

# **INTENT FORMS**

*Provided by Home Ed (Home Educators of Greater Little Rock)*

## **About the Forms - What, When, and Who**

According to Arkansas law, a "Notice of Intent to Home School" and a "Home School Waiver Form" must be submitted to your local school district EACH YEAR that you homeschool.

The deadline for submitting these forms is **August 15** of each year or **December 15** (to begin homeschooling the second semester), or anytime during the year (with a required 14-day waiting period). Your Superintendent or local School Board has the authority to waive the 14-day waiting period. If you just moved into the state or district, these forms should be filed within thirty calendar days of establishing residency with the district. **Whether delivering by hand or by mail, these forms must arrive at your school district (not just be postmarked) by the deadline.**

If your child is 5 years old on or before October 1st of the listing school year, you must either register them as a kindergartner OR fill out a kindergarten waiver form. If you do the latter, you may wait until the next year to register them as a kindergartner, and from then on they will be an older child than what is typical for each grade they're in....OR you can register them as a first grader (thereby skipping kindergarten). Completion of kindergarten is not a requirement under Arkansas law.

If your child is 6 years old on or before October 1st of the listing school year, you must fill out an Intent Form and Waiver Form (for either Kindergarten or 1st Grade).

## **Obtaining the Forms**

The state of Arkansas usually has updated homeschool registration forms for the upcoming school year finalized and available around June of each year.

To download copies of the "Notice of Intent to Home School" and the "Home School Waiver Form" go to the web site of the [Home School Office](#) of the Arkansas Department of Education. **This site also has a very helpful example of a completed form.** These forms can also be obtained from your school district.

The Kindergarten Waiver Forms may be obtained from the Superintendent's office of the school district in which you live or from the [Home School Office](#) of the Arkansas Department of Education.

### **Printing the Forms**

To print the Notice of Intent to Home School - set your printer on the LANDSCAPE (sideways) orientation.

To print the Home School Waiver Form - reset your printer back to the PORTRAIT (up and down) orientation.

### **Completing the Forms**

A great start in understanding how to complete the Intent Form would be to review the "Example Notice of Intent" that is on the Department of Education's web site. Note how simplistically the curriculum and study schedules are described. This does not need to be detailed information.

Also note that the "Educational Qualifications of Parent/Teacher(s)" has no bearing on whether or not you may teach your child. It is informational only.

You are asked to list your Superintendent and School District. The name of the Superintendent is not critically important - but you should make a good effort. If there has been a recent superintendent change, they will understand if you list the previous superintendent. You can find information on your Superintendent and School Districts in the section below, entitled "Submitting the Forms".

How do you know what school district you're in? This can be a tough one. Identifying your district may not be that intuitive. Many have had one city's address and phone number but actually be in a neighboring school district. We know of no "school district lookup" site on the web. Here is what most people do:

- This is probably the best way - Contact the Tax Assessors Office for your county. This is where the local tax dollars go to pay for schools and they must allocate the money appropriately. Therefore, they should be able to look up your address and give you your school district. The State of Arkansas has a list of [County Assessors and their web sites](#). The different counties web pages vary in style, but look for a phone number at the bottom, in the margin, or many have a "Contact Us" link - then call them.

- Ask the public school family next door what school district they are in.
- Watch for the school name on the school buses that go by and use the web to look up what district they belong to (call the school to confirm).
- Use your house realtor papers to see what they listed...or go online to look at houses for sale in your neighborhood. See what school district they list for that nearby house.
- Call the district you believe you live in. Give the district your address. The school district should be able to tell you if you reside in their district.

Your home address that you list on this form will be what the Department of Education uses as an address to mail testing notification information to you at testing time. Should you move after submitting the form, you will want to notify your district (the old and new districts - if your move changes your district) of your new address.

There is a place on the Intent Form where you can indicate whether your child is eligible for state assistance in obtaining special needs services. Legally, homeschool students with special needs can dip into the same pot of money as private school students for extra assistance. However, the Education Alliance (our state-level homeschool group) recommends that you NOT check that status box. The reasons are two-fold. First, there is not a lot of money in that pot so it is unlikely your child would receive any substantial amount of assistance. Second, and more importantly, every time the legislature gets together, special needs students come up as an issue. A significant number of legislators do not think you should be allowed to homeschool your special needs child. If you check that box, it will tag your child as a special needs child. You might want to protect your choice of homeschooling should the law ever change, by not checking the box.

**Make and keep a copy of your Notice of Intent and Waiver before you submit the original to the Superintendent.** You will never need to fill out the *notarization section* of the Intent Form on the original form.

The notarization section of the Intent Form will only apply to a copy of the Intent Form and only for those who have a homeschool child that will be pursuing the written portion of their drivers license this year. The copy of the "Notice of Intent" should be notarized before a Notary Public. Notaries can be found at banks, law offices, insurance

companies (secretaries), and many churches (secretaries). Although not a part of the law, often the State Police will want the document notarized within 24 hours of taking the written drivers test - they want proof that you are CURRENTLY homeschooling. So you may want to delay any notarization until just before taking the drivers test.

Overall, you are only required to provide information as specified by Arkansas homeschool law. Act 1117 says that “notice must include the name, date of birth, grade level, and the name and address of the school last attended, if any of each student; and the mailing address and phone number of the homeschool, the basic core curriculum to be offered, the proposed schedule of instruction and the qualification of the parent/teacher.” Any other requested information may be considered *optional* information.

### **Submitting the Forms**

If you are homeschooling in Arkansas for the first time, you must deliver both forms in person; otherwise, both forms should be mailed to your local school district. **Whether delivering by hand or by mail, these forms must arrive at your school district (*not* just be postmarked) by the deadline.** Since there are many school districts in Arkansas, the address will not be on the form. You can obtain the address of your school district from the phone book or you can go to the Arkansas Department of Education's web site for a list of superintendents (see paragraph below).

Special note: North Little Rock School District requires all students (public or homeschool) to bring a utility bill to prove residency. Of course, if it's your 2nd or subsequent year to homeschool, you can mail your Intent Form in and this will not be an issue.

Note that superintendents sometimes change faster than the Department of Education's web site. The name of the superintendent is not as important as getting the proper address for the superintendent's (school district's) office. The list for [Arkansas Public School Superintendents](#) from the Department of Education, lists the Superintendents and their District Office's address and phone numbers. Note: You will need a software program that can open the document in the program in which it was made (Excel, Adobe Reader, or whatever format that has been chosen to use by the Department of Education).

For added insurance, it is wise to mail your forms with "return-receipt requested" OR have the school district desk clerk confirm your hand-delivery by signing a name and placing a date on your extra copy. You will not receive confirmation from the State office that these documents were or were not received.

Also note that you are not required to do anything further beyond simply submitting your "Notice of Intent to Home School" and your "Home School Waiver Form". You are not required to fill out any surveys or additional forms, answer questions as to why you chose to homeschool, have a "session" or "meeting" with district personnel, etc.