

## California Private School Affidavit (PSA) -- Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q: What is the Private School Affidavit and who should file it?**

**A:** The Private School Affidavit notifies the state that someone is operating a private school. If your child is not enrolled in another full-time school (charter or PSP), then you should establish your home-based private school and file a Private School Affidavit or send a Statement in Lieu between October 1 and October 15. For children enrolled in a PSP, district ISP, or charter school, you should not file an affidavit.

**Q: Is my child truant during September because we can't establish our private school until October?**

**A:** No. Filing the private school affidavit does not establish your private school. Rather, it notifies the CDE that you are already operating a private school. For info on establishing your home-based private school, <https://www.californiahomeschool.net/how-to-homeschool/establishing-your-psa/>

**Q: I filed the PSA online in July because we knew we were going to leave our charter and homeschool privately this year. I'm good, right?**

**A:** The PSA that you filed during the summer was for previous school year. The form for the upcoming school year will be available beginning October 1. You need to file again during the first two weeks of October.

**Q: My child is enrolled in a school right now, but we might start homeschooling during this year. Should I file my affidavit now, just in case?**

**A:** No. The Oct. 1-15 filing window is just to give the state a snapshot of how many private schools are operating in CA and how many students are enrolled. You can't file the affidavit unless you have at least one student enrolled, and a student can't be enrolled in two schools at once. The CDE keeps the affidavit up all year, so that schools starting mid-year can file at that time.

**Q: We enrolled in a full-service accredited online school located in another state. We're covered, right?**

**A:** That depends. Students residing in CA need to be enrolled in a school with a physical presence in CA. If your online school does not have a street address in CA, you should file or own PSA.

**Q: I am starting to homeschool kindergarten with my 5-year-old. Should I file my affidavit this year?**

**A:** Kindergarten is optional in CA. Children need to be enrolled during the school year they turn 6 before September 1. You can establish your private school for this year or wait until next year.

**Q: I filed an affidavit listing just one student, but now we have decided to start homeschooling our fourth grader midyear. Do I need to update my PSA?**

**A:** No. Private schools enroll students throughout the year and do not notify the state every time a new student enrolls. The affidavit is just a snapshot of enrollment in California private schools during the first two weeks of October.

**Q: I have heard that I need to file an R4. What's that?**

**A:** The Private School Affidavit is sometimes referred to as the "R4". It is the same thing. Before the Private School Affidavit became an online document, it was a paper form called the R4.

**Q: I'm nervous that the state will recognize our school as a homeschool. Should I be concerned?**

**A:** Yes, the state will assume you are homeschooling. No, you needn't be concerned. The majority of PSAs filed each year in CA (five out of six in 2016) were from schools with fewer than 6 students, IE homeschool families.

**Q: I am filling out a form for my daughter, and it asks for our school's CDS Code. What's that?**

**A:** The California Department of Education (CDE) makes a separate list of private schools with 6 or more students, available on their website for parents who are looking for traditional private schools. Only these schools are assigned a CDS Code. In the vast majority of cases, you can provide a copy of your most recent PSA instead of the CDS Code.

**Q: The online form looks complicated. Can I get help?**

**A:** Help is available! Several homeschool associations post line-by-line instructions for the PSA, updating as needed once the new school year's form has been released. Here's an example:

<http://www.californiahomeschool.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2018-19-PSA-Instructions-1.pdf>

**Q: Do you need to file if they are taking classes at a college or University while in high-school?**

**A:** Yes. Students who are ages 6 - 18 must be enrolled in a full-me school unless they have graduated or passed CHSPE.

**Q: Are there any requirements for running your own private homeschool?**

**A:** Yes. If you establish a private school to teach your own children, you follow the same statutes as other private schools. However, some of them are waived if school staff are only working with their own children. The state of California has decided not to set many requirements for private schools, which are free to set their own curriculum, hours of instruction, and graduation requirements. <https://www.californiahomeschool.net/how-to-homeschool/establishing-your-psa/>

**Q: Is the local public school district involved in overseeing families homeschooling with a PSA?**

**A:** The local district is supposed to make sure students in its attendance area are legally enrolled in a school. If they contact you asking about your child by name, just confirm that your child is enrolled in XYZ private school. They may also ask to see your affidavit. Generally, the only time this happens is when a family neglects to inform their previous school that their children are not returning.