

Helping Families and Schools Recover in the Aftermath of Hurricane Harvey

U.S. Department of Education
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Meet Your Presenters and Panelists

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Outline

- **Context:** What should I expect once the storm has passed?
- **Support:** What educational rights and supports are available for students made homeless as a result of Hurricane Harvey?
- **Strategies:** What next steps can I take to help students, families, and schools recover?
- **Additional resources:** What additional Federal and State sources could help?
- **Q&A**



What should I expect once the storm has passed?



The Effects of a Disaster on Children



- Many children will experience **anxiety** after a disaster, manifesting in
 - Clinginess, separation anxiety, nightmares
 - Irritability, outbursts, displays of anger
 - School avoidance and/or social withdrawal
 - Difficulty concentrating or sleeping
- Parents may be consumed with daily survival and struggle to meet their children's emotional needs
- Symptoms typically decrease quickly, depending on the proximity to, severity of, and duration of the disaster

Support for Students

- **School** helps children feel a sense of stability and a return to normalcy
- Children will feel **relief** through:
 - A return to a safe and regular routine, including school
 - Comforting and nurturing interactions
 - A sense of physical safety
 - Opportunities to express their feelings and concerns
 - Flexibility when needed (i.e. with difficulty completing homework due to lack of adequate space or supplies)



The Effects of Disaster on Schools



- **Schools** may be affected by:
 - Damaged or destroyed buildings and/or other infrastructure
 - Being used as evacuation centers/shelters
 - Destruction of student records or payroll systems
 - Their students being displaced and other displaced students arriving
 - The chaos of reopening schools and returning to normalcy
 - Challenges and stressors experienced by district and school employees

Support for Schools

- **Schools** will benefit from the following after a disaster:
 - Frequent communication and support from leadership, including a clearly communicated plan and system of school operations shared among leadership, staff, parents, and students
 - Clear instructions on how to proceed in areas that are particularly pressing
 - Information on available resources (Federal, State, local), including access to funding and other resources to assist students and their families immediately
 - What else do you need to feel supported? (*participants chat their thoughts*)



Who is considered homeless
under federal education law?



The McKinney-Vento Act

- Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act:
 - Authorizes the Federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program
 - Was reauthorized by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act
 - Establishes the educational rights and supports available to students who meet the Act's definition of *homeless*
- Other Federal laws also authorize supports for McKinney-Vento students (IDEA; Child Nutrition Act; Title I, Part A of ESEA)



About the EHCY Program



- **Staff**

- Every state has a State Coordinator for Homeless Education
- Every district has a local homeless education liaison

- **Funding**

- States receive funds to reserve for conducting State-level activities and distribute to districts through a competitive subgrant process
- Title I, Part A also provides categorical eligibility for students experiencing homelessness through targeted assistance and school-wide programs, and the Title I homeless set-aside

- **Legislation**

- Much of the strength of the homeless education program stems from its legislative authority

Student Eligibility

- The McKinney-Vento Act defines a *homeless child or youth* as **children or youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including children and youth:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters, or are abandoned in hospitals



Student Eligibility

- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances
- The term *unaccompanied youth* includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian



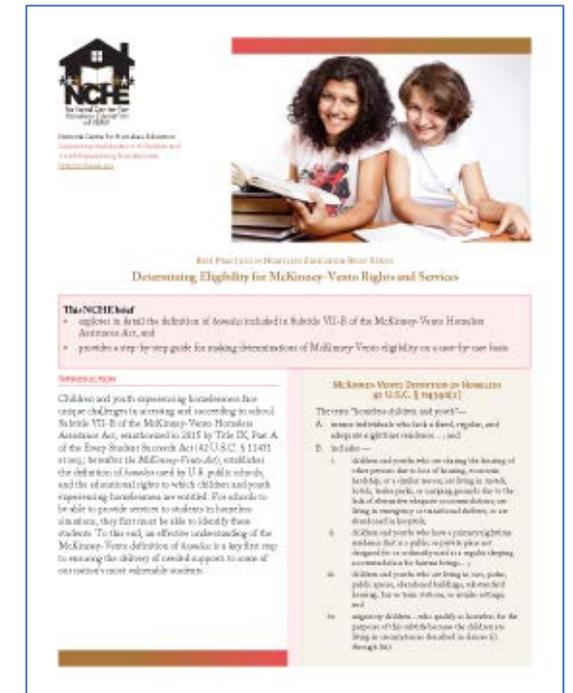
Understanding the Definition

- Shelters often are not an option in many communities (the community may have no shelters or their shelters may be full)
- Many families and youth will explore all other options before entering the shelter system or staying in an unsheltered location
- Shared housing arrangements may provide a temporary place for a family or youth in crisis to stay, but often are unsustainable and may even be unsafe



Making Determinations of Eligibility

- Consult your local liaison
- Pay close attention to the legislative wording
- Make determinations **expeditiously** on a **case-by-case basis** based on the circumstances of each student
- Some determinations will be clear; others may require additional information and a nuanced analysis
- Consider the questions in NCHE's *Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services* issue brief at <http://nche.ed.gov/briefs.php>



Unique Post-Harvey Considerations

- Consider the following **eligibility considerations** that may come into play following a disaster:
 - Is the family/youth able to return to their housing?
 - How will delayed returns to housing figure into eligibility determinations?
 - If unable to return to housing, is the family/youth able to secure other fixed, regular, and adequate housing?
- Seek to establish a **consistent protocol** for making determinations
- Consider what supports may be provided to students affected by the disaster who don't qualify as McKinney-Vento eligible; note that individual states may enact additional supports



What educational rights and supports are available for students made homeless as a result of Hurricane Harvey?



The McKinney-Vento Act

- **IMPORTANT:** The following is a high-level overview of the McKinney-Vento Act. For more detailed or case-specific information, contact
 - **Your State Coordinator for Homeless Education**
 - Visit https://nche.ed.gov/states/state_resources.php
 - **Your local homeless education liaison**
 - Texas: <http://www.theotx.org/liaison-directory/>
 - Louisiana: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/school-policy> (2017-2018 Homeless Contact Information under homeless education services)
 - Florida: <https://app1.fldoe.org/flbпсо/nclbchoice/bпсоDirectory/directory.aspx> (select Title X Homeless Contacts under Program Area)
 - Other states: Click on your state at https://nche.ed.gov/states/state_resources.php
 - **The NCHE homeless education helpline**
 - 800.308.2145 or homeless@serve.org



Rights of McKinney-Vento Students



- **Immediate enrollment**, even if lacking documentation normally required for enrollment, or having missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness
 - Districts must contact previous school districts immediately to request student records
 - Districts must help with obtaining needed immunizations, screenings, and/or immunization or other required health records

Rights of McKinney-Vento Students

- **School selection**

- **School of origin**

- School the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled
 - Includes district-administered public preschool programs and receiving schools (transitions between elementary ⇨ middle ⇨ high)

- **Local attendance area school**

- Any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend



Rights of McKinney-Vento Students

- In making best interest determinations:
 - Districts must **presume that** keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth
 - Districts must consider **student-centered factors** related to the student's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless children and youth, giving priority to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth
 - Should a **disagreement** arise about the school of attendance, the district must provide the parent, guardian, or youth with a written explanation of its determination, including information on the right to appeal



Rights of McKinney-Vento Students

- **Transportation** to/from the school of origin, upon request
 - If the student is living and attending the school of origin in the same district, that district provides transportation
 - If the student is living in one district and attending the school of origin in another, the two districts must agree on how to apportion the cost and responsibility of providing transportation, or split the cost and responsibility 50/50; *however*, some states have put into place policies that provide more specific direction regarding interdistrict transportation
- **Comparable services**
 - Transportation
 - Educational services and programs for which the student meets the eligibility criteria



Rights of McKinney-Vento Students

- **Free school meals** through a streamlined certification process, see any available state guidance
- **Title I, Part A support** (targeted assistance, schoolwide, homeless set-aside)
- **Special education services**, when necessary
- **Provision of materials** needed to enable the student to attend classes and participate fully in school (e.g. school uniforms, etc.)
- **Referrals to services**, including health care, dental, mental health, substance abuse, housing, and other appropriate services



Unique Post-Harvey Considerations

- The McKinney-Vento **immediate enrollment** will be key, as documentation may have been destroyed and/or lost
- **School selection** decisions may need to factor in unique circumstances
 - Returns to the school of origin may not be available for students whose school of origin is not operational; if the school of origin reopens, the student would have the right to return at that time
 - In cases where schools of origin are expected to reopen, districts should communicate early with parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth about the school of origin right, and provide clear information on how best interest determinations will be addressed once the school of origin reopens



Unique Post-Harvey Considerations

- Districts should consider state-specific laws or policies that provide flexibility regarding school selection beyond that provided in Federal statute
 - Ex: TX Education Code Section 25.001(b)(5), FL school choice and open enrollment statutes
- Students may need added **mental health supports** to recover from the upheaval of the disaster



What next steps can I take to
help families and schools
recover?



Strategies and Next Steps



- Identify key district and community contacts and partners; capitalize on community good will to brainstorm and implement creative solutions to pressing issues
- Establish shared protocols for
 - Conducting outreach to families and youth experiencing homelessness
 - Use a housing questionnaire in your enrollment packet; consider adding a disaster-specific question
 - Ask community agencies for assistance in referring families who may be eligible

Strategies and Next Steps

- Determining McKinney-Vento eligibility
 - Will the local liaison handle all eligibility determinations or will the liaison be assisted by trained district personnel?
 - What steps should district or community personnel follow when working with a family or youth who may be McKinney-Vento eligible?
- Identifying unmet family/youth needs
 - Needs assessment upon school enrollment/intake?
 - Triage approach?
- Connecting families and youth to needed supports
- Communicating questions and concerns to district leadership



Access to Support from FEMA



PUBLIC ASSISTANCE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES OVERVIEW



FEMA

SEPTEMBER 2017

Public Assistance Overview

FEMA provides supplemental Federal disaster grant assistance for:

- Debris removal

Note: Must be from applicant's maintained property

- Emergency protective measures

Note: Must be related to your facility and address immediate threat to life or property

- Repair, replacement, or restoration of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities and those of certain private non-profit organizations

Eligible applicants are State, Local, Tribal and Territorial governments, and certain private non-profit organizations including:

- Elementary or secondary educational schools, or
- Higher-education institutions that meet certain conditions

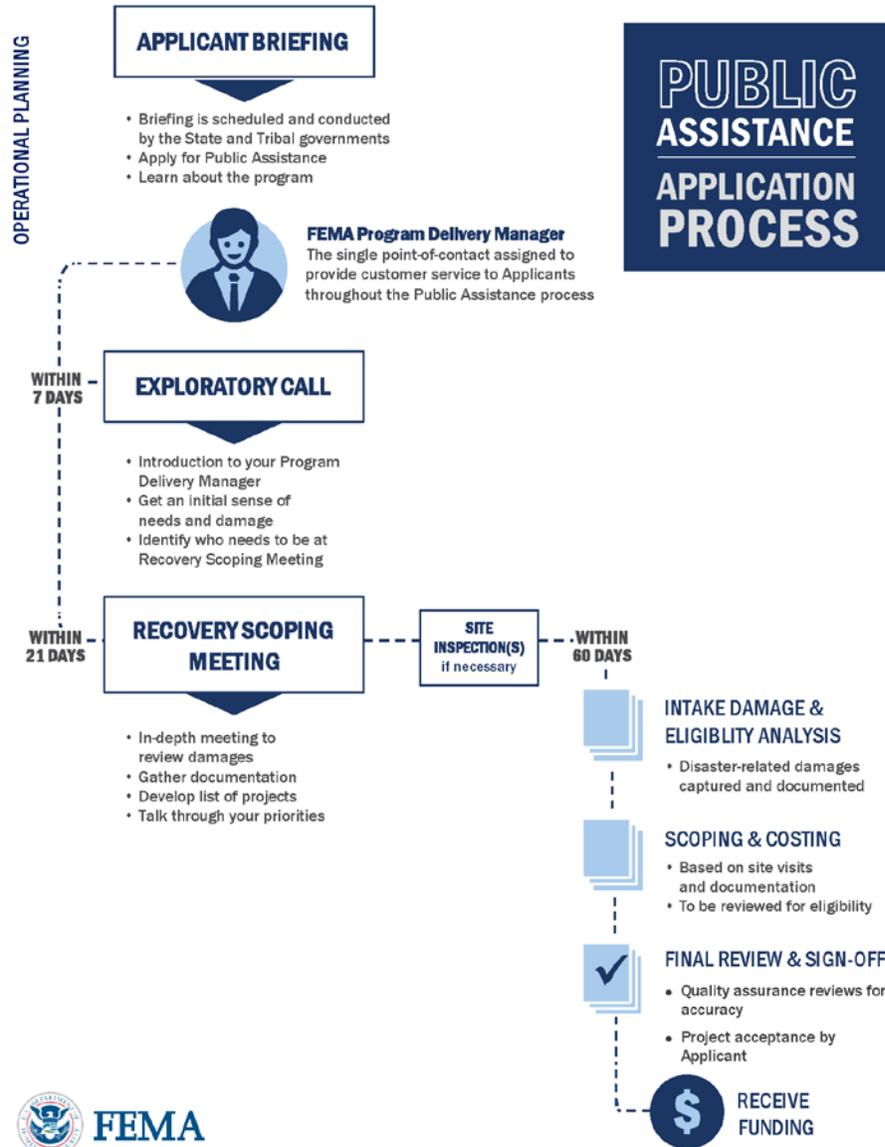
Conditions:

- Will not duplicate insurance or other grant programs
- Must comply with grant requirements including procurement, document maintenance, environmental and historic preservation, and insurance



FEMA

Public Assistance Application Process



KEY POINTS:

You drive your recovery.

The quicker you provide documentation & the more complete it is, the faster you will receive assistance.

You will have support.

Your state representative and FEMA program delivery manager are there to help you navigate the process.

Document. Document. Document.

All costs must be documented.

Additional Information:

Program Overview & Policies:

www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit

Video Overview Series:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCIjp91Ds2IaVIR1t8uXcEKg/videos



Additional Resources



NCHE Resources

- Disaster response webpage: https://nche.ed.gov/ibt/dis_prep.php
- Homeless education helpline: 800.308.2145, homeless@serve.org
- NCHE homeless education issue briefs: <https://nche.ed.gov/briefs.php>, including;
 - *Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services*
 - *Confirming Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services*
 - *Guiding the Discussion on School Selection*
 - *Transporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness*
 - *Access to Food for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students*



Texas Resources

- TEA Hurricane Harvey Resources:
http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Other_Services/Weather_and_Disaster/Hurricane_Harvey_Resources
- TEA Dealing with Disasters FAQ:
http://tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/Other_Services/Weather_and_Disaster/Dealing_with_Disasters_Frequently_Asked_Questions/
- THEO Disaster Response webpage:
http://www.theotx.org/resource_type/disaster-response/
- TX Health and Human Services Hurricane Harvey webpage:
<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/financial/disaster-assistance>



Louisiana Resources

- LA Emergency Preparedness Guides:
<http://gohsep.la.gov/PREPARE/EMERGENCY-PREPAREDNESS-GUIDE>
- LA Department of Children and Family Services Harvey Press Release:
http://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/LaNews/PublicPages/Dsp_PressRelease_Display.cfm?PressReleaseID=4764&Rec_ID=0
- LA Department of Transportation and Development Harvey Press Release:
http://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/LaNews/PublicPages/Dsp_PressRelease_Display.cfm?PressReleaseID=4757&Rec_ID=0



Florida Resources

- Governor's State of Emergency:
<http://www.flgov.com/2017/09/04/gov-scott-declares-state-of-emergency-to-prepare-florida-for-hurricane-irma/>
- Updates on State Preparedness:
<http://www.flgov.com/>
- Florida Division of Emergency Management:
<http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp>



Federal Resources

- **U.S. Department of Education**

- Hurricane Harvey Information and Resources
<https://www.ed.gov/hurricane-harvey>
- Hurricane Harvey Toll-Free Hotline: 1-844-348-4082
- Hurricane Harvey Email: HarveyRelief@ed.gov
- Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center
<http://rems.ed.gov/>
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Policy Guidance: *Disclosure of Student Information Related to Emergencies and Disasters*
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/pdf/ferpa-disaster-guidance.pdf>
- Planning to Recover From Emergencies at Districts and Schools Webinar
<http://rems.ed.gov/PlanningtoRecoverFromEmergencies.aspx>



Federal Resources

- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

- Disaster Distress Helpline: (1-800-985-5990) and SMS (text 'TalkWithUs' to 66746)
- Hurricane Harvey webpage:
<https://www.phe.gov/emergency/events/harvey2017/Pages/default.aspx>
- *Tips for Talking With and Helping Children and Youth Cope After a Disaster or Traumatic Event*
<https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//SMA12-4732/SMA12-4732.pdf>
- *Head Start Emergency Preparedness Manual: 2015 Edition:*
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/head-start-emergency-prep-manual-2015.pdf>
- *Head Start Emergency Preparedness Tip Sheets:*
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/safety-practices/article/emergency-preparedness-tip-sheets>



Federal Resources

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
 - *Caring for Children in a Disaster* webpage
<https://www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters/index.html/>
 - *Interim Immunization Recommendations for Individuals Displaced by a Disaster*
<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/disease/vaccrecdisplaced.html>
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency**
 - Hurricane Harvey webpage: <https://www.fema.gov/hurricane-harvey>
 - FEMA's Children and Disasters webpage: <http://www.fema.gov/children-and-disasters>
 - *Keeping Children Safe after Harvey* (available in English, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu, Vietnamese)
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/136310>



Federal Resources

- **Environmental Protection Agency**

- *Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings Guide:*
<https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-remediation-schools-and-commercial-buildings-guide>

- Checklist for Mold Remediation in Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings:
<https://www.epa.gov/mold/pdf-version-checklist-mold-remediation-mold-remediation-schools-and-commercial-buildings>



Thank you for joining us

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