

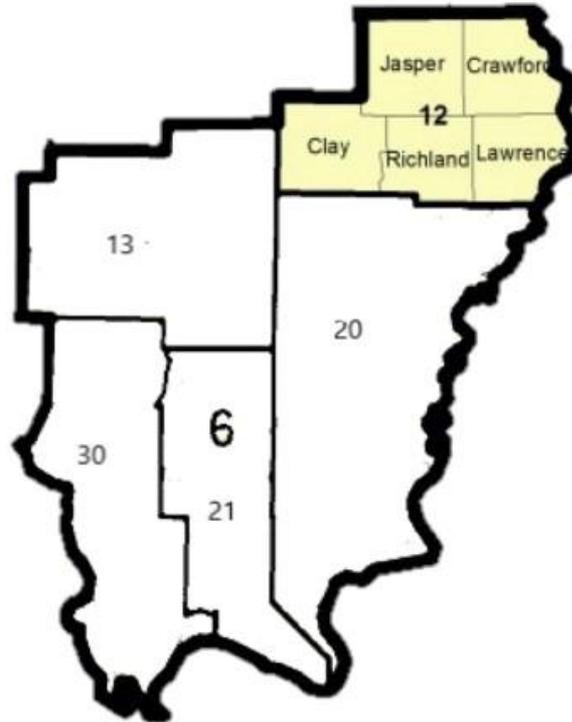
The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act



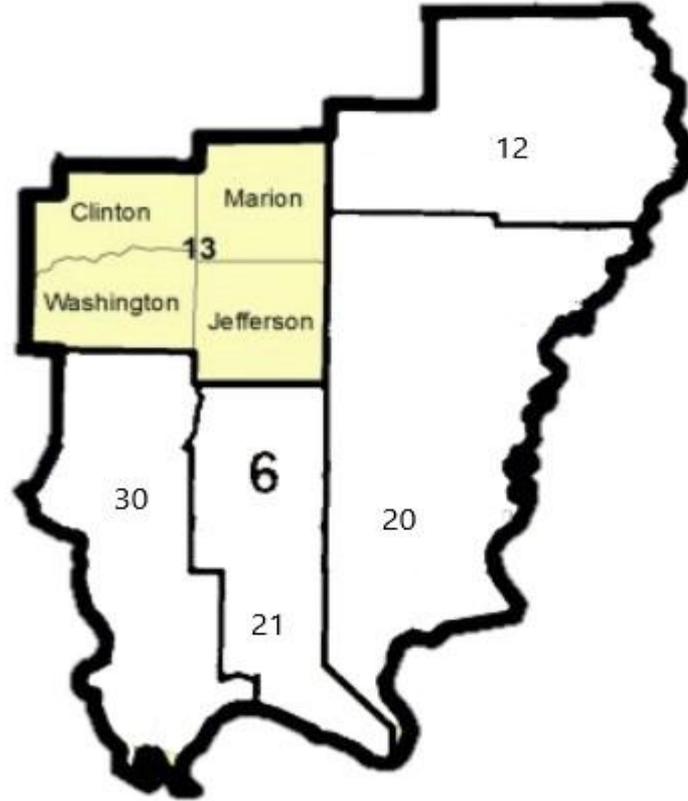
Who We Are...



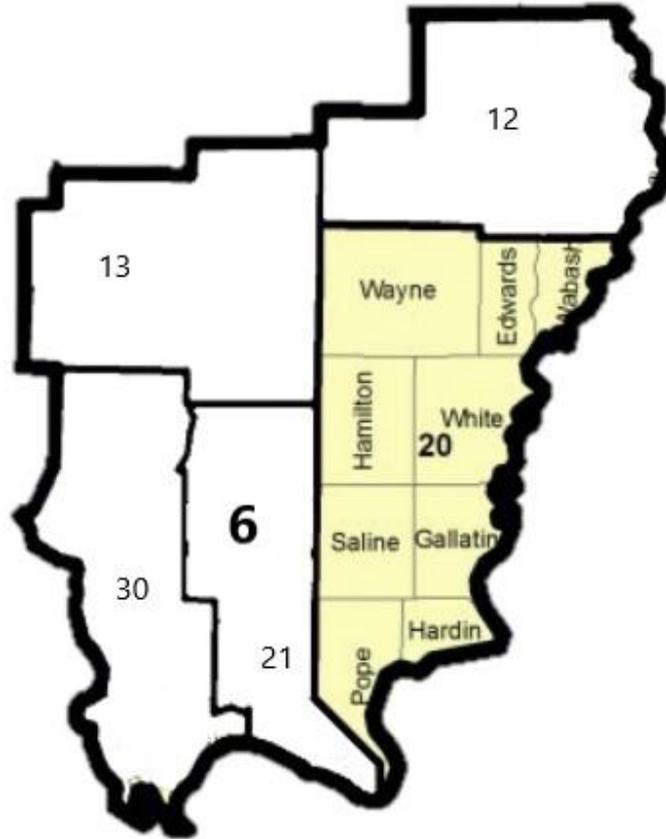
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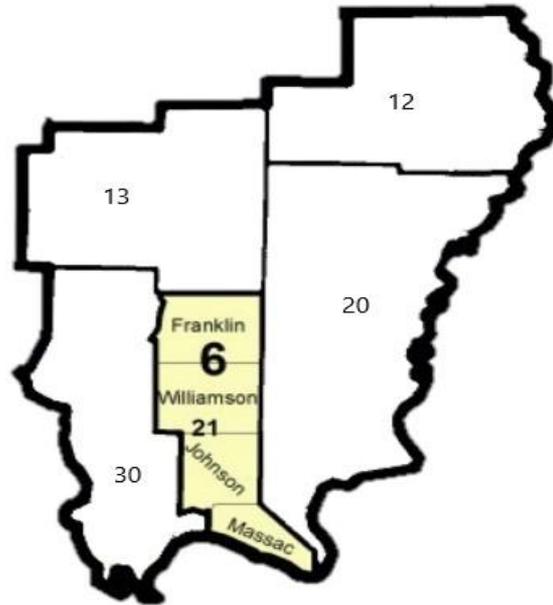
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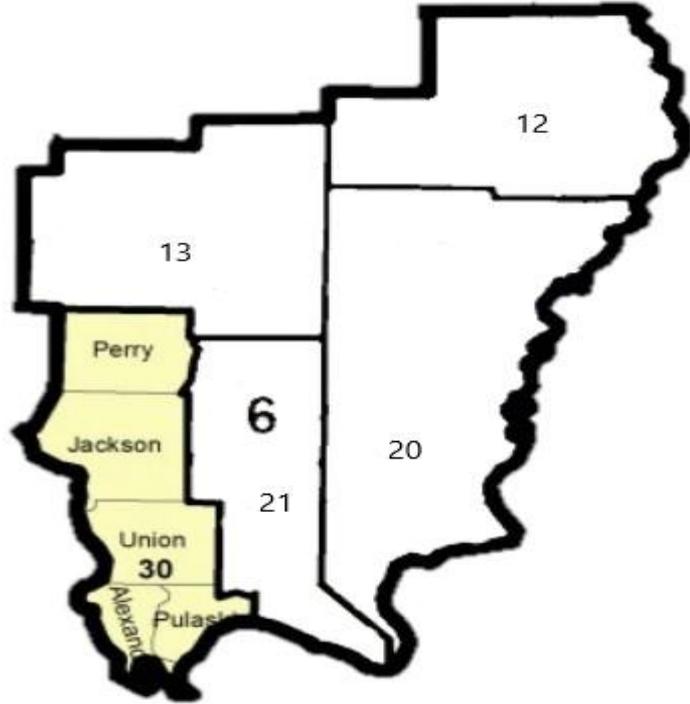
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Who Are You....



McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Main themes:

- Role of the liaison
- Identification
- School stability
- School enrollment
- Support for academic success



Impacts of Homelessness on Children and Youth

- Higher incidences of acute and chronic illnesses, depression and anxiety, chronic absences
- Homelessness in early childhood is associated with poor classroom engagement and poor social skills in early elementary school
- The achievement gap between homeless and low-income elementary students tend to persist, and may even worsen, over time
- A youth who experiences homelessness is 87 percent more likely to drop out of school



Barriers to Education for Homeless Children and Youth

- Poor health, fatigue, hunger
- Emotional trauma, depression, anxiety
- Stereotypes and lack of awareness
- Under-identification
- High mobility resulting in lack of school stability and educational continuity
- Enrollment requirements (school records, health records, proof of residence, guardianship)
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of school supplies, clothing, etc.



Role of the Homeless Liaison

- Every LEA must designate a McKinney-Vento (MKV) liaison able to carry out their legal duties.
- Ensure that:
 - Homeless children and youth are identified; enrolled in and have a full opportunity to succeed in school; receive educational services, including preschool; and are referred to healthcare, dental, and mental health services
 - Parents and guardians are informed of MKV rights and can participate in their children's education



Role of the Homeless Liaison (*continued*)

- Ensure that:
 - Public notice of educational rights is posted
 - Enrollment disputes are mediated
 - Parents, guardians, and unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) are informed of transportation services and assisted with transportation arrangements to the school of origin
 - Liaisons must *participate* in professional development as determined appropriate by the state coordinator, and *provide* MKV professional development to school personnel



Role of the Homeless Liaison (*continued*)

- Ensure that:
 - Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school and procedures are implemented to identify and remove barriers that prevent them from receiving credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed at a prior school, in accordance with state, local, and school policies.
 - LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove **barriers** to the identification, enrollment and retention of children and youth in homeless situations, including barriers due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences



Role of the Homeless Liaison (continued)

Liaisons are responsible for **data** reporting

- Liaisons must have a system for tracking homeless students throughout the year (Common form www.isbe.net)
- Identified students must be flagged in district Student Information System (SIS)
 - For the entire year, even if they become permanently housed
- Collaboration with district data staff
- Data needed during annual McKinney-Vento monitoring
- Data on homeless students are collected and submitted



Liaison Resources

- Liaison Toolkit: <https://nche.ed.gov/homeless-liaison-toolkit/>
- Training Videos: www.roe21.org
- District Monitoring form: www.roe21.org
- Common form: www.isbe.net



Homelessness Defined

The term “homeless” children and youth means:

“Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence—”

What exactly is a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence?



Fixed, Regular and Adequate

- Fixed:
 - Stationary, permanent, not subject to change
- Regular:
 - Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis
 - Consider the relative permanence
- Adequate:
 - Lawfully and reasonably sufficient
 - Sufficient for meeting the physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment

Can the student go to the **SAME PLACE** (fixed) **EVERY NIGHT** (regular) to sleep in a **SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE** (adequate)?



Sample Questions to Ask the Students or Parents for Information Gathering

The following questions are designed to assist in gathering information from families or youth to determine the extent to which their living arrangement is fixed, regular, and adequate.

Fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change

- Is this a permanent arrangement or just temporary?
- Are you looking for another place to live?
- Do you plan to move out soon?
- Why are you staying in your current place?
- Where were you living right before this place? Why did you leave?
- Where would you go if you couldn't stay where you are?
- Are you staying with friends/relatives just for a little while?
- Did you and your friends/relatives decide to move in together and share a home and expenses for the long term? Or is this a temporary situation for you?
- Could your friends/relatives ask you to leave if they wanted to?
- Are you all sharing the home equally, or are you more like guests in the home?

Regular residence is one that is used on a regular [i.e., nightly] basis

- Do you stay in the same place every night?
- Do you have a key to the place where you are living?
- Do you move around a lot?
- How long have you been at that place?
- How long do you plan to stay?
- How long did you live in your last place?

Adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments

- How many people are living in the home? How many bedrooms/bathrooms does it have?
- Are you and your children sharing a room? How many people are staying in one room?
- Are you and your children sleeping in a bedroom, or in a public area, like a dining room?
- Does the home have heat/electricity/running water?
- What condition is the home in? Does it keep out rain and wind? Is it safe? Is it warm and dry?
- Can you come and go as you please?

Eligibility

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up-70%)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for ordinary use as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans (cars, parks, bus or train stations, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, etc.).
- Children from migrant families who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances



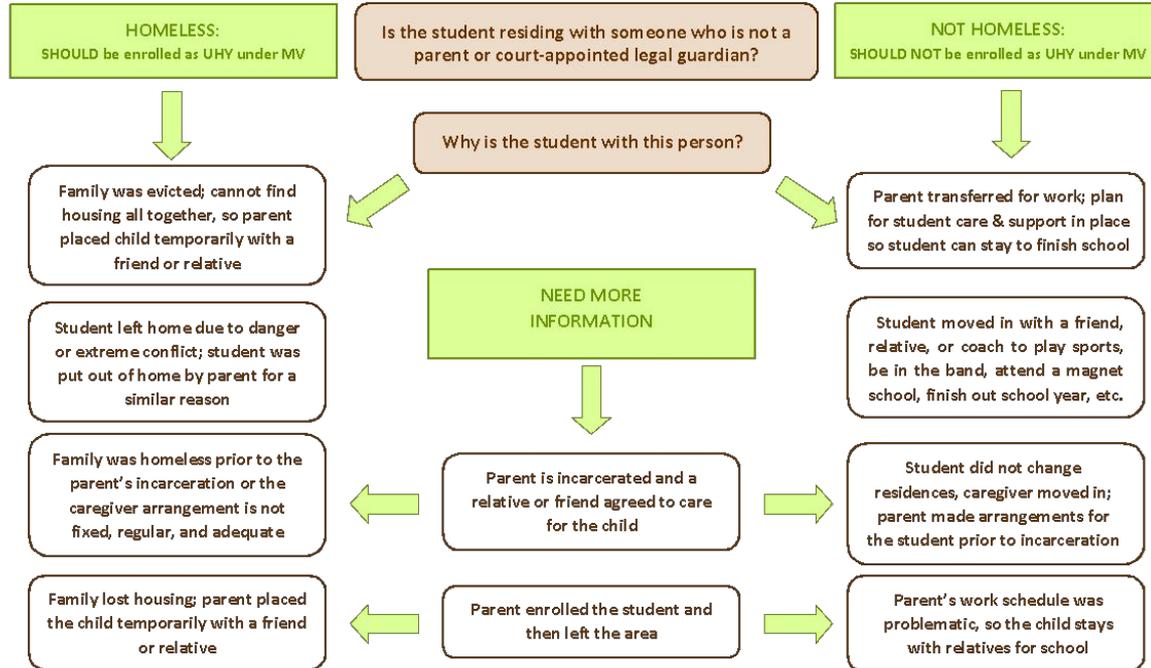
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

- Definition: Youth who meet the definition of homeless AND are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian (ie: youth living with relatives on an emergency basis, youth living with a friend or runaway)





Appendix 9.A Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility



NOTE: The information contained in this flowchart is intended to serve as a general guide. All McKinney-Vento eligibility determinations should be made on a case-by-case basis weighing the individual circumstances of each student. To be eligible for McKinney-Vento services as an unaccompanied homeless student, the student must meet the criteria of both homeless and unaccompanied.

Determining Eligibility

- Case-by-case determination
- Get as much information as possible (with sensitivity and discretion)
- Look at the McKinney-Vento definition (specific examples in the definition first, then overall definition)
- Considerations for families and youth who are staying with other people:
 - Where would you go if you could not stay here?
 - What led you to move into this situation?
- NCHIE's *Determining Eligibility* brief is available at
https://nche.ed.gov/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf



Identification Strategies

- Avoid using the word "homeless" with school personnel, families, or youth
- Provide trainings for school staff (registrars, secretaries, counselors, nurses, teachers, tutors, bus drivers, security officers, dropout prevention specialists, attendance officers, administrators, etc.) www.roe21.org
- Post outreach materials and posters in all schools and where there is a frequent influx of low-income families and youth in high-risk situations, including motels, campgrounds, libraries, health center, youth services
<https://nche.ed.gov/products.php>



Identification Strategies *(continued)*

- Coordinate with community service agencies, such as shelters, food pantries, law enforcement, legal aid, public assistance and housing agencies, mental health agencies and public health departments. Put up posters here!

Southern Illinois Resource Guide www.roe21.org

- Coordinate with youth-serving agencies, such as drop-in centers, street outreach, child welfare, juvenile courts, teen parent programs, LGBTQ youth organizations
- Make special efforts to identify preschool children, including asking about siblings of school-aged children...use enrollment forms to help with this



Identification Strategies (*continued*)

- Use enrollment forms to inquire about living situations-samples available
- Coordinate between all levels of education-elem., middle school, high school...share data from previous year when students move on to the next level.



Things to Remember...

- Schools are, first & foremost, educational entities
- Our primary responsibility & goal is to enroll & educate
- Federal law always supersedes state and local law or policy
- We can educate without understanding or agreeing with aspects of a student's home life
- Better to error on the side of the student
- There is no time limit on homelessness



Scenario

Ann, a 16-year-old youth, moved out of her parent's home to live with her boyfriend? Is she MKV?

Yes. We are required to make a decision based on the living situation...is her situation fixed, regular, adequate? The answer is No so we'd identify her as MKV.



Q & A

What do we do if a parent refuses to be identified as MKV?

You must provide appropriate services to all eligible students, even without a parent's signature. Parents may have many reasons for not signing paperwork admitting to homelessness. You need to provide services regardless, if you determine the child is experiencing homelessness. At the same time, it's the parent's right to decline services. Either way, you should count all children you identify as homeless in your data, regardless of signatures or services provided.



Now that We Know Who

- *What does the McKinney-Vento Act provide?*
 - School stability
 - Enrollment
 - Support for academic success



School Stability

Each LEA shall, according to each child's or youth's best interest:

- Continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, and until the end of the academic year in which the student becomes permanently housed; OR
- Enroll in any public school that housed students living where the student is living are eligible to attend.



School of Origin and Residence

- **School of origin:** school that child or youth attended when permanently housed or last enrolled
- **School of residence:** school in the local attendance area where the child or youth is staying



School Stability (*continued*)

- School of origin:
 - Includes a preschool
 - Includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for feeder school patterns, when the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin



School Stability (*continued*)

In determining best interest, the LEA shall:

- Presume that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest
 - Unless contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth
- Consider student-centered factors, including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety
- Give priority to the parent's/guardian's request.
- Give priority to the youth's request (in the case of unaccompanied youth)



Transportation

- LEAs **must** provide transportation to and from the school of origin, including until the end of the year when the student obtains permanent housing, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth)
 - If staying in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation to the school of origin
 - If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally



Transportation—Key Provisions

- LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students
- LEAs must eliminate barriers to the identification, enrollment and retention of students experiencing homelessness (including transportation barriers)



Transportation Strategies

- Develop close ties among local liaisons, school staff, pupil transportation staff, and shelter workers
- Use school buses (including special education and other buses)
- Develop formal or informal agreements with school districts where homeless children cross district lines
- Use public transit where feasible
- Use approved carpools, van or taxi services
- Reimburse parents and youth for gas
- Pursue interagency solutions



Scenario 1

The family consists of two students that attend School District A. The mother was forced to move out of her current residency in District A. She, along with the two children, then moved in with her mother in District B. The mother has elected to enroll her youngest child in District B. However, she wants to keep the other child in District A.

Does the McKinney-Vento Act allow for her two children to attend in different districts? Who is responsible for transportation?



Scenario 1-answered

The parent has the right to have the students attend the school of origin or the resident area school. It is ok for the parent to choose differently with each child. There are many reasons why the parent may have decided this for the children.

In this case, the older child has transportation rights to and from the school of origin with the cost split by the districts; the younger child would receive transportation comparable to the students attending that resident school.



Scenario 2

A student in a transitional living situation is taking Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) classes at the regional vocational education center. The district was providing transportation but says it no longer can do this because the class now lasts until 8:00PM.

Is the district responsible for transporting this student? If so, what other transportation options may be considered?



Scenario 2-answered

Yes, given that the CNA classes are educational components of the student's class schedule, the district continues to be responsible for transportation to the regional vocational education center. Gas cards, city bussing, cab, etc. may be considered if a school bus option is not available in the evening hours.



Q & A

Must LEAs provide transportation to and from extracurricular activities for homeless students?

To the extent that lack of transportation is a barrier to extracurricular activities, an LEA would be required to provide this student with transportation to or from extracurricular activities



Now that We Know Who

- *What* does the McKinney-Vento Act provide?
 - School stability
 - Enrollment
 - Support for academic success



School Enrollment

When remaining in the school of origin is not in the student's best interest or what the parent, guardian or youth requests:

McKinney-Vento students are entitled to *immediate* enrollment in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend; even if:

- Students do not have required documents, such as school records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, guardianship, or other documents; or
- Students have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.



Enrollment (*continued*)

The terms “enroll” and “enrollment” include attending classes and participating fully in school activities

Immediate...typically within 24-48 hours



Enrollment (*continued*)

- If a student does not have immunizations, or other health records or screenings, the liaison must immediately assist in obtaining them; the student must be enrolled during this process.
- Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school, and students must be enrolled in school while records are obtained.



Immediate Enrollment— Strategies

- Request all records from the previous school immediately, including immunization records
 - Parental signature is not required for transfer students
 - Most students have been enrolled in school before and have received immunizations
- Speak with parents and youth about the classes the student was in, previous coursework, and special needs
- Call the liaison at the previous school for information --Liaison locator www.isbe.net
- Ensure enrollment staff are aware of the law and procedures



Q & A

I have a family who wants to enroll without a birth certificate, no proof of residency, no immunization records...what do I do?

Enroll them immediately and then as the liaison it's your responsibility to work with them to get the proper paperwork, immunizations scheduled if needed, apply for birth certificates if needed, contact the previous school for school records.

-<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Homeless-Birth-Certificate-Form.pdf>

-<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeless-Liaison-Contact-Information.aspx>

-www.roe21.org



Enrollment of Unaccompanied Youth

- Immediate enrollment applies, even without parent or guardian
 - Youth self-enrollment; Caregiver forms www.isbe.net
- Liaisons must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school, give priority to the youth's wishes, and inform the youth of his or her appeal rights
- School personnel (administrators, teachers, attendance officers, enrollment personnel) must be made aware of the specific needs of unaccompanied homeless youth



Unaccompanied Youth—Strategies

- Develop clear policies for enrolling unaccompanied youth immediately, whether youth enroll themselves, liaisons do enrollment, caretakers enroll youth in their care, or another procedure is in place. Offer youth an adult and peer mentor.
- Establish systems to monitor youth's attendance and performance, and let youth know you'll be checking up on them.
- Help them participate fully in school (clubs, sports, homework help, etc.).
- Build trust! Be patient and ensure discretion and confidentiality when working with youth.



Scenario 1

A homeless family from another state comes in to register their children. When you call the previous school to get records, they say they will not forward the records due to unpaid fines.

Can the school legally hold records for unpaid fines for homeless students?

No, all fines and fees must be waived for homeless students



Scenario 2

A homeless student does not have required immunizations by the October 15th deadline.

Can you exclude this student from school?

Not right away. The liaison and school should work with the family to assist them in obtaining the immunizations. Work with the school nurse and set up the appointments ASAP.



Enrollment in Preschool

- States must ensure that homeless children have access to public preschool programs administered by the SEA or LEAs.
- Preschools are included in the school of origin definition.
- Liaisons must ensure access to Head Start, early intervention (IDEA Part C), and other preschool programs administered by the LEA.



Preschool Enrollment— Strategies

- Facilitate enrollment: include homelessness in needs assessments and priorities; put MKV families at the top of waiting lists; provide enrollment forms on-site at shelters and motels.
- Expedite records by working together: joint release forms; joint intake forms; share records within a family.
- Work with families and providers to meet school of origin and comparable transportation requirements appropriately for young children.
- Cross-train preschool, school, and service providers.



Dispute Resolution

If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection or enrollment in a school:

- The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute (including all available appeals).
- The parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth must be provided a **written** explanation of decisions made by the school, LEA or SEA, and how to appeal them.
- The parent, guardian or youth must be referred to the liaison, who must carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.
- The liaison shall ensure unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Homeless-Dispute>

-Resolution-Procedures.pdf



Now that We Know Who

- *What does the McKinney-Vento Act provide?*
 - School stability
 - Enrollment
 - Support for academic success



Support for Academic Success: National School Lunch Act

- McKinney-Vento students are automatically eligible for free school meals-don't have to complete standard paperwork
- USDA policy permits liaisons and shelter directors to obtain free school meals for students immediately by providing a list of names of students experiencing homelessness with effective dates.
- <http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/food>
- <https://nche.ed.gov/downloads/briefs/nutrition.pdf>



Support for Academic Success: Coordination with Other Laws/Programs

- LEAs must coordinate McKinney-Vento and special education services within the LEA, and with other involved LEAs
- Information about a McKinney-Vento student's living situation is a student education record subject to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)



Support for Academic Success: Title I Eligibility

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are:

- automatically eligible for Title I services, including services provided through schoolwide or targeted assistance programs
- eligible to receive Title I services for the remainder of any school year in which they become permanently housed
- eligible to receive Title I services, even if not attending a Title I school, through the Title I set-aside



Title I

When taking into consideration barriers that students experiencing homelessness often encounter, districts may provide students experiencing homelessness with services that are not ordinarily provided to other Title I permanently housed students, and are not available from other sources.



Support for Academic Success: Transitioning to Higher Education

- All McKinney-Vento youth must be able to receive assistance from counselors to advise such youths and prepare and improve their readiness for college.
-
- ACT Waiver <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/FeeWaiver.pdf>
- SAT Waiver
<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/k12-educators/advising-instruction/requesting-fee-waivers>
- Admissions Application Fee Waiver <https://www.nacacfairs.org/learn/fee-waiver/>



Higher Education Act: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Homeless Students

- Liaisons must ensure unaccompanied youth are informed of their status as independent students and may obtain assistance from the liaison to receive verification of that status.

More info and sample letters are available at:

<http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/higher-ed>
www.roe21.org

- Youth who meet the definition of “independent student” can complete the FAFSA without parental income information or signature.



The FAFSA (*continued*)

- Determination must be made by:
 - a McKinney-Vento Act school district liaison,
 - a HUD homeless assistance program director or their designee,
 - a Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program director or their designee, or
 - a financial aid administrator
- Must be determined to be unaccompanied and homeless after July 1 of the prior year.
- Youth who have been in foster care at any time after age 13 are also automatically independent.



The FAFSA (*continued*)

FAFSA Simplification Act passed into law Dec. 2020, effective 2023-24 school year:

- Homeless status does not need to be redetermined every year unless:
 - the student informs the institution that circumstances have changed
 - or
 - the institution has specific conflicting info about the student's independence and has informed the student of this info



Support for Academic Success: Credit Accrual

Credit Accrual-States and districts must implement procedures to identify and remove barriers to MKV students receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed at a prior school.

- Consult with prior school about partial work completed
- Evaluate student's mastery of partly completed courses
- Offer credit recovery, tutoring



Q & A

If we have to waive a fee for technology repairs etc, who pays for it?

District absorbs the fee

Where can I find monies that are available to assist families?

District “special funds”, community/local agencies, your ROE

How can our district get reimbursed for MKV expenses? How can we access funds?

Depends on your ROE’s policy, varies by ROE



Q & A

I have had multiple UHY (age 16-17) with limited family/friend support, limited fixed income, and no where to go...what can I do to help?

- Help them register for SNAP benefits <https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=33698>;
- So. Ill. Resource Guide for shelters, food pantries, Ministerial Alliances www.roe21.org;
- The Night's Shield is an option for housing-to see other state providers go to IDHS:
Homeless Youth Agencies and their Sites
<https://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=76383>



Q & A

Is sharing a student's homeless status with a teacher or other school district illegal?

A student's homeless status is a protected educational record. However, there is an exception under FERPA that allows sharing educational records with other school officials, including teachers, within the agency or institution whom the agency or institution has determined to have legitimate educational interests. Teachers are school officials, and in some cases, teachers would have a legitimate educational interest in the information.



Q & A

What are allowable expenses?

No food, no utilities, **currently a 3-5 night motel stay is allowed

What do we do if Administration won't follow the law?

Reach out to your ROE liaison, we can do a monitoring visit



Q & A

Can UHY who are minors seek medical treatment?

Yes, UHY ages 14-17 can seek care for primary care services (screening, counseling, immunizations, medications, and treatment for illnesses)

www.isbe.net/Documents/83-04T-MKV-cert-minor-health-form.pdf

<https://codes.findlaw.com/il/chapter-410-public-health/il-st-sect-410-210-1-5.html>

Youth ages 12 and up may receive limited mental health services without parental consent

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/hispc2/resources/Appendix7-Special%20Record%20Protection.pdf>

<https://www.medicaid.gov/chip/index.html>



Q & A

Are minors able to obtain their social security cards without a legal guardian present?

Yes. The minor can get the card without a parent. However, there are document requirements that can be difficult to fulfill without a parent. The requirements are [here](#). A school ID can prove identity, but the student will need a birth certificate or a passport, as well.



Q & A

Our school is pursuing “consequences” for a student who is tardy almost daily. The parent is refusing to speak with the truancy team, and they are all at odds with each other. How does McKinney-Vento apply?

The school is within its rights to put interventions in place to improve attendance and tardiness. The school cannot punish tardiness due to homelessness. But, if the school takes steps like providing an alarm clock, putting something enticing in place first thing in the morning to encourage on-time arrival (an activity, breakfast, etc.), making sure appropriate transportation is available, etc., and the student just never shows up on time, the school can try interventions it would use with housed students.



Resources

SchoolHouse Connection (follow them on Facebook)

<https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/>

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

<http://naehcy.org>

National Center on Homeless Education

<http://nche.ed.gov/>



Resources (continued)

McKinney-Vento full text and Policy Guidance:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/MKV-Non-Regulatory-Guidance.pdf>

Most Frequently Asked Questions

https://naehcy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2017-10-16_NAEHCY-FAQs.pdf

Illinois State Board of Education Homeless Education

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeless.aspx>



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