

Executive Summary: Homebound Handbook Revisions

This executive summary outlines the recent revisions to the Meridian 223 Homebound Tutoring Handbook. These updates were made to ensure our district policies, procedures, and required forms strictly align with current Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) regulations and Illinois state law regarding home and hospital instruction.

Key Revisions to the Homebound Handbook

1. Expanded List of Authorized Medical Professionals:
 - a. Previously, only a licensed physician could authorize homebound services.
 - b. The updated handbook and forms now allow a licensed Physician Assistant (PA) or an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) to certify a student's medical need for home or hospital instruction.
2. Updated Absence Thresholds and Intermittent Absences:
 - a. The district has removed the outdated requirement that a student must miss a minimum of 11 consecutive school days to qualify for services.
 - b. Under the revised policy, a student is eligible if a medical professional anticipates they will be absent for a minimum of 10 days during the school year.
 - c. This explicitly includes "ongoing intermittent absences," meaning a student qualifies if they will be absent for periods of at least two days at a time, multiple times throughout the year, totaling 10 or more days.
3. Expanded Eligibility Categories:
 - a. The handbook now explicitly includes updated eligibility criteria for specific student populations.
 - b. Students may qualify if they are unable to attend school due to pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions.
 - c. Eligibility is also extended to students who must fulfill parenting obligations to care for an ill child with a serious health condition.
 - d. Furthermore, students may qualify if they are treating physical/mental health complications or addressing safety concerns arising from domestic or sexual violence.
4. Strict Timelines for Service Initiation:
 - a. The revised handbook clarifies that appropriate educational services must begin no later than five school days after the district receives the written medical statement.

Updates to Required Forms

To support these policy shifts, we are adopting updated administrative forms for families and medical providers:

- **Medical Certification Forms:** We are utilizing the *ISBE Medical Certification for Home Hospital Instruction* and our district-specific *Home Hospital Instruction Request Form* to

process requests.

- Ongoing Verification: The updated district request form notes that an updated medical referral will be required every 30, 60, or 90 days, depending on the severity and nature of the student's condition.

Conclusion

I recommend the Board of Education consider the approval of the Homebound Handbook revisions. This will ensure that Meridian 223 remains fully compliant with Illinois School Code and ISBE administrative rules while providing equitable, timely, and supportive educational services to our students experiencing significant medical, health, or safety disruptions.