

APPENDIX 20

QUICK-START DISASTER RESPONSE TOOL

In the event of a disaster, the following basic checklist can guide the immediate responses of local liaisons and school districts that are still in the process of establishing a robust McKinney-Vento program. This tool can also help new local liaisons quickly prioritize their efforts and implement the basics of a strong McKinney-Vento program. This tool references sections in the toolbox for further information, strategies, and resources.

1. Identify homeless children and youth within the school and community (II.C, II.B)

A. Have enrollment staff use residency information forms / McKinney-Vento enrollment forms for all enrolling students.

B. Disseminate outreach brochures and posters that describe student eligibility and provide local liaison contact information to all schools and community agencies.

2. Track students (II.H)

A. Communicate with the school district data processing department to add data elements to the district student information system, including student residency status and a disaster code.

3. Enroll students immediately (II.C, II. A)

A. Explain the basic legal requirements to enrollment and front office personnel.

B. Conduct expedited, basic information sessions for enrollment and front office personnel, including enrollment without school records, proof of address, birth certificate, immunization records, and proof of guardianship. Information sessions can take the following formats:

- i. Conference Calls
- ii. Group e-mails
- iii. Web-based trainings
- iv. Workshops/meetings

C. Work with the administration to enact emergency district policies and eventually to align all district policies with the McKinney-Vento Act.

4. Ensure proper academic placement (II.D)

5. Expedite transportation requests (II. F)

A. Identify the persons responsible for transportation in your district, explain the law to them, and request their assistance.

B. Provide information explaining the law.

C. Develop forms to facilitate and systematize the process.

6. Expedite food service requests (II. G)

A. Identify the persons responsible for processing school meal requests, explain the law to them, and request their assistance.

B. Develop forms to facilitate and systematize the process.

7. Assess and meet basic needs (III. A)

A. Have enrollment personnel and/or school counselors conduct basic needs assessments.

B. Use collaborative relationships with other school district departments and the community to meet basic needs.

8. Assess and meet mental health needs (III. A)

A. Ensure that school counselors and teachers are aware of the warning signs of post-traumatic stress disorder and related difficulties in children and youth.

B. Prepare a list of free or low-cost mental health service providers in the school district and community to disseminate to school personnel and families.

9. Connect with the community (I.A)

A. Prepare a short list of key community resources and keep it handy. Toolbox pages provide some ideas.

B. Contact those key resources and inform them of your role, basic McKinney-Vento rights, and what the school has to offer.

10. Set up a system for continuous monitoring and reporting (II.H)

A. Designate a staff member in each school for weekly updates (perhaps a school counselor or assistant principal). This person can inform the local liaison of unmet needs, challenges, and successful strategies.

B. Maintain the student information system with current information.