



Start·a·School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Mississippi

Home School

Parents who wish to home school their children should contact their local School Attendance Officer (SAO) for information and requirements.

Every family who wishes to home school compulsory school age children must complete an enrollment form with the local School Attendance Officer for every year the child home schools. This is in accordance with the Compulsory School Attendance Law §37-13-91(2) (c). Parents should keep a copy of the enrollment form for their records.

Home school enrollment must be completed by September 15 of each school year. You must wait until the current school year has ended before enrolling a child in home school for an upcoming school year.

Requirements for home school parents/guardians:

- Withdraw the student from school if currently enrolled in a public-school district.
- Complete home school enrollment form with the local School Attendance Officer by **September 15th**.

Recommendations for home school parents/guardians:

- Review the [Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards \(MCCRS\)](#). The MCCRS provide clear expectations of what a student should know and be able to do at each grade level. Aligning instruction with these standards and competencies will ensure a smoother transition should the child return to public school.
- Maintain a portfolio for each child that contains samples of activities, assignments, projects, and assessments, as well as a log of books and materials used. Include results of any national assessments
- Contact potential colleges and universities to learn what is required for admission

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in Mississippi involves several steps to ensure compliance with state regulations and to provide a quality education for your child. Here's a general guide to help you get started:

- 1. Familiarize Yourself with Mississippi Homeschool Laws:** Before you start homeschooling, it's essential to understand the legal requirements. In Mississippi, homeschooling is governed by Mississippi Code Annotated §37-13-91. This law requires parents to submit a certificate of enrollment to the local school attendance officer and maintain certain records. 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 the following:
 - [Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Home School](#)
 - [Mississippi State Board of Education Home School Policy](#)
 - [Home School - MS Code 37-13-91](#)
 - [Supervisor Regional Contact Information](#)
 - [Mississippi Home School Association](#)
- 2. Notify the Local School District:** Notify the local school district superintendent or attendance officer of your intent to homeschool. Download the [Home School Certificate of Enrollment form](#), complete it, and return it to your local School Attendance Officer (SAO). Submit an original form signed in blue ink. Locate your SAO on the school attendance officer contact list. Please contact your SAO either by email or phone to obtain the return mailing address.
- 3. Choose a Curriculum:** Decide on a curriculum that aligns with your child's educational needs, interests, and learning styles. There are many homeschool curricula available, ranging from structured, textbook-based programs to more flexible, eclectic approaches. Consider your child's strengths, weaknesses, and interests when selecting a curriculum.
- 4. Establish a Schedule and Learning Environment:** Create a daily or weekly schedule that outlines when and where homeschooling will take place. Designate a dedicated learning space in your home where your child can focus on their studies without distractions.
- 5. Keep Records:** Maintain detailed records of your homeschooling activities, including attendance, subjects covered, assignments completed, and any assessments or evaluations. These records may be required by the state or helpful for tracking your child's progress.
- 6. Stay Connected:** Join homeschooling groups or associations in your area to connect with other homeschooling families, share resources, and participate in group activities or co-ops. Staying connected with other homeschoolers can provide support and valuable social opportunities for your child.

7. **Assess Progress:** Regularly assess your child's progress to ensure they are meeting educational goals and milestones. This can include informal assessments, such as observing their understanding of concepts during lessons, as well as more formal assessments, such as standardized tests or portfolio reviews.
8. **Stay Informed:** Stay informed about any changes to homeschooling laws or regulations in Mississippi. Keep up-to-date with educational resources and strategies to support your child's learning journey.

By following these steps and staying organized and committed, you can successfully start and run a homeschool in Mississippi. Remember that homeschooling allows for flexibility and customization, so tailor your approach to suit your child's individual needs and interests.

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.

- Home schools meet the definition of "nonpublic schools," which means an institution for the teaching of children, consisting of a physical plant, whether owned or leased, including a home, instructional staff members and students, and which is in session each school year. This definition shall include, but not be limited to, private, church, parochial, and home instruction programs. [Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-91\(2\)\(i\)](#).
- The State of Mississippi does not have the "authority to control, manage, or supervise" the private education of children." [Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-91\(9\)](#).

Initial and Renewal Applications

- The parent or guardian of a child enrolled in a legitimate homeschooling program is required to complete a "certificate of enrollment" and return it to the school attendance officer where such child resides on or before September 15 of each year. [Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-91\(3\)](#).
- Other than the Certificate of Enrollment, there are no current state laws concerning requirements for home schooling programs.
- A parent must educate his child in a "legitimate home instruction program" and not with the "purpose of avoiding or circumventing the compulsory attendance law." [Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-91\(3\)\(c\)](#).
- "Home schools and home schooling programs, including those that are affiliated with an accrediting agency, are specifically excluded from this definition [of "school"] and are not eligible to participate in the State Board of Education accreditation process." [Nonpublic Schools Accountability Standards, 2023..](#)

Student Assessment and Graduation Requirements

- A homeschooled student seeking to transfer to a Mississippi public school "may be required to take a test to determine the grade and class to which the pupil shall be assigned at the time of pupil transfer." [Miss. Code Ann. §37-15-33](#).

Resources

Contact Information - State and Federal Departments of Education

- Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West Street
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205
Phone: (601) 359-3513
Fax: (601) 359-3242
Website: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/>
- U.S. Department of Education, [Mississippi](#)

Information and Legislation

- [Mississippi Department of Education \(MDE\): Office of Accreditation](#)
- [MDE: Mississippi Nonpublic Schools Accountability Standards, 2023](#)
- [Mississippi Code of 1972 Unannotated](#) Title 37 Education, Chapters 1-169