



State of South Carolina

Department of Social Services

Child Welfare Policies and Procedures: Home School Policy

Subject:	510.6.1 Educational Needs- Homeschooling Children in Foster Care
Authority:	S.C. Code Ann. § 59-65-46 - Homeschooling of foster child.
Standards:	South Carolina Practice Model: Guiding Principles and Standards (GPS)
Application:	All Child Welfare Staff
Purpose:	The South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS) is committed to providing for the well-being of children and youth involved with the Child Welfare System through delivering comprehensive, clear, and efficient procedures for addressing and meeting educational needs through individualized service planning. A caregiver, parent, or guardian can request that a child or youth in foster care be homeschooled but must be approved by SCDSS.
Policy Statement:	To provide a process for requesting and assessing the special circumstances that a child or youth in foster care may need to obtain a high-quality education outside the public or private school system. See South Carolina Code of Law Section 59-65-46.
Definitions:	504 Plan: As specified in federal education guidelines, the 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the law and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment. Homeschool: The act of schooling where children are taught an academic curriculum at home by a parent or caregiver instead of a public or private school. Individual Education Plan (IEP): A legal document under United States law that is developed for each public-school child in the U.S. who needs special education. The IEP is created through a specific team of the child or youth's parents and district personnel who are knowledgeable about the child and disabilities that effect their learning. IEPs must be reviewed every year to keep track of the child's educational progress. South Carolina homeschooled students may be eligible for special education services by their district for free by contacting the school district to determine what services are offered and begin constructing an IEP, if necessary. Public School: A school that is maintained at public expense for the education of the children of a community or district and that constitutes a part of a system of free public education commonly including primary and secondary schools. School Age: A child or youth between five and seventeen years of age.

Original Effective Date: August 24, 2021

Current Effective Date: August 24, 2021

Special Needs: Particular educational requirements resulting from a child or youth's learning difficulties or impairments, physical disability, or emotional and behavioral difficulties.

Procedures:

A. Request for Homeschooling	1. SCDSS will consider the approval for the homeschooling of a child or youth in foster care for the following special circumstances: a. The child has special needs that are not being met in the public-school setting, or b. The child is a victim or survivor of Child Trafficking, and is at risk for recruiting, running away, or being trafficked, or c. Any other special circumstance that requires the child to be considered for homeschooling. 2. Children who do not fall under one of these circumstances will not be considered for homeschooling.
B. Complete Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form (DSS Form 37553)	1. The Case Manager completes, Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form (DSS Form 37553) within ten (10) business days of receiving request. 2. Case Manager submits DSS Form 37553 to their Supervisor. 3. The Case Manager consults with the 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. 4. The County Director, Supervisor, or designee reviews and submits the completed Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form DSS Form 37553 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". 5. The Case Manager and Supervisor receives the request determination from the Director of Child Health and Well Being or their designee between 7-10 business days after receiving the completed request.

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	6. The Case Manager updates the Education tab of the Person screen in CAPSS upon receiving the approval letter from the Office of Child Health and Well Being.
C. Ongoing Monitoring	1. The 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 the foster parent provides educational update to the Child and Adult Information Portal (CAIP), the Case Manager reviews updates monthly. These updates must 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 indicating 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. 2. The Case Manager and Supervisor resubmits the DSS Form 37553: The Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form annually while the youth is placed in the foster home.

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	3. The Regional Community Liaison of the Well Being Team semi-annually reviews the children and youth in the region to assess that all educational needs are being met in the home.
Forms:	DSS Form 37553: Foster Care Homeschooling Request Form DSS Form 30245: Health and Education Passport
Resources:	SC Code of Law 59-65 Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) Disability Resources Well-Being Team Guide .
Related Management Reports:	ER100-R03- Foster Children and Youth Home Schooled Report

Original Effective Date: August 24, 2021
Current Effective Date: August 24, 2021