

# UNDERSTANDING MEDICAL HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

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# WHAT IS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM?

Any student in grade K-12 who misses 50 percent or more of the instructional day for any reason for 10 percent (or more) of the enrollment period.

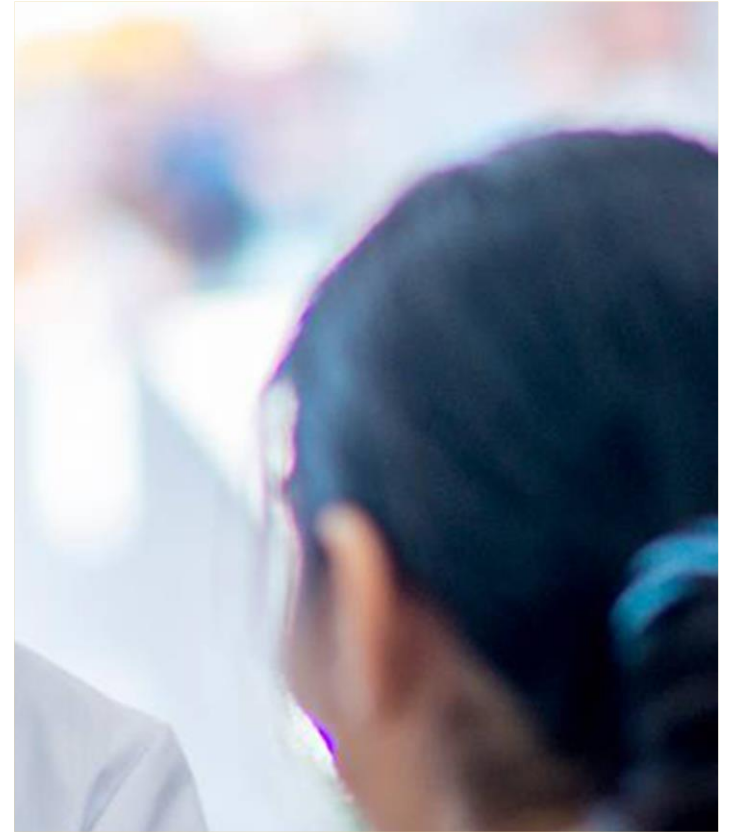
All types of absences contribute to chronic absenteeism:

Excused Absences

Unexcused Absences

Suspensions

A student is absent if he or she is not physically on school grounds and is not participating in instruction or instruction-related activities at an approved off-grounds location for the school day.



## GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MEANS...



**PRESCHOOLERS**  
build skills and develop  
good habits for showing  
up on time



**ELEMENTARY  
STUDENTS**  
read well by the  
end of third grade



**HIGH SCHOOLERS**  
stay on track for  
graduation



**COLLEGE  
STUDENTS**  
earn their degrees



**WORKERS**  
succeed in  
their jobs

Too many absences—excused or unexcused—can keep students from succeeding in school and in life. How many are too many? 10% of the school year—that's 18 missed days or 2 days a month—can knock students off track.

# 2022 Chronic Student Absenteeism Five-Year Comparison Report

Richland School District One, Office of Accountability, Assessment, Research and Evaluation - October 27, 2022

	Percent of Students who were Chronically Absent						
School	2018	2019	2020*	2021*	2022*	Two-Year Change	Five-Year Change
District	17.2	16.3	10.1	23.0	33.3	10.3	16.1
Elementary	13.1	13.0	7.2	19.9	26.0	6.1	12.9

Middle	17.7	16.1	11.7	22.3	34.9	12.6	17.2
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High	24.3	22.5	13.8	28.8	43.9	15.1	19.6
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RICHLAND ONE SCHOOL DISTRICT 2018-2022



## HOW CAN PEDIATRIC PROVIDERS HELP WITH CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

- Communicate with stakeholders including the student when appropriate
- Understand what is at stake
- Know when students benefit from being home and when they should be in school benefitting from social and academic engagement
- Understand Medical Homebound Instruction: when to use and when to avoid





## WHAT IS MEDICAL HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION?

- SC State Board of Education Regulation 43–241. Medical Homebound Instruction. I. Students who cannot attend public school because of illness, accident, or pregnancy, even with the aid of transportation, are eligible for medical homebound or hospitalized instruction.
- The IDEA intersection of FAPE and LRE> Free and Appropriate Public Education meets Least Restrictive Environment
- Sample case judicial discussion:
  - In N.R., the Third Circuit discussed the LRE requirement:
  - "The least restrictive environment is the one that, to the greatest extent possible, satisfactorily educates disabled children together with children who are not disabled, in the same school the disabled child would attend if the child were not disabled."
  - "We have interpreted this mandate to require that a disabled child be placed in the least restrictive environment (hereinafter "LRE") that will provide him with a meaningful educational benefit."

# MEDICAL HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION FORM

Dear Provider:

Thank you for your dedication in keeping students in South Carolina healthy and progressing academically and socially in the regular school environment to the extent that is appropriate. The below named student and his/her parent, legal guardian, or surrogate parent has requested that the school district provide medical homebound instruction due to the student's inability to come to school as a result of an illness, accident, or pregnancy even with the aid of transportation. A district representative may contact you to discuss strategies to maintain the student in the school environment and to request additional information. The district superintendent or his/her designee must approve any student participating in a program for medical homebound instruction or hospitalized instruction.

Please fully complete Section II as indicated.

Section I – Student Information: (To be completed by School District Personnel)

Student's Name: Date of Birth: Age:

School: Grade: School District:

Is this a student with a disability? Yes No Category of Disability:

**Section II** – Medical Information: (To be completed by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, in compliance with the requirements of the Nurse Practice Act, or physician assistant in compliance with the requirements of Article 7 of the Medical Practice Act.)

Diagnosis of Condition that prevents school attendance: (Attach additional information if needed)

# MEDICAL HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION FORM CONTINUED

Prognosis and Treatment:

How does this medical condition impact educational performance and access to the student's educational program?

Beginning date of nonattendance:

Projected return date:

I certify that the above student cannot attend school because of illness, accident, or pregnancy, even with the aid of transportation but may profit from instruction given in the home or hospital.

Date: Address:

Phone #:

Provider's Printed Name and Title:

Provider's Signature:

Note: the form does not explicitly state that MHI can be intermittent but that is allowable and may be a great fit for certain diagnoses.



# EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS

- The administration of medication or other nursing services,
- Shortened assignments,
- School-based counseling or behavioral health services,
- Behavior therapy,
- Adult educational assistants,
- Instruction in self-calming strategies,
- Smaller classroom settings for testing, additional time for completing assignments and tests,
- Note-takers,
- Assistive technology,
- Peer assistants,
- Assistance with toileting,
- Delayed arrival times,
- Early dismissal,
- Training for personnel on how to recognize the onset of seizure activity,
- Training for personnel on how to recognize the onset of elevated or low blood sugar levels, and
- Specialized diets.

# HOW TO BEST MANAGE MEDICAL HOMEBOUND: PREVENTION

- Students with identified chronic and longer duration acute disease can feel secure being at school if they have a well-developed and thoughtful 504 plan (IEP if applicable-related services). Accommodations which enable the student to come to school safely and feel like they are supported and more likely to stay in school. **Communication with all stakeholders is key.**
- Students who show early warning signs such as increasing absenteeism, increased tardies, late assignments, missed assignments, or symptoms of illness with no medical etiology, may be struggling. With Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), services can be scaffolded early, and students supported to succeed in school. **Discuss early warning signs of school avoidance and refusal with parents and encourage them to start working with the school support staff as soon as possible to create supportive structures.**
- Whether it is a physical or mental health issue which is the underlying reason for a student's struggles, early recognition and accommodations will help prevent requests for full-time medical homebound. **Ask about school attendance at well child visits, if parents are requesting excusal notes address issues early.**

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES:

- Medical Homebound Instruction Form: Retrieved July 16, from <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/health-and-nutrition/wellness-and-food-safety/wellness-and-food-safety/role-of-a-school-nurse/individual-health-plan-ihp-documents/medical-homebound-instruction-form/>
- School Report Cards (2024). Retrieved July 16, 2024, from <https://screportcards.com/overview/school-environment/school-climate/?q=eT0yMDIzJnQ9UyZzaWQ9MDAwMA>
- South Carolina Department of Education: Chronic Absenteeism. Retrieved July 16, 2024, from <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/student-support/chronic-absenteeism/>
- School Avoidance Alliance
- <https://schoolavoidance.org/modes-of-therapy/>
- Children's Hospital Colorado: The Pediatric Mental Health Institute
- <https://www.childrenscolorado.org/doctors-and-departments/departments/psych/mental-health-professional-resources/primary-care-articles/school-refusal-intervention/>
- The Center on PBIS: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- [https://assets-global.website-files.com/5d3725188825e071f1670246/62754d0c5d53737f5217b932\\_School%20Refusal-%20Assessment%20and%20Intervention\(1\).pdf](https://assets-global.website-files.com/5d3725188825e071f1670246/62754d0c5d53737f5217b932_School%20Refusal-%20Assessment%20and%20Intervention(1).pdf)

# THANK YOU

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