

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Definition of Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youth as individuals who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** night-time residence. The term includes children and youth who:

- share the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (often referred to as **doubled up**);
- are living in **motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds** due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional **shelters**;
- are **abandoned** in hospitals;
- are **awaiting foster care** placement;
- have a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place **not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation** for human beings;
- are living in **cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations**, or similar settings;
- **unaccompanied** youth and **migratory** children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Rights and Services

The McKinney-Vento Act requires school districts to remove all barriers to enrollment, attendance, and academic success that may be faced by students experiencing homelessness. Consequently, eligible homeless students have the following rights and are eligible for the following services and supports:

- **Immediate enrollment**, even if lacking documents normally required at the time of enrollment. The district will work with the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth to later obtain required documents and records;
- Right to continue attending the **school of origin** (even if it is in a different district than the district in which the student is temporarily residing);
- **Transportation** to the school of origin when feasible and in the best interests of the student, upon the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth;
- Immediate enrollment in **free school meals** program;
- **School supplies**;
- **Fee waivers**;
- **Before/After school** programs;
- **Tutoring** programs;
- **Referral** to community and social services, including but not limited to housing, food, clothing, medical, and mental health;
- **Preschool** programs;
- **Title I** services