

## Home Study Frequently Asked Questions

### *Enrollment*

#### **When should I submit my home study enrollment notice?**

You may submit a home study enrollment notice any time after March 1 for the following school year. For families who want to be eligible for the Minimum Course of Study Exemption deadline (MCOS [memo](#)), all enrollment documents and End of the Year Assessments (EOYA) must be received by August 1 at midnight.

#### **How do I submit my Enrollment forms?**

There are several ways to submit enrollment packets. Please choose only one version (i.e. do not submit a paper copy and submit it via email):

1. Complete the forms electronically [online](#)
2. Complete the forms and email them to [AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov)
  - a. Please do not email them to an individual Home Study Team member
  - b. Please note that while the forms will be secure once they arrive at AOE, they are not secure during the email transfer.
3. Print the forms, fill them out and mail, walk-in or fax them directly to:

Home Study/VT Agency of Education

1 National Life Drive, Davis 5, Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

(p) 802-828-6225 | (f) 802-828-6433 | [AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov)

<https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-operations/home-study>

#### **Can I send a CD, thumb drive or use other electronic means to send my information to you?**

No, please do not send us information on a CDs or thumb drives. We also cannot access information from Drop Box, Google Drive, Mac Pages or other similar electronic programs. There is also a risk of spreading an electronic virus if we collect information this way.

### **I have multiple children; do I need to have a different Form A and an MCOS for each one?**

Yes, each student has his/her own separate file so each student must have their own **MCOS** and **enrollment form**. If students are combined on the same form, we will ask families to separate out the documentation for each child prior to our review.

### **What are the effective dates of a home study program?**

There is no immediate enrollment in home study. Student must continue to be enrolled in a public/independent school until all of the paperwork has been processed. AOE staff review the enrollment paperwork to ensure that all components are included. Once all the information has been received and reviewed, students are considered complete and are enrolled. This process could take up to 45 calendar days. The date the completion letter is written is the first day of the student's home study program. The final day of the program is June 30th.

### **What is the last day that I can submit my enrollment notice for the current school year?**

We will not accept enrollment notices for the current school year after May 1<sup>st</sup> as we may not have enough time to process it within the timeframe allowed by law.

### **How long will it take for the Home Study Office to process my enrollment notice?**

The home study office has **14 business days** from the date the enrollment notice is received to process the enrollment. AOE staff will send families a letter (via secure email or mail) if the enrollment packet is incomplete. Families then have **14 calendar days** to supply the additional information needed to complete the enrollment notice.

Families should expect to receive a letter from AOE within 3 weeks of their enrollment submission. In the interim, **please do not contact the Home Study office to check on the status unless three weeks have passed.**

### **May I enroll my child after the school year has begun?**

Yes. Families may enroll students at any time during the school year until May 1<sup>st</sup>. Please keep in mind that the Home Study office has up to 45 days to process enrollment packets. An enrollment received after August 1<sup>st</sup> (midnight) will not count toward the MCOS exemption.

If you decide to enroll your student in home study during the school year, it is important that your child remain in school until we have finished our review and issued a "complete" letter.

## **How old does my child need to be to enroll in a home study program?**

Compulsory attendance statutes require that a child between the ages of 6 and 16 must be enrolled in a public school, a private school, or a home study program. If the student turns six during the school year, families may enroll the student in a home study program during the current school year or wait until the beginning of the following school year (as they will still be 6). It's the family's decision.

## **Should I enroll my child who is age 5?**

While you are welcome to enroll your 5-year-old child, it is not required until age 6.

## **What happens if I miss the August 1 deadline?**

That year would not count towards a Minimum Course of Study exemption. If you already have the MCOS exemption, the family will lose the exemption for each student in the family and the family will be required to establish the exemption in subsequent school years.

## **What is the Minimum Course of Study (MCOS) exemption?**

[16 V.S.A. §166b\(k\)](#) states: *A Vermont home study program, which has successfully completed the last two consecutive school years of home study with any enrolled child, provided those two years fall within the most recent five years, shall not thereafter be required to submit an annual detailed outline or narrative describing the content of the minimum course of study.*

## **What does Successfully Completed mean?**

To be considered as *successfully completed* home study program, the Enrollment notice **and** the End of the Year Assessment (EOYA) must be received or clearly postmarked by midnight on August 1 of each year. The student must not have been withdrawn during the school year for this to be considered a school year. An MCOS must be submitted for each child who is 12 years old at the time the enrollment (even if the student is eligible for the exemption). See [16 V.S.A. §166b\(k\)](#). Please refer to the February 13, 2018 [memo](#) for more information.

## **If I lose my MCOS exemption status, when can I get it back?**

If a family loses the MCOS exemption status (i.e. submits an enrollment notice after August 1 or withdraws the student from a Home Study Program), the family will then be required to submit an MCOS for each student until the exemption can be re-established. Remember that the exemption status extends to all students within a family. If one student receives the exemption, then every student in the family receives the exemption. Similarly, if one student loses the exemption, then all lose the exemption.

### **I received an Incomplete letter, what does this mean?**

If you receive a letter saying your enrollment notice is incomplete, do not assume that we do not “approve” of your program. The incomplete letter simply states that something is missing from the enrollment paperwork.

If you have a difficult situation (i.e. the curriculum materials have not arrived or a teacher has not signed Form C) or if you are uncertain about what is needed, please contact us. We offer technical assistance to help families develop curriculum.

### **Can I follow the course requirements of the school?**

You can follow the curriculum of the school, but your MCOS must still include all required areas. For example, if your student is enrolling in home study for the second semester and he/she took a Physical Education (PE) class at the local school during the first semester, your MCOS must still include PE for the remainder of the school year. Similarly, even if your local high school requires only 3 years of science to graduate, home study families must include 4 years of high school science to be eligible for a home study program.

### **What can I submit as an alternative to Form B?**

Report Card or similar documentation that verifies that the student was enrolled in a Vermont public school during the last school year (please make sure that the school name, student name and date/s attended is listed on the document). You may also submit an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan.

### **Who can fill out Form B?**

This form must be completed by an independent professional (such as a health care professional, mental health provider or licensed educator or licensed special educator/related service provider). This form cannot be completed by a parent/guardian or relative of the student.

### **What is Assurance of Educational Legal Rights?**

By signing this form, it verifies that you have educational decision-making rights if you are a sole parent/guardian or have a different surname.

## **Who needs to sign the Assurance of Education Legal Rights?**

Only complete this form if:

1. A sole parent/guardian with educational decision-making rights is enrolling a student
2. The student surname is different from either or both of the parents'/guardians' surnames.
3. Family circumstances have changed within the past year.

## **My student is taking online classes do they need to complete Form C?**

No, we do not need one.

## **Other Questions:**

### **I need help, how can I contact someone at the Home Study Office?**

You can contact the Home Study office by email: [aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov](mailto:aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov) or by our technical assistance phone number, (You will not initially talk to a staff member, as this is a voicemail system): 802-828-6225.

Emails and voicemails are generally answered within 1-2 business days depending on the time of year and the volume of calls/emails.

Please choose to either email or call the Home Study Office. Emailing and contacting multiple staff members directly with the same questions significantly delays our responses to families. We appreciate your patience.