

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The Georgia Connections Academy School System provides continuous educational services for students who anticipate a school absence due to a diagnosed medical or psychiatric condition for a minimum of ten consecutive school days or for intermittent periods of time for a minimum of ten school days per year. These services will be provided virtually.

**To be eligible for services, students must meet the following criteria:**

- 1- A licensed physician or psychiatrist who is currently treating the condition must certify that the student is expected to be absent from school due to a physical or mental condition, or due to an intermittent chronic condition, for at least 10 consecutive or intermittent school days and will be unable to participate and benefit from a virtual instructional program. Therefore, hospital homebound is required.
2. The student is under medical care for the illness, which may be acute or chronic in nature.
3. The physician must certify that the student can receive instruction without endangering the health of the instructor or other students with whom the instructor may come in contact. Students are not eligible for Hospital/Homebound instructional services if their absence is due to communicable disease.
4. Re-documentation of a chronic or recurring condition is not required but may be requested by the system coordinator.

To initiate Hospital/Homebound (HHB) services, obtain a *Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services Request Form*, *HIPPA Release Form* and *Licensed Physician and Medical Referral Form* Georgia Connections Academy. Complete the services request form and have the medical form completed by the licensed physician who is treating your child for the diagnosed condition. Submit all completed forms to Ms. Shannon Derrick, HHB Coordinator within 10 days.

A conference to develop an Educational Service Plan (ESP) for your child will be convened within five school days of receipt of the completed application. The purpose of the conference is to address the impact that the physical and/or psychiatric condition may have on your child's educational performance. The school team or Individualized Education program (IEP) team will determine the exact amount of instructional time based on the ESP, which takes into consideration the cognitive ability and medical condition of your child. To comply with the Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services, a minimum of three instructional contact hours per week must be provided for your child to be counted present.

Should you have any questions regarding HHB services, please communicate with the school's HHB contact. Local education agencies (LEAs) are responsible for providing instructional services for students who are eligible for Hospital/Homebound (HHB) services and hospitalized in health care facilities. The LEA will provide the services directly.

NOTE: Parents/guardians, emancipated minors, or students 18 years of age or older must complete the HHB application forms before services can be provided.

### Parent Notice and Summary of Virtual Hospital Homebound Services

#### Georgia State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.31 Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services

Hospital/Homebound services are not intended to supplant regular school services and are by design temporary. It offers a short-term instructional program for students who are anticipated to be absent for a minimum of 10 consecutive or intermittent school days and are confined to home or hospital by a medically diagnosed physical or mental condition. The student's inability to attend school for medical or psychiatric reasons must be certified by the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist who is currently treating the student for the diagnosis presented. This program may also be utilized if a licensed physician certifies that a student has a chronic health condition causing him/her to be absent for intermittent HHB service. Three consecutive absences for each occurrence must occur before the student is eligible for HHB services. Students with chronic health conditions should have a 504 plan or in certain circumstances be considered for a referral to Special Education.

Students are NOT counted absent as long as they receive and complete three (3) hours of weekly instruction/online curriculum assignments. This is NOT retroactive and can only take place after a proper referral is received, has been approved and services have been delivered. Communication with homeroom teachers is critical to ensure accurate reporting of attendance data.

The student must be enrolled at Georgia Connections Academy prior to the referral and for consideration to receive services through the virtual Hospital/Homebound Program.

2. The student must have a medical and/or psychiatric condition that is documented by a licensed physician.

3. Only a psychiatrist can submit a medical request form for an emotional or psychiatric disorder. The psychiatric condition presented must be listed in the latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). The referring licensed physician and/or licensed psychiatrist must be the treating physician or psychiatrist for the medical and/or psychiatric condition for which the student is requesting HHB services. Examples include the following:
  - a. A student with leukemia may not request HHB services with a medical statement from a pediatrician. A statement from the oncologist currently treating the student is required.
  - b. A student with paranoid delusions may not request HHB services with a medical statement from a psychologist or pediatrician. The medical request must be from the licensed psychiatrist currently treating the student.
4. The student must be anticipated to be absent from school for a minimum of ten consecutive school days or for intermittent periods of time anticipated to exceed ten school days during the school year.
5. Students who have been declared emancipated by a court or are 18 years of age or older are eligible to sign the Hospital/Homebound (HHB) Services Request Form and the Compliant Authorization for Exchange of Health and Education Information (HIPAA).
6. Students who have any form of influenza or other airborne contagious diseases will not be provided in person services until the licensed physician certifies that the student is no longer infectious. (This applies to state testing)
7. The local education agency (LEA) may require the parent, guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older to sign the HIPAA form relating to the reason for the request for HHB services. If the LEA requires the HIPAA form, it must be submitted before services can be provided.
8. Students approved for intermittent HHB services must be absent for three consecutive school days on each occurrence before HHB services will be provided.

Note: Chronic illnesses that require long-term intermittent absences may require students missing many days, but possibly not three consecutive days. Systems are encouraged to use their discretion and evaluate these cases on an individual basis.

## Georgia Connections Academy Parent Procedures and Agreement

1. A parent, guardian, or an approved adult parent designee as identified in the Educational Service Plan (ESP) shall be present during the instructional period.
2. A table or desk in a workspace that is clean and quiet must be provided. The student must have access to a computer for time determined on the ESP and working internet.
3. A schedule for student check in time between teacher or GACA designated staff member for virtual check-in times will be established and the student will be prepared for each session.
4. Instructional materials must be obtained from the school, and assignments completed and submitted on time. Watching weekly live lesson recordings is mandatory.
5. Assignments will be submitted via Connexus to their regular school teacher for grading.
6. A parent, guardian, emancipated minor, student 18 years of ages or older, or an approved adult parent designee as identified in the ESP must notify the HHB GACA designated staff member at least 24 hours in advance if a check-in must be canceled. The LEA may, at its discretion, reschedule the check-in session. The HHB GCA designated staff member will notify the parent, guardian, or approved adult parent designee if they need to cancel a check-in session and the check-in session may be rescheduled.
7. The parent/guardian, emancipated minor, or student 18 years of age or older must submit a release form from the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist upon the student's return to school.
8. To extend HHB services beyond the originally identified return to school date, the licensed physician or licensed psychiatrist must submit an updated medical referral request form.