



Start·a·School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

Missouri

Home School

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a home school in Missouri involves understanding the state's homeschooling laws and fulfilling the necessary requirements. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you get started:

1. **Understand Missouri Homeschool Laws:** Familiarize yourself with Missouri's homeschooling laws and regulations. In Missouri, homeschooling is governed by Section 167.031 of the Missouri Revised Statutes. The law requires parents to provide 1,000 hours of basic education in the subjects of reading, math, social studies, language arts, and science. 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 \(HSLDA\)](#).
2. **File a Declaration of Intent:** Submit a Declaration of Intent to homeschool to the superintendent of the local school district or to the Recorder of Deeds in your county. This declaration must be filed annually and should include basic information such as your name, address, and the names and ages of the children you plan to homeschool.
3. **Choose a Homeschooling Approach:** Select an educational approach that aligns with your child's learning style and your teaching philosophy. Common homeschooling approaches include traditional, Charlotte Mason, Montessori, Waldorf, and unschooling.
4. **Develop a Curriculum:** Create a curriculum that meets Missouri's educational requirements and covers subjects such as reading, math, social studies, language arts, and science. You can choose from various curriculum options, including pre-packaged curricula, online resources, and textbooks.
5. **Gather Curriculum and Materials:** Collect textbooks, workbooks, educational materials, and other resources needed for teaching and learning. Consider your child's interests, learning style, and grade level when selecting materials.

6. **Set Up a Learning Environment:** Create a designated space in your home for homeschooling activities. Ensure that the space is free from distractions and equipped with necessary supplies such as desks, chairs, and school supplies.
7. **Establish a Schedule:** Develop a daily or weekly schedule for homeschooling activities. Include time for instruction, independent study, breaks, and extracurricular activities. Be flexible and adjust the schedule as needed to accommodate your child's needs and interests.
8. **Keep Records:** Maintain thorough records of attendance, academic progress, and other documentation required by the state. This may include sample work, standardized test scores, progress reports, and a portfolio of your child's achievements.
9. **Participating in Evaluations (Optional):** Missouri does not require homeschooling families to participate in standardized testing or evaluations. However, you may choose to have your child participate in standardized testing or evaluations to assess their academic progress.
10. **Stay Informed and Connected:** Stay updated on any changes to homeschooling laws and regulations in Missouri. Join homeschooling support groups, attend workshops and conferences, and connect with other homeschooling families for resources, advice, and socialization opportunities.

Remember that homeschooling is a personalized educational option, so feel free to tailor your approach to meet your child's unique needs and interests. Additionally, don't hesitate to seek guidance from experienced homeschoolers, educational professionals, and homeschooling organizations as you embark on this journey.

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 home school is not considered a private school though it is a school that "has as its primary purpose the provision of private or religious-based instruction." [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031.2\(1\)\(a\)-\(c\)](#).
- Instruction is given to children between the ages of seven and 17 years. Further state restrictions for children on either end of the age range are outlined in the law. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031.1\(3\)](#) and [§167.031.2\(3\)](#).

Forms

- [Web-based Nonpublic Registration Form Login Screen](#)

Assessment and Diplomas

- If families are educating students of high school age and elect to re-enroll in the public schools, they need to be aware of the local board of education policies on accepting credit for students from unaccredited educational programs. There is no recognized high school diploma for homeschooled students. Individuals who have been homeschooled may take the high school equivalency exam to obtain their GED.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Any parent may educate a child at home. The parent does not have to hold a teaching certificate or meet any education requirements. If a parent decides to homeschool, he or she must provide 1,000 hours of instruction during the school year, with at least 600 hours in the basics, such as reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. At least 400 of the 600 hours must be taught in the home location. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031.2\(2\)\(b\)](#).
- Students may attend a combination of schools during the day — public or private school in the morning and home school in the afternoon — to satisfy the Missouri compulsory attendance law. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031](#).

Initial and Renewal Applications

- The parents may notify the superintendent of schools or the recorder of county deeds in the county where the parent resides of their intention to homeschool. This declaration of enrollment must be done before September 1 annually and within 30 days after establishing the home school. The law is permissive in the area of registering and does not mandate registration. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.042](#).
- A parent who is homeschooling a child must maintain the following records: a plan book, diary, daily log, or other written record indicating the subjects taught and the activities engaged in with the student; a portfolio containing samples of the student's academic work; and a record of evaluation of the student's academic progress. These records do not need to be submitted. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031](#).

Public School Access

- Homeschooled students may be allowed to attend public school part-time under Missouri's compulsory attendance statute. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031.1](#).

Records

- Homeschool families must keep records. (a) A plan book, diary, or other written record indicating subjects taught and activities engaged in; and b. A portfolio of samples of the child's academic work; and c. A record of evaluations of the child's academic progress; or (b) Other written, or credible evidence equivalent to subparagraphs a., b. and c. [Mo. Rev. Stat. §167.031.2\(2\)\(a\)](#)

Resources

Contact Information--State and Federal Departments of Education

- Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
205 Jefferson Street
P.O. Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480
Phone: (573) 751-4212
Fax: (573) 751-8613
TTY: (800) 735-2966
Website: <http://dese.mo.gov/>
- U.S. Department of Education: [Missouri](#)

Information and Legislation

- [Missouri Virtual Instruction Program \(MoVIP\)](#)

School Choice Programs

[MO Scholars Education Saving Accounts \(ESA\)](#)

In 2021, the Missouri General Assembly passed HB349 and SB86 which established the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Program, MOScholars. The law provides state tax credits for contributions to approved, non-profit Educational Assistance Organizations (EAOs). These EAOs use the contributions to award scholarships to Missouri students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and students living in low-income households.

Home school students interested in applying for MOScholars should first connect with an EAO to understand the EAO's capacity for, and any requirements of, partnering with home schools.

Next, students will complete a prescreening with the EAO, and if eligible, move on to the submission of an application.

As part of the application process, in addition to meeting the definition of a home school under [section 167.031](#), home schools must:

- Agree to not pay, share, refund, or rebate any MOScholars account funds in any manner with the parent, qualified student, or any other individual within three (3) degrees of consanguinity (kinship/relation) to the qualified student.
- When requested, produce the records required to be maintained under [section 167.031.2\(2\)\(a\), RSMo.](#)
- Within the online student application, students/parents must:

- Submit a background check authorization to allow the State Treasurer's Office to conduct a review of the criminal history records maintained by the Missouri State Highway Patrol in the Missouri criminal records repository. An authorization must be completed for every adult, age 18 years and older, who resides in the home school, and the background check will be completed if the home school is given initial approval from an EAO.
 - Submit a proposed curriculum plan, or produce the records required to be maintained under section 167.031.2(2)(a), RSMo.
 - Submit a completed home school certification form.
- After the student/parent submit the online MOScholars application and home school documents, the EAO will review the home school certification for pre-approval within 15 days of receipt, then submit to the STO for final approval. Upon receipt of a home school certification that has received initial approval from an EAO, the STO will review the certification documents and the criminal history records, then notify the EAO and home school parent(s) of final approval or denial.