

A Simplified Guide to California Homeschooling. The title is centered on a white rectangular background that is slightly tilted. The background image shows a bright sun rising over a field of colorful wildflowers under a clear blue sky.

A Simplified Guide to California Homeschooling

By Penny Ross, Tools for the Home Educator

California mandates school attendance for students if they are 6 years old on or before September 1st and continuing until the age of 18 or high school graduation. Because there is no provision for homeschooling in our state law, parents use one of the following four ways to ensure legal compliance:

✔ Option 1: Private School Option (PSA)

Who Teaches? Parents

Who Oversees? Parents

You can establish a private school in your own home for your own children. You then notify the California Department of Education of the existence of your school by filing a Private School Affidavit (PSA) October 1-15 each year. As is required of all private schools in the state, you agree to teach the branches of study required of the public schools and to maintain a few records. Because you are the administrator of your private school, you determine all the other details. The only cost is for the materials or resources you choose to use (free sources are available!).

✔ Option 2: Private School Satellite Program (PSP)

Who Teaches? Parents

Who Oversees? PSP Leaders

A PSP can be composed entirely of home educating families or it can be an extension of a campus-based private school. The PSP files one PSA (private school affidavit) on behalf of all enrolled students. The parents then function as the teachers of their own children within the PSP structure. PSPs vary in the amount of services offered, the requirements placed upon enrolled families, the level of oversight provided, and the tuition/fees charged.

✔ Option 3: Public School Option: Independent Study

Who Teaches? Parents

Who Oversees? School Admin & CA Dept. of Education

Independent study or non-classroom based instruction is offered through some charter schools and public school districts. Students enrolled in these tuition-free programs must adhere to the standards, requirements, and tests established by the California Department of Education since they are funded by state tax dollars. You meet regularly with a credentialed teacher and turn in homework or work samples from acceptable secular curriculum or resources. Certain programs offer instructional funding to help offset some of the costs.

✔ Option 4: Private Tutoring Option

Who Teaches? Tutor

Who Oversees? Tutor

You can hire a tutor to teach your students. The tutor must hold a valid California teaching credential for the grade level and subjects being taught. Tutoring must be done for at least 3 hours per day for at least 175 days per year, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. Filing a PSA is not required.

NOTE: Families using an out-of-state school or program are still required by state law to be enrolled in a school with a California address. They should file a PSA or enroll in a PSP to comply with California's compulsory attendance law, but are then able to outsource instruction and other educational services to the out-of-state program.



If you'd like to learn more, Penny has a free 30 minute video, providing an overview to the what, why, and how of homeschooling in California. Sign up for it at

<https://www.toolsforthehomeeducator.com/product/webinar-homeschooling-the-what-the-why-and-the-how/> .

➤ *For additional information, please contact Penny at*
<https://www.toolsforthehomeeducator.com/contact/>