

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Compulsory Attendance Ages: “between the ages of six and sixteen.” Commonwealth of the Marianas Code § 3-1141.

Required Days of Instruction: 180 days. Policy 415.7.

Required Subjects: Same as public schools.

Home School Statute: N. Mar. I. Code § 3-1141, “the superintendent may grant individual waivers” to compulsory attendance in “cases of home study or other special circumstances, subject to the approval and review of the Board.” The Board of Education has adopted Policy 415, “Home Study,” which requires:

1. Parents or legal guardians must provide the Commissioner “compelling evidence that justifies a Home Study Program.”
2. An application must be submitted to the Commissioner at least 60 days prior to beginning of school year. “No one will be excused from nonattendance as a public or chartered private school until a waiver has been granted by the Commissioner.”
3. According to Section 415.2, the application must include:
 - a. name, address, and telephone of parent and student,
 - b. justification for home study,
 - c. “auspices under which the home study will operate and curriculum will be taught,”
 - d. description and qualification of parent-instructor,
 - e. dates and hours of instruction (according to § 415.7, the home school must have “300 minutes of secular instruction daily”), and
 - f. “any other pertinent and necessary information as requested by the Commissioner.”
4. The Commissioner will take action on application within 3 months.
5. “The parents shall submit to the Commissioner monthly, quarterly, and annual reports on the progress of the program.” § 415.6.

6. “The PSS shall monitor the Home Study Program to ensure compliance with its application and this policy.”
7. “Failure to comply with any of these requirements will result in revocation of the waiver. § 415.8. Also, failure to “cooperate, provide information and access, and assist the Commissioner in any inquiry or investigation conducted regarding application, monitoring, and related matters” will result in disapproval of application or revocation of waiver. § 415.9.

Alternative Statutes Allowing for Home Schools: N. Mar. I. Code § 3-1141, a child may attend a “chartered non-public school,” and home schools or groups of home schools may possibly be able to operate as a non-public school if it meets the following requirements:

1. N. Mar. I. Code § 3-1171. A person desiring to operate a non-public school must apply for a charter. The application must contain:
 - a. name of the applicant;
 - b. proposed location;
 - c. courses of instruction;
 - d. summary of financing of the school; and
 - e. “such other information as may be required by the Board.”
2. The applicant for a non-public school charter must satisfy the Board that the school meets curriculum, safety, “and any other applicable standards that may be required by the Commonwealth or the Board.”
3. The Board must make its decision on whether to approve a charter application within three months. The charter is revocable if its terms are violated or the Board determines the school is not providing the required education.
4. “Freedom to choose nonpublic education meeting reasonable Commonwealth standards for the child is a fundamental parental liberty and a basic right.” N. Mar. I. Code § 3-1173(d).

Teacher Qualifications: “Mentors of a home study program shall meet the qualifications stipulated by Board policies.” § 415.7. Not applicable to parent instructors.

Standardized Tests: Not required by statute or policy.