

McKinney-Vento

District Guidelines

(Condensed Version)

PANGBURN
SCHOOL
DISTRICT



District Homeless Program Guidelines



The program is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC 11431 et seq.), (McKinney-Vento Act). The program was originally authorized in 1987 and, most recently, reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The McKinney-Vento program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, State educational agencies (SEAs) must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth. Homeless children and youth should have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. States and districts are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youth.

A-2.

The McKinney-Vento Act defines "homeless children and youth" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes –

- Children and youth who are:
 - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as *doubled-up*);
 - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - living in emergency or transitional shelters;
 - abandoned in hospitals; or
 - awaiting foster care placement;
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

The local liaison serves as one of the primary contacts between homeless families and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers, and other service providers. The liaison coordinates services to ensure that homeless children and youth enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically.

Local liaisons must ensure that:

- Homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- Homeless students enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA;
- Homeless children and youth and their families receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services;
- Parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of educational and related opportunities available to their children, and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;
- Parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth are fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing transportation services;
- Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act; and
- Public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated to locations where they receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act.

In meeting these responsibilities, **local liaisons must assist homeless children and youth with such activities as the following:**

- Enrolling in school and accessing school services;
- Obtaining immunizations or medical records;
- Informing parents, school personnel, and others of the rights of homeless children and youth;
- Working with school staff to make sure that homeless children and youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement;
- Helping to coordinate transportation services for homeless children and youth; and
- Collaborating and coordinating with State Coordinators for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and community and school personnel responsible for providing education and related support services to homeless children and youth.

Requirements for Schools

The McKinney-Vento Act provides certain rights for homeless students. They include waiving certain requirements such as proof of residency when students are enrolling and allowing categorical eligibility for certain services, such as free textbooks. The Act also states:

- Homeless students may attend their school of origin or the school where they are temporarily residing;
- Homeless students must be provided a written statement of their rights when they enroll and at least two times per year;
- Homeless students may enroll without school, medical, or similar records;
- Homeless students have a right to transportation to school;
- Students must be provided a statement explaining why they are denied any service or enrollment;
- Students must receive services, such as transportation, while disputes are being settled;
- Students are automatically eligible for Title I services;
- School districts must reserve a portion of Title IA funds to serve homeless students;
- School districts must review and revise policies that provide barriers to homeless students;
- Schools must post information in the community regarding the rights of homeless students, in schools and other places that homeless families may frequent; and
- School districts must identify a McKinney-Vento Liaison to assist students.

Steps to Ensure the District Homeless Program is Operational

Legal Requirements for McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

The LEA ensures that schools implement procedures and guidelines for identifying and enrolling homeless children and youth. §722(g)

Create a **District Homeless Policy** which outlines the homeless program.

Keep minutes of meeting to create and/or update policies, sign in sheet and agenda.

Include in the policy the procedure for identification, transportation, fees in the district, and all other services offered to identified homeless students.

Notices should be posted in each building and around the community. These posters can be ordered free from the National Center for Homeless Education's website.

District training should be conducted each year with the staff to go over all procedures for McKinney-Vento. Topics to be covered:

- Definition as defined in McKinney-Vento
- Identification
- Enrollment
- Warning signs of homelessness
- Contact for McKinney-Vento

The LEA has developed and implemented policies and procedures to ensure programs and activities address the educational needs of homeless children and youth. §722(g) 6(A), 722(g)(1)

Keep record of all homeless students, services for these students and records of any transportation.

Maintain records of all fees that are waived for identified homeless students.

Contact businesses, churches, and civic clubs in the community to create collaborations for the program. Maintain collaboration forms for each group. Liaison also must collaborate with others in the district---Title 1, Special Ed., Federal Programs Coordinator, and others. Keep a list of all donations received.

Maintain records for any services provided to identified students. (Birth Certificate, school records, food, clothing, etc.)

The LEA complies with providing comparable Title I, Part A services to homeless students attending Non-Title I Schools. §722(g)