If a child is school age and has a 504 Plan or IEP, the Case Manager consults with the Regional Well Being Team to determine if homeschooling is in the best interest of the child or youth and to develop a plan that meets the child's special needs in the home setting. b. The Regional Community Liaison Coordinators, Regional Clinical Specialists, and Regional Well Being Managers will participate in the staffing to assess that the child or youth's comprehensive educational needs are considered. A meeting with the child or youth's school may be needed to determine if the school district can deliver IEP services to the youth in the home setting. (See Well-Being Contact List) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. IDEA requires that children with disabilities voluntarily enrolled in private school by their parents and homeschooled children (K-12) receive an opportunity for participation in special education services. c. The Case Manager summarizes the outcome of the consultation in the cover letter along with other components of the request. <p>5. After the consultation has taken place, the County Director, Supervisor or designee reviews and submits the entire Homeschooling Request Packet including the completed DSS Form 37553: Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form and supplemental documents mentioned above to the Office of Child Health and Well Being at childhealth@dss.sc.gov with the subject line containing "Homeschool Request".</p> <p>6. The Case Manager and Supervisor will receive request determine between 7-10 business days after receiving the completed request.</p> |
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	Note: Until the Case Manager and Supervisor has received a determination of the request, the child or youth will continue or begin education in the public school setting.
C. Monitoring the Child or Youth's Home School while in Foster Care.	1. Upon receiving the approval letter from the Office of Child Health and Well Being, the DSS Case Manager updates the Education tab of the Person screen in CAPSS to indicate that the child is being homeschooled. a. Go to the Person screen of the child or youth who has been approved to be homeschooled. b. In the left panel, click on the Education tab. c. Click "Update" in the right corner of the screen. d. Next to Enrollment Terms, click 'Add' to enter a new educational provider. e. Click "Yes" button to answer the question "Is the child Homeschooled?" f. Enter Homeschool Association information, if available. g. Enter Date of Enrollment. h. Enter additional information, if available. 2. Case Manager follows up with the educational needs of the child or youth monthly and documents in the Education tab of the Person Screen in CAPSS. If foster parent provides educational update to the Child and Adult Information Portal (CAIP), Case Manager reviews updates monthly. These updates include: a. Obtaining educational updates from the foster parent to provide evidence that required instruction is taking place. This may include, but is not limited to: i. A plan book, diary, or other written record indicated subjects taught and activities, ii. A portfolio containing samples of the child/youth's academic work, iii. A record of evaluations of the student's academic progress, iv. A semi-annual progress report including attendance records b. Assessing for and monitoring the child or youth's safety and participation in the homeschool setting alone with the child or youth and foster parents. This assessment should include: i. Child or youth's social emotional development ii. Child or youth's willingness to continue homeschooling, and

	iii. Child or youth's safety c. Documenting educational updates of the child or youth being homeschooled in the Education tab of the Person Screen in CAPSS. d. Contacting the Regional Community Liaison Coordinator on the Well Being Team and the Office of Child Health and Well Being if there are any educational concerns about the progress of the child or youth. 3. The Case Manager and Supervisor resubmits the DSS Form 37553: The Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form on a yearly basis while the youth is placed in the foster home. 4. The Regional Community Liaison Coordinators semiannually reviews the children and youth in their region to assess that all educational needs are being met in the home.
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