

Home and Hospital Instruction Policy

The purpose of the Home and Hospital Instruction Program Policy is to provide academic instruction and support to students who have been or will be absent from school for 10 or more consecutive or cumulative school days during a school year due to a health condition¹. Girls Global Academy's Home or Hospital Instruction Program is designed to provide academic instruction in core subjects to the greatest extent possible as well as the provision of special education and related services as appropriate.

Eligibility for Home or Hospital Instruction

Any Girls Global Academy Public Charter School student who has been or is anticipated to be absent from school, on a continuous, partial, or intermittent basis, for 10 or more consecutive or cumulative school days during a school year due to a health condition may be eligible for home or hospital instruction. The following steps must be taken before home or hospital instruction is provided:

- A parent/guardian, or adult student, is responsible for requesting home or hospital instruction. This request may be written or oral and must be submitted to GGA's Home Hospital Instruction Coordinator, Molly Green at mgreen@girlsglobalacademy.org or 202-600-4822
- Upon receipt of a request for home or hospital instruction, Girls Global Academy will document and acknowledge the request within two school days and will provide the parent with information on how to submit a completed medical certification of need and parent agreement for home or hospital instruction;
- The parent must submit a completed medical certification of need and parent agreement for home or hospital instruction.
- Within 5 school days of receiving the medical certification of need and parent agreement for home or hospital instruction, Girls Global Academy will issue a written decision approving or denying the request and explaining the basis for that decision;

¹ "Health condition" means a physical or mental illness, injury, or impairment that prevents a student from participating in the day-to-day activities typically expected during school attendance.



- o A request will only be denied if the medical certification of need is missing or incomplete;
 - o In the event that a request is denied, the written explanation will state specifically that the basis for the determination was a missing or incomplete application or medical certification of need;
 - o In the event that a request is denied, Girls Global Academy will include in the written decision and how the parent may appeal that decision (due within 10 days of receiving denial). For more details from OSSE please see their information page:
<https://osse.dc.gov/page/home-and-hospital-instruction>
 - o If the application is fully completed, and approved, Girls Global Academy will provide the student's home or hospital instruction plan including location, schedule, and services to be delivered
 - o In general, hospital and homebound services are considered to be temporary solutions. All students should return to a regular school placement as soon as possible. Additionally, hospital and homebound services must be requested by the parent/guardian for any student under the age of 18.
- Upon receipt of an HHI application for a student who has an individualized education program (IEP) or who is suspected of having such a disability, GGA is responsible for contacting the appropriate team members.
 - o The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) supersedes all HHI requirements.
 - o If a student is eligible for an IEP, the LEA shall also:
 1. Provide the parent/guardian with procedural safeguard notices under IDEA;
 2. Consider whether the placement could impact the student's "least restrictive environment" and if so, convene a placement team to review and revise the student's IEP, as appropriate; and
 3. In doing so, the determination and eligibility for HHI shall be governed by the IDEA rather than the HHI program.



Medical Certification of Need

To access HHI, a parent/guardian must provide a medical certification of need. This is a written letter from the appropriate medical personnel (licensed physician, licensed nurse practitioner, licensed clinical psychologist, licensed mental health counselor or therapist, or physician's assistant) and must:

1. Include signatory's license number;
2. Certify that a student has been diagnosed with a health condition and explain how the condition had caused or is anticipated to cause the student to be unable to attend in-school instruction on a continuous, partial, or intermittent basis, at the student's school of enrollment or attendance for 10 or more consecutive or cumulative school days during a school year;
3. Contain a recommendation that the student receive HHI;
4. Identify if there are a maximum number of direct instructional hours permitted due to the student's health condition;
5. Define the expected duration and frequency of the student's health condition and the needed start date for services; and
6. Explain whether the medical condition is anticipated to cause continuous, partial, or intermittent absence from school.

Upon receipt of a signed medical records release, Girls Global Academy may contact the medical provider to clarify recommendations and services. If the medical certification of need's recommendations are unclear to the Girls Global Academy team, and the medical provider cannot be reached for clarification, GGA will contact the parent about the issues in writing, and may request additional information for the medical certification of need to be considered complete.

While home or hospital instruction is being provided, Girls Global Academy Public Charter School may request updated information related to the student's continued medical need and work with the parent to develop a plan that would permit the student to return to school.

Students Receiving Psychiatric Care

Students who participate in intensive psychiatric treatment programs during the school day, such as an inpatient hospitalization program or partial hospitalization program, may not be available to access their education during their treatment. The HHI Team will work with the student's psychiatric team to determine when it is medically appropriate to



initiate education services as well as the appropriate number of courses that the student can access while in treatment. In some cases, hospitalization may impact the student's promotion status or their projected graduation date.

Students participating in an intensive outpatient program (IOP) that begins in the afternoon must attend school during the day. Typically, IOPs begin after the traditional school day to ensure that students are attending as much of the school day as possible. The HHI Team will create a plan of support for afternoon courses that may be impacted by the IOP start time.

Students who are in a psychiatric crisis, as evidenced by hospitalization, may be unable to access education. In these cases, educational services will be paused until it has been determined that the student is sufficiently medically stable to access services. When it is determined that the student can access education, a plan of support will be created.

Students who are not actively participating in an inpatient or partial hospitalization program must transition to school. The school-based HHI Team will create a transition plan of no more than twenty (20) school days. If the student is unable to transition to a full school day within twenty (20) school days, the transition plan will be paused and reevaluated.

GGA will request to meet with the medical team and family to discuss relevant data, observations, and any underlying medical concerns that are not being met by the current medical treatment plan or if the current medical treatment plan is sufficient. Please note that it is not within the purview of GGA staff to provide medically-based support (e.g., therapy) to students. Support provided by GGA staff is focused on a student's ability to access education.

Pregnant Students

Students who are or become pregnant are required to continue attending school until they are admitted for delivery or are hospitalized due to pregnancy complications. Students experiencing pregnancy symptoms, such as nausea, fatigue, physical discomfort, or swelling, are expected to attend school, though GGA will consider appropriate accommodations for pregnant students as necessary.

For instance, pregnant students may be eligible for the following accommodations:



- Use of elevator,
- Availability of snacks or water bottle during class,
- Elevating feet,
- Movement breaks,
- Lunch in a separate area,
- Extra transition time between classes,
- Preferential seating,
- Breaks in the nurse's suite.

Some students may experience decreased ability to remain focused in class due to symptoms associated with pregnancy. GGA and the HHI Team will ensure that appropriate teachers and staff are aware of the various barriers that may be impacting the student and work to create adjustments that alleviate discomfort to the extent possible.

Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is permitted for previously pregnant students for six (6) weeks from the baby's birth date. It is extended to eight (8) weeks when a cesarean section is performed. Maternity leave cannot be extended due to individual circumstances, such as a lack of childcare. Girls Global Academy's CARE Team will work with the student to create an action plan when the student is experiencing barriers that are impacting their return to school. All students are expected to return to school at the conclusion of their maternity leave and HHI services. During maternity leave, a student's academic schedule may be adjusted. HHI considers how the demands of school and parenthood are likely to impact the student's ability to receive instruction and complete assignments in all courses. In the situation that one or more classes are paused, the student will be required to make up all missed assignments upon transition back to school. The HHI Team will create a make-up plan so that the student has the opportunity to earn a final grade in the course.

Duration of Home or Hospital Instruction

Approval of home or hospital instruction requests are expected to last no longer than 60 days or the duration estimated in the medical certification of need, whichever is less. A parent may extend the program for periods of up to 60 days by submitting a medical recertification of need at least 5 days before the date that the parent requires for the extension to begin.



Proposed Accommodations to Allow Student to Remain in School

Before or after a request for home or hospital instruction is granted, Girls Global Academy Public Charter School may propose accommodations to allow the student to remain in school but will only proceed with such accommodations if the medical professional that signed the medical certification of need agrees in writing that such accommodations meet the medical needs of the student and permit in-school instruction.

Delivery of Instruction

Home or hospital instruction will begin within 5 school days of the request being approved. Instruction will be provided in core academic subjects to the greatest extent possible. Special education and related services will also be provided to the greatest extent possible in accordance with an IEP or Section 504 Plan.

Instruction will be provided in-person by a home or hospital instructor unless the parent consents to virtual instruction via real-time videoconferencing. Instruction may be provided virtually without a parent's consent in the following circumstances:

- During a public health emergency;
- When the student has been diagnosed with a communicable disease;
- When a household member has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, if the student is to receive instruction at home; or
- When Girls Global Academy Public Charter School determines safety concerns prevent the delivery of in-person services.

Reasonable efforts will be made to provide instruction during regular school hours, but some instruction may occur during evenings or weekends. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate student and guardian schedules, including medical appointments. Failure of students to attend or participate in scheduled sessions will not result in additional time allotted or make-up sessions.

HHI sessions are not held on Federal and DC holidays, teacher work/planning days, professional development days, and parent-teacher conference days. HHI also adheres to school closures and delays due to inclement weather. Sessions that are missed because of school closures and delays will be rescheduled if possible. School delays, closures, breaks, and holidays do not extend HHI services.



Location

Sessions are held in the student's home or at the hospital. Parents/guardians may submit a request to GGA's Home Hospital Instruction Coordinator for sessions to be held at another location, such as a relative's home. Such a change in location must be approved in writing, and is not guaranteed.

Services cannot be provided outside of Washington, D.C. Sessions may also include logging into class via computer to access instruction.

Learning Environment

Students and parents/guardians must ensure that the physical area where HHI sessions will take place is appropriately prepared for learning, including the following:

- The area where the session is taking place must be clean and well lit.
- All potential distractions in the area must be minimized so that the student and staff can focus on the session. This includes TVs, music, video games, loud conversations by others, sibling interruptions, etc.
- All material needed for the instructional session should be accessible by the student.
- The student and all members of the home should be appropriately dressed (i.e., fully dressed, both top and bottom).
- Before the session begins, all pets must be removed from any areas where the provider will be, such as the front door/entry and the room where the session will take place.
- Smoking is not permitted in the home when the provider is present.
- Medications, drug paraphernalia, and alcohol must not be present in any area the provider will enter, unless medication is being administered to the student during the session.
- Students who are logging into their classes from home or the hospital must ensure that their location is free of the above stated distractions prior to logging into class.

Providers reserve the right to leave the home or hospital and cancel the session immediately when the above expectations are not met. If there are consistent issues meeting expectations, sessions will be paused until a resolution is discussed and agreed upon.

Adult Supervision for Students

When providers arrive for a session or service at a home, an adult who is responsible for the student must be present in the home during the entire session, even if the student is



18 years old or older. If the adult leaves the home during the session, the provider will end the session immediately. This requirement does not apply to sessions or services that occur in a student's hospital room.

Cancellations by the student or parent/guardian should be made at least 24 hours in advance, whenever possible. Providers will also provide 24-hour notice before a session cancellation whenever possible. When a provider cancels a session, the missed session will be rescheduled and made up.

If three (3) instructional sessions are missed for non-medical reasons, services will be paused and absences will be unexcused. Services will resume when the barrier to student participation is addressed, and the student is prepared to participate within the timeframe initially scheduled for HHI services. A pause in services does not extend HHI services. Missed services may result in a change in schedule that differs from the initial pre-determined schedule. All absences, cancellations, and pauses in services must be reported to the GGA HHI Coordinator.

Attendance

Student absences will be excused from the date of receipt of a completed HHI application. Once a student is ineligible for HHI services, their absences from in-person attendance will no longer be excused. The school attendance office is notified when HHI services are terminated and the student is then expected to return to school. If a student misses three (3) instructional sessions for non-medically excused reasons while receiving HHI services, the school-based team and parent/guardian will be notified that services will be paused until the barrier impacting attendance is addressed and the student is prepared to participate in HHI. Until the student can fully participate in HHI, absences after the third missed session for a non-medically excused reason will not be excused. If a student's family cannot be contacted and the student is not participating in sessions, the school-based team will be notified that services will be paused and absences will not be excused until contact can be made and the barrier to participation has been addressed. HHI services will end immediately if the student is working outside of their home or the hospital.

Academic Instruction

HHI aims to provide students with access to their classroom and/or classroom teacher to the extent possible. GGA utilizes varying modalities to provide access to instruction.



To the extent possible, students receiving HHI services are required to complete the same work that their peers are required to complete in school, including the same rigor of assignments. Additionally, HHI services do not automatically increase the amount of time to complete the work. Substitute assignments may be provided if regular assignments or activities cannot take place outside of the classroom. In addition to the weekly instructional sessions, the student is expected to complete assignments on his or her own time. Assignments must be completed by the designated due date and are returned to the school for grading. Failure to complete or turn in assignments on time will result in zeros for those assignments and reflected in the grade accordingly. Grades earned during hospital and homebound instruction will be added to any current grades and calculated towards the final grade for the applicable grading period.

Although it is our goal to support students in order to mitigate learning loss associated with medical absences, there is a possibility that the typical progression in school may be impacted. We are guided by what is in the best interest of students and understand that there are medical issues that may prevent students from fully participating. In cases where there are medical barriers to educational access, the HHI Team will meet to discuss an appropriate educational plan. In some cases, the inability to participate in instruction may impact graduation.

Based on the student's medical status, GGA may recommend discussing a student's academic course load to best set them up for success with their coursework, while maintaining the student's necessary focus on their health and accounting for medical complexities.

For courses that a student has already failed due to previously accrued unexcused absences or those in which there is insufficient remaining time in the term to receive all missed instruction and complete all missed required work, instruction may be provided but a passing grade and credit will not be assigned. Additionally, credit recovery courses are not supported.

With questions or for more information, please contact GGA's Home/Hospital Instruction Coordinator, Molly Green at: mgreen@girlsglobalacademy.org or 202-600-4822