

Home and Hospital Teaching

Home and hospital teaching (HHT) provides educational continuity to students who are unable to attend their usual school of enrollment due to an emotional disability, physical illness or chronic illness. To qualify, the student must provide a statement from the relevant doctor stating why the condition prevents the student from attending school and for how long. Most school systems have an HHT application form that must be completed by the student's parents or guardians, and the student's physician, psychiatrist or psychologist.

Which conditions qualify students to receive special education and related services via HHT?



- Emotional disability—a condition that presents for a long period of time and adversely affects a student's education, such as:
 - Anxiety disorder
 - Conduct disorder
 - Obsessive compulsive disorder
 - Bipolar disorder
 - Eating disorder
 - Psychotic disorder
- Physical illness—applies to students with a physical condition that prevents them from attending school for an anticipated three weeks or more, such as:
 - An acute medical condition
 - Surgery
- Concurrent enrollment or chronic illness—applies to students with a chronic illness, including but not limited to:
 - Asthma
 - Sickle cell anemia
 - Juvenile diabetes
 - Cardiac disorders
 - Cancer
 - Kidney failure
 - Cystic fibrosis
 - Emotional conditions such as depression or bipolar disorder

Can schools refuse to provide HHT to qualifying children because virtual schooling is available?



The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not permit the U.S. Department of Education or school systems to waive the requirement of providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE), of which HHT is a part. Due to COVID-19, if online schooling is available, this may be more appropriate than HHT. However, if a student's illness prevents them from participating in a full day of remote/distance schooling, HHT services may still be needed.

Are students with health and immunity risks permitted to refuse in-person instruction?



HHT services are triggered by a note from a relevant doctor explaining why the student's health condition makes them unable to participate in regular schooling. Should schools return to in-person classes (without an option for remote/distance education) while COVID-19 is still a risk, a student with a health and/or immunity risk is permitted to submit a doctor's note stating their inability to attend school in person. This note should include the following:

- The student's medical condition
- How the student's medical condition affects schooling
- Length of time the student is expected to be out of school

It is important that the doctor's note indicate why the student's health is at an elevated risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. As with all HHT services, the student's individualized education program (IEP) team will take the doctor's note into consideration and make an eligibility determination.

To apply for HHT services, contact your child's IEP team or your school system's HHT office to request an HHT application.

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) HHT technical assistance (TA) bulletin (18-01): marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/TAB.aspx

For more information, contact Project HEAL at 443-923-4414.

