

---

## Home Study Frequently Asked Questions

### Table of Contents

Enrollment Questions:.....	1
End of the Year Assessments (EOYA):.....	5
Special Needs/Special Education Questions: .....	10
Other Questions: .....	11

### Enrollment Questions:

#### 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. Enrollment must be received by August 1 to be considered timely.

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

There are several ways to submit enrollment packets. Please only choose 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 off 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  
802-828-6433

Additional questions may be referred to the Home Study Team via phone at 802-828-6225 or email [AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.HomeStudy@vermont.gov).

### **What is considered to be a complete enrollment?**

See checklist

### **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 CDs or thumb drives. We also cannot access information from DropBox, Google Drive or other similar electronic programs. There is also a risk of spreading an electronic virus if we collect information this way.

Families may consider uploading information on YouTube and send us the link for us to review it.

### **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 the home study. AOE staff must review the enrollment packet to ensure that all components are included. Once all of the information has been received and reviewed, students are considered 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 July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **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.

If you decide to change your child's enrollment to home study during the school year, it is important that your child remains 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, you may enroll the student in a home study program during the current school year, or wait until the beginning of the following year.

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

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

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

That year would not count towards a Minimum Course of Study exemption.

### **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 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. See above. Keep in mind that the exemption status extends to all students within a family. If one student receives the exemption, then all of the students in the family receive 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 packet.

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 a 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 areas. For example, if your student is enrolling in a home study for the second semester and he/she took a PE class at the local school during the first semester, your MCOS must still include PE.

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

Report Card or similar documentation 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 the Assurance of Educational Legal Rights?**

A form stating 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.

## **End of the Year Assessments (EOYA):**

### **What end of the year assessments are allowed?**

- Teacher Assessment
- Parent Letter and Portfolio
- Teacher Advisory Service Report from a publisher of a commercial curriculum and Portfolio, or
- Results from a Standardized Achievement Test

We also accept a General Education Diploma (GED) and grades from classes as EOYA.

### **What do I need to provide if I complete a parent report and portfolio?**

A parent report must contain a parent summary of the student's progress in each area of the MCOS. This will involve a brief description of the work accomplished in each area. A portfolio of the student's work must accompany the report. If the student is 13 or older, the parent report does not need to provide information for Physical Education, Health or Fine Arts. Please remember to label all work with the student's name and subject area.

### **How many work samples do I need to include in the parent report and portfolio?**

Each subject area must include 4-6 portfolio pieces (except Fine Arts, Physical Education, and Health which only require one example).

### **Can I send more than 4-6 examples?**

Due to the high volume of mail that the Home Study office receives, we do not recommend that you send in more than 6 examples per subject as we do not have the capacity to review all of them. Consider overlapping your work samples. For example, a written report on the Revolutionary War may count toward a History and Writing Sample. A report on the digestive system may cover Writing, Science and Health.

### **I have so many work samples that I want to share, how do I decide which portfolio pieces to send?**

Make sure that the samples are ones that the family can part with as the Home Study Office will not return the portfolio. Each sample should represent a different time period during the school year (Fall, Winter, and Spring) to show progress. Each sample should include the student's name, date and any corrections/comments that the family/teacher/tutor has made as well as the work the student has completed. Math worksheets should also include the work that the student has completed, not just the final answer. We want to see the process the student went through to obtain the answer.

### **Can I have a teacher from another state complete an EOYA?**

No, any teacher that completes an EOYA must be licensed in Vermont at the time of the assessment.

**Does the VT Licensed Teacher need to sign my EOYA?**

No. While we have requested this in the past, it is currently not a requirement.

**My student took an online course in Math this year. Can I send you the print out stating that he/she completed the course?**

Yes and No. If the course provided a grade, then you may submit the document with the grade as it indicates the student's progress.

If the course only provides a print out that identifies that the student did the work, then no, you cannot provide a print out only. The family will need to provide work samples if submitting a parent report and portfolio. The print out only reflects participation and does not demonstrate that the student made any progress.

### **What do I need to do if I am not reenrolling for the current year?**

Send in an End of Year Assessment to close out the student's year.

### **Should I send my EOYA and enrollment paperwork together?**

It is strongly recommended that the EOYA and the enrollment paperwork arrive simultaneously.

### **Public School Questions:**

#### **How will my public school be notified that my student is enrolled in a home study program?**

Superintendents receive weekly updates during the summer and early fall indicating which students have enrolled in a Home Study Program. In October, a complete list of students is sent to the Superintendent. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify the local schools.

It's important for families to enroll students in a Home Study Program prior to the start of the school year. Students who are not enrolled in a public school, independent school or Home Study Program by the start of the school year may be considered truant.

#### **Is my home study student allowed to participate in public school?**

Yes. Students enrolled in a Home Study Program may take part in classes and activities at their public schools. Act 119 provides for the participation of home study students in public school academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular programs.

To be enrolled in a home study program, at least **three** of the core academics must be conducted *at home*. "Core academics" include language arts, English/American, literature, math, history, citizenship, government, and the natural sciences.

#### **What is VTVLC?**

The [Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative](#) (VTVLC) works with Vermont schools to facilitate online courses for students statewide. VTVLC has some options for families enrolled in a Home Study Program. Families who wish to participate should contact either their local public school or VTVLC directly.

#### **How do I withdraw my student from their Home Study Program?**

Students returning to school (public or independent) or moving out of state need to close out their home study enrollment. The easiest way to do this is by sending an email to [aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov](mailto:aoe.homestudy@vermont.gov) with the following information:

- Identify the name of student who is withdrawing and the date of the withdrawal.
- Include the name of the school the student is attending.
- Identify the date the student enrolled in the public or independent school.

If the student is moving out of state just identify that the family is withdrawing the student from Home Study due to relocation.

If EOYA is necessary to close out the student's home study record or we will not be able to verify that the enrollment was completed.

**Will a school accept the work my student completed in a home study program?**The grade level, credits and academic standing of students who enroll in a public or independent school after participating in a Home Study Program is at the discretion of the school. Students may have to take a placement test upon entering/re-entering school. High school students may not receive credit for courses taken at home and may need to repeat courses.

**I want my student to take a class at the local school, but the class is full. Can my student still access it?**

The rules of the State Board of Education (SBE) require that home study students and full time students are treated on the same basis as to enrollment procedures, deadlines and capacity limits. You should consult the parent/student handbook for the district's home study integration policies established by your local school board." If there is a waiting list for a popular class (i.e. driver's education) then your child should be placed on the waiting list under the same criteria as full time students (i.e. by birth date, date of learner's permit, etc.)

**Where will my student receive his/her high school diploma?**High school students enrolled in a home study program do not receive a diploma from the Agency of Education. If your student has successfully completed a year or more of home study, our office will provide, upon request, a verification letter that identifies that the student was enrolled in a home study program.

**Should I enroll my 16-year-old (or older) student?**

Each family needs to determine if they want to enroll their student at age 16. While it's not required, some families want to receive a verification letter from the Home Study



Office stating that their student has been enrolled in a home study program. This letter may be presented to colleges and the military to proving that the student has been enrolled in a home study program.

Additionally, families may want to consider enrolling in either the Dual Enrollment and/or Early College Programs via Act 77 (Flexible Pathways). These programs provide older qualified students the opportunity to participate. The Dual Enrollment Program provides juniors and seniors vouchers to take two college courses. Students may take courses during summers preceding their junior and senior year.

The Early College Program provides eligible students (in their “senior” year) the opportunity to complete their final year of high school/home school at college, tuition free. For more information visit the [Early College](#) page of the AOE website.

### **I consider my student to be a 12<sup>th</sup> Grader. Can I follow the High School requirements?**

Yes and No. Families can follow the specific curriculum or school subjects that the public school teaches in any given grade. For example, many high schools typically offer Algebra I to freshman. Home Study families can offer their student Algebra I during the same time frame.

Many high schools suggest that students take 4 English classes, 3 Science, 3 History classes, 1 year of Fine Arts, 1 ½ years of PE, a Health class and a variety of electives. Home Study requires that every student who is enrolled must include every core subject each year. If your 12<sup>th</sup> grade student has taken Earth Science, Biology, and Chemistry at the local school (or at home), that would satisfy the school’s requirements. The student’s 12<sup>th</sup> year must still include a science class even though the school’s requirements have been met.

## **Special Needs/Special Education Questions:**

### **What must I do to enroll my child who has special needs or is eligible for special education services in a home study program?**

Families self-identify upon enrollment if a student has a disability. The MCOS for these students must include a description of any special services or adaptations to be made to accommodate the disability. This must be completed annually regardless of their MCOS exemption status. Families are not required to provide a copy of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan in their enrollment packet.

### **What are adaptations?**

Adaptations are methods or materials used to accommodate any special needs the child has as a result of a disability. Adaptations enable students to make progress which is commensurate with his/her age and ability while factoring in the disability. The goal of implementing adaptations is to enable a student to progress as closely to his/her age and ability as can be reasonably be expected within the course of a school year.

### **What if adaptations are not needed for every area in the MCOS?**

*Only* identify the adaptations needed for the specific content areas. For example, if the student has a math disability, he/she might use manipulatives, a calculator, or an online program such as Kahn Academy to provide supplemental instruction. Since these adaptations are only for math, then they are not required for every subject area.

If there are general adaptations that will span the entire MCOS, there is a specific section on the Adaptations form where this can be identified, thus the adaptation will not need to be repeated for each subject area. For example, if the student accesses a voice-to-text program to write, it will be something that is potentially used during Basic Communication: reading/writing, Citizenship/History/Government, and Natural Sciences. This adaptation is more global and only needs to be identified once.

### **Will my school still provide my child with special education services?**

Students enrolled in home study programs are not entitled to special education services at the public schools. Public schools, at their discretion, may provide special education to homeschoolers through a Services Plan. A services plan may include consultation, special education and/or related services.

Families who would like to be considered for a Services Plan for their child should contact the local school district.

**Can my child access an Individualized Education Program (IEP)?**

If a student with a disability is participating in a class at the public school and needs supports and/or services to access the class, then the student may have a Services Plan or IEP for that class. For example, if the student has a math disability and needs specialized math instruction to be able to access an Algebra class, then the student may be able to receive a Services Plan or IEP for math only. Additionally, if the student has a reading disability and wants to access a PE class, then the student most likely will not need any reading supports and services. The receipt of an IEP is at the discretion of the individual school.

**May I request that my public school complete a special education evaluation for my child if I suspect there is a disability?**

Families who suspect that their child has a disability may request a special education evaluation. If the school district feels that an evaluation is not warranted, then the school must provide that information in writing. If the school district agrees to conduct an evaluation, it is at no cost to the family.

To access a special education evaluation, the student does not need to be enrolled in the public school. Contact your local school for more information about evaluations.

**Who can I contact if I have questions regarding special education?**

The VT Agency of Education technical assistance line 802-828-1256,  
The Vermont Family Network at 800-800-4005 or  
The Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health: 802-876-7021

**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 not both. Emailing and contacting multiple staff members directly with the same questions significantly delays our responses to families. We appreciate your patience.