



Start·a·School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Maine

Home School

Maine parents may choose to educate their children at home. Parents take full responsibility for the child while providing home instruction—they legally direct the child's education by choosing the curriculum, facilitating the process and determining academic needs. Home instruction is funded exclusively by the parent.

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in Maine involves understanding the state's homeschooling laws and taking the necessary steps to comply with regulations. Here's a guide to help you get started:

1. **Understand Maine Homeschool Laws:** Familiarize yourself with Maine's homeschooling laws and regulations. Maine's homeschooling laws are relatively flexible, allowing parents to homeschool under the homeschool statute or as part of an approved private school. As of my last update, homeschooling in Maine is governed by the Maine Department of Education (MDOE). You can find detailed information on your state's Department of Education website or through homeschooling advocacy groups such as [Home School Legal Defense Association \(HSLDA\)](#).
 - Review [Subscribe to Email Updates from the Department of Education](#)
 - Review [Requirements, Forms & Laws](#)
 - Review [Home Instruction Resources](#)
 - Review [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
2. **Choose a Homeschooling Option:** Maine offers several options for homeschooling:
 - **Homeschooling under Maine's Homeschool Statute:** Parents can establish a homeschool and operate independently, following the requirements outlined in Maine's homeschool statute.

- **Homeschooling as part of an Approved Private School:** Parents can enroll their children in an approved private school that offers homeschooling programs. These schools must meet certain criteria set by the MDOE.
3. **Comply with Notification Requirements:** Depending on the homeschooling option you choose, you may need to notify the MDOE or your local school district of your intent to homeschool. Follow the procedures outlined by the MDOE.
 4. **Develop a Curriculum:** Select a curriculum or educational approach that meets Maine's educational standards and aligns with your children's learning needs and your teaching philosophy. You can choose pre-packaged curricula, online resources, or design your own curriculum.
 5. **Set Up a Learning Environment:** Create a dedicated space in your home for homeschooling activities. Ensure that the space is conducive to learning and free from distractions.
 6. **Gather Necessary Materials:** Collect textbooks, workbooks, educational materials, and other resources needed for teaching and learning. Consider your children's interests and learning styles when selecting materials.
 7. **Establish a Schedule:** Create a daily or weekly schedule for homeschooling activities, including time for instruction, independent study, and breaks. Be flexible and adjust the schedule as needed to accommodate your family's needs and interests.
 8. **Keep Records:** Maintain thorough records of attendance, academic progress, and any other documentation required by the state or your chosen homeschooling option. This may include standardized test scores, portfolios, or other assessments.
 9. **Join a Homeschooling Support Network:** Connect with local homeschooling support groups, online forums, or social media communities for resources, advice, and socialization opportunities for both you and your children.
 10. **Stay Informed and Flexible:** Stay updated on any changes to homeschooling laws and regulations in Maine. Be open to adjusting your approach based on your children's progress and evolving educational needs.

Remember that homeschooling is a personalized educational option, so feel free to tailor your approach to suit your family's unique needs and preferences. Additionally, don't hesitate to seek guidance from experienced homeschooling families or organizations for support along the way.

Home School Statutes

The Education Freedom Foundation has relied on the [U.S. Department of Education's State Regulation of Private and Home Schools Map](#) for relevant statutes. Over time, the state pages on this map have been updated since their initial creation. In some cases, states have changed their laws without these updates being reflected on the map. Given the various methods each state uses to publicize changes to its laws, the most recent information for the Start-A-School project was often obtained directly from the U.S. Department of Education website. Users are encouraged to verify any information before making decisions based on it.

- A child receiving home instruction that complies with state requirements is excused from attending school. [Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. title 20A, §5001-A, sub §3A. \(4\)](#).
- Groups of homeschooled students, not individual homeschooled students, can be organized, and that organization may then qualify, under Maine law, as a private or church school. This type of organization is a legitimate alternative for a group of homeschooled students.

Assessment and Diplomas

- The following forms of annual assessment meet state requirements: 1) a standardized achievement test administered through the administrative unit in which the student resides or through other arrangements approved by the commissioner; 2) a test developed by the school officials of the administrative unit in which the student resides and agreed to by the school officials of the administrative unit prior to submission of the written notice of intent that is appropriate to the student's home instruction program; 3) a review and acceptance of the student's progress by an identified individual who holds a current Maine teacher's certificate; 4) a review and acceptance of the student's progress based on, but not limited to, a presentation of an educational portfolio of the student to a local-area homeschooling support group whose membership for this purpose includes a currently certified Maine teacher or administrator; or 5) a review and acceptance of the student's progress by a local advisory board selected by the superintendent of the administrative unit in which the student resides that includes one administrative unit employee and two home instruction tutors. [Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. title 20A, §§5001-A sub 3A \(1\)\(4\)\(b\)](#).
- A student's parent or guardian must keep copies of the notice of intent to provide home instruction and the file submitted each year, including the forms of annual assessment, until the home instruction program concludes. The records must be made available to the commissioner upon request. [Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. title 20A, §§5001-A sub 3A \(1\)\(4\)\(c\)](#).

Initial and Renewal Applications

- The student's parent or guardian must provide a written notice of intent "to the school officials of the administrative unit in which the student resides and to the commissioner within 10 calendar days of the beginning of home instruction." [Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. title 20A, §5001-A, A sub §3A. \(4\)](#).
- The notice of intent must include 1) the name, signature and address of the student's parent or guardian; 2) the name and age of the student; 3) the start date of the home instruction program; 4) a statement of assurance that the home instruction program will

provide annually at least 175 days of instruction in the following subject areas: English and language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, health education, library skills, fine arts, Maine studies (in one grade level between grades six and 12), and demonstrated proficiency in the use of computers (in one grade level between grades seven and 12); and 5) a statement of assurance that the home instruction program will include an annual assessment of the student's academic progress. [Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. title 20A, §5001-A, A sub §3A. \(4\)](#).

- The student's parent or guardian must file a letter with "the school officials of the administrative unit in which the student resides and the commissioner" on or before September 1 of each subsequent year of home instruction. The file must state the intent to continue the home instruction program and include forms of the annual assessment of the student's academic progress. [Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. title 20A, §5001-A, A sub §3A.\(4\)](#).

Public School Access

- A private school student is eligible to participate in public school cocurricular, extracurricular, and interscholastic activities at the discretion of the public school principal and if the private school is not a member of a statewide association that promotes, organizes, and regulates statewide interscholastic activities in both public and private schools.

Resources

Information and Legislation

- [Maine Department of Education \(DOE\): Home Instruction Information and FAQs](#)
- [Maine DOE: Legislation and Rulemaking](#)
- [Maine DOE: Rule Chapters for the Department of Education](#)
- [Maine Legislature – Revised Statutes Title 20-A: Education](#)