



Start·a·School

AN EDUCATION FREEDOM FOUNDATION INITIATIVE

South Carolina

Home School

Steps to Start a Home School

Starting a homeschool in South Carolina involves specific steps to comply with state laws.

- 1. Understand State Laws:** Familiarize yourself with homeschooling laws and regulations in South Carolina. The primary statute governing homeschooling in the state is Option 3, also known as the homeschooling law. It allows parents to homeschool their children under certain conditions. 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 [Home School Frequently Asked Questions](#)
 - Review [Home School: Option 2 List](#)
 - Review [Home School Option 3 List](#)
- 2. Choose a Homeschooling Option:** Parents or guardians may choose to home school their children instead of enrolling them in a public, private, or parochial school. South Carolina statutes provide parents or guardians with three different options for home schooling their children. **Option One** allows the parents to home school their children under the auspices of a school district, if approved by the board of trustees. Under **Option Two**, parents may home school their children with the support of the South Carolina Association of Independent Home Schools. In **Option Three**, parents may choose a home school association which has no fewer than fifty members and meets the home school requirements. The parents or guardians select the particular homeschooling option that is best for the children.
- 3. Submit Required Paperwork:** If you choose **Option 3**, you need to submit a homeschooling accountability association membership form to one of the approved homeschool associations in South Carolina. Each association has its own requirements and procedures for membership. The association will provide you with guidance on fulfilling the legal requirements for homeschooling.

4. **Develop a Curriculum:** Select a curriculum or educational approach that aligns with your child's learning style and meets South Carolina's academic standards. You have the flexibility to choose from various homeschooling methods, including traditional textbooks, online programs, and eclectic approaches.
5. **Set Up a Learning Environment:** Create a designated space in your home for homeschooling activities. Ensure the learning environment is conducive to focused study and free from distractions. Consider incorporating educational resources, such as books, manipulatives, and technology, to enhance the learning experience.
6. **Establish a Schedule:** Develop a homeschooling schedule that fits your family's routine and allows for a balanced mix of academic instruction, hands-on activities, and breaks. Flexibility is one of the advantages of homeschooling, so adjust the schedule as needed based on your child's needs and interests.
7. **Connect with Homeschooling Communities:** Join local homeschooling groups, co-ops, or online forums to connect with other homeschooling families in South Carolina. These communities provide support, resources, and opportunities for socialization and collaboration.
8. **Keep Records and Evaluate Progress:** Maintain accurate records of your homeschooling activities, including attendance, coursework, and assessments, as required by South Carolina homeschooling laws. Regularly assess your child's progress to ensure they're meeting educational goals and making satisfactory academic growth.
9. **Stay Informed and Flexible:** Stay updated on any changes to homeschooling laws and regulations in South Carolina. Remain open to adjusting your homeschooling approach based on your child's evolving needs and interests.

By following these steps and complying with South Carolina homeschooling laws, you can start a successful homeschooling journey for your family. Remember to seek guidance from your chosen homeschool association and utilize available resources to support your homeschooling efforts.

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.

Assessment and Diplomas

- Students in district-approved home schools must participate in the annual statewide testing program and the Basic Skills Assessment Program approved by the South

Carolina Board of Education for their appropriate grade level. [S.C. Code §59-65-40 \(A\)\(6\)](#).

- If a student in a district-approved homeschooling program scores below the test requirements of the promotion standards prescribed for public school students by the South Carolina Board of Education for one year, the district's board of trustees must decide whether or not the student must receive appropriate instructional placement in the public school, special services as a handicapped student, or home schooling with an instructional support system at parental expense. [S.C. Code § 59-65-40 \(D\)](#).

Curriculum and Instruction

- A homeschool parent must hold at least a high school diploma or an equivalent GED certificate. [S.C. Code §§59-65-40 \(A\)\(1\); 59-65-45; and 59-65-47](#).
- The district-approved homeschool instructional day must be at least four and one-half hours, excluding lunch and recesses, and the instructional year must be at least 180 days. [S.C. Code §59-65-40 \(A\)\(2\)](#).
- For other types of home schooling, the instructional year must be 180 days. [S.C. Code §§59-65-45 and 59-65-47](#).
- The curriculum must include, but not be limited to, the basic instructional areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies and, in grades seven through 12, composition and literature. [S.C. Code §§59-65-40 \(A\)\(3\); 59-65-45; and 59-65-47](#).
- For a district-approved home school or alternative form of home instruction under S.C. Code §59-65-47, as evidence that a student is receiving regular instruction, the parent must maintain the following records for inspection upon reasonable notice by a representative of the school district: a plan book, a diary, or other written record indicating subjects taught and activities in which the parent and student engage; a portfolio of samples of the student's work; and a record of evaluations of the student's academic progress. [S.C. Code §§59-65-40 \(A\)\(4\) and 59-65-47](#).
- The student in a district-approved home school must have access to library facilities. [S.C. Code §59-65-40 \(A\)](#).

Initial and Renewal Applications

- To homeschool their child, parents or guardians must receive approval of the instruction from the district board of trustees of the district in which the child resides. [S.C. Code §59-65-40 \(A\)](#).
- The parent must agree in writing to hold the district, the district's board of trustees, and the district's employees harmless for any educational deficiencies of the student sustained as a result of home instruction. [S.C. Code §59-65-40 \(A\)](#). A parent or guardian denied permission by a district board of trustees to begin or continue a program of home instruction may appeal that decision to the South Carolina Board of Education. [S.C. Code of Regs. 43-246](#).
- In lieu of the requirements of district approval, parents or guardians may teach their children at home if the instruction is conducted under the auspices of the South Carolina Association of Independent Home Schools. [S.C. Code §59-65-45](#).

- In lieu of the requirements of S.C. Code §59-65-40 or §59-65-45, parents or guardians may also teach their children at home if the instruction is conducted under the auspices of an association for home schools that has no fewer than 50 members and meets the following requirements, as determined by the South Carolina Department of Education through an annual review of the association: a) a parent must hold at least a high school diploma or an equivalent GED certificate; b) the instructional year must be at least 180 days; c) the curriculum must include but not be limited to the basic instructional areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies, and in grades seven through 12, composition and literature; and d) education records must be maintained by the parent-teacher. [S.C. Code §59-65-47](#).

Public School Access

- A homeschooled student who has been taught according to [S.C. Code §§59-65-40, 59-65-45, or 59-65-47](#) for a full year is eligible to participate in interscholastic activities (athletics, music, speech, and other extracurricular activities) of the student's resident school district if the student meets all of the school district's eligibility requirements, disregarding those related to attendance, class, and enrollment. The student must notify the superintendent in writing of the intent to participate before the season for the activity starts. [S.C. Code §59-63-100](#).
- A school district is not allowed to contract out supervision of interscholastic activities to a private entity that prohibits homeschooled students from participating. [S.C. Code §59-63-100](#).

Resources

Contact Information--State and Federal Departments of Education

- South Carolina Department of Education
1006 Rutledge Building
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: (803) 734-8500
Fax: (803) 734-3389
Email: homeschooling@ed.sc.gov
- Website: <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/home-schooling>
- U.S. Department of Education: [South Carolina](#)

Information and Legislation

- [South Carolina Department of Education: Home Schooling](#)
- [South Carolina Code of Laws](#)
 - [Title 59: Education](#)
- [South Carolina Code of Regulations](#)