



McKinney-Vento 101: Understanding and Implementing the Law

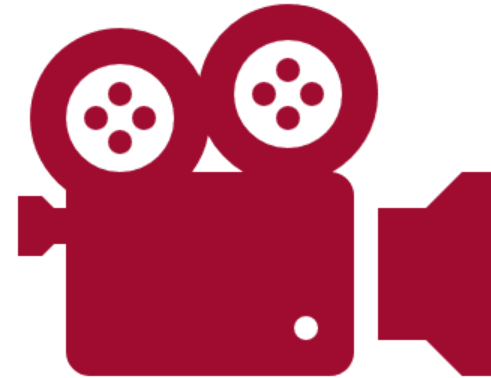
Thursday, August 24, 2025, 2:00 - 3:30 PM ET

Presented by NCHE Staff

Webinar Logistics

- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted to the NCHE website at <https://nche.ed.gov/>.
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McKinney-Vento 101: Understanding and Implementing the Law

Thursday, August 24, 2025, 2:00 - 3:30 PM ET

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About NCHE



The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) is the technical assistance (TA) center for the U.S. Department of Education's Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program.

NCHE provides training and TA to state coordinators, local liaisons, community partners, parents, students, and other stakeholders to support the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

NCHE is managed by Team Safal: Safal Partners, ICF, and Pearl Strategies.



Visit the NCHE Website at <https://nche.ed.gov/>.

Meet Your Presenters

Leading us through
today's session



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Webinar Objectives

- 1 Be able to describe the purpose and main themes of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act), including the definition of homelessness and rights of eligible students.
- 2 Learn how to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness (CYEH) using appropriate tools and strategies and ensure their immediate enrollment and access to services.
- 3 Explore best practices including collaborating with community partners.



**How familiar are you with
the McKinney-Vento Act?**

The McKinney-Vento Act

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- [Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#) (McKinney-Vento Act) is a federal law that addresses the educational needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness (CYEH). It also
 - Addresses the unique educational barriers and challenges faced by CYEH;
 - Establishes the definition of *homeless* and *unaccompanied youth* used by U.S. public schools;
 - Requires state educational agencies (SEAs) to designate a [State Coordinator for Homeless Education](#) and local educational agencies (LEAs) to designate a local homeless education liaison (hereafter local liaison); and
 - Requires SEAs and LEAs to review and revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the identification of, or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of CYEH

Educational Rights

Eligible students have the right to:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education (McKinney-Vento Act section 721(1));
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment, or having missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(C)(i)(I-II));
- Enroll in school and attend classes while the school gathers needed documents (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(C)(ii-iii));


Educational Rights

Eligible students have the right to:

- Continue attending the school of origin, or enroll in the local attendance area school if attending the school of origin is not in the best interest of the student or is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(B)(i-iv));
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin, if requested by the parent or guardian, or by the local liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth (McKinney-Vento Act sections 722(g)(1)(J)(iii) and 722(g)(4)(A)); and
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to each student's need (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(4)(B-D)).

Resource Spotlight

Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: Introduction to the Issues



MCKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES
Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: An Introduction to the Issues

This NCHÉ brief:

- explains the definition of homeless established in the [education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#);
- describes some of the challenges faced by families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness; and
- provides an overview of the educational rights and supports available to children and youth experiencing homelessness (CYEH).

THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT DEFINITION OF HOMELESS
McKinney-Vento Act section 725(2)

The term "homeless children and youth"—



A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and

B. includes —

- children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;
- children and youths 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 youths 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 for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

INTRODUCTION

The word *homeless* typically does not bring to mind images of children and youth, but the reality is that many people experiencing homelessness are under the age of 18; some of them are a part of families experiencing homelessness, while others are youth experiencing homelessness on their own. Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) is a federal law that addresses the educational needs of CYEH. This brief provides basic information about the scope of the issue of child and youth homelessness, the impact of homelessness on education, and the educational rights and supports available to CYEH. Briefs on additional homeless education topics are available on the [resources page of the NCHÉ website](#).



Core Pillars of McKinney-Vento

McKinney-Vento Definition of Homelessness

According to McKinney-Vento Act section 725(2), children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including

- Sharing the housing of other persons, *due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason*
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds *due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations*
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters, or abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children *living in the above circumstances*

Breaking Down the Definition

The Guiding Phrase:

Can the student go to the same place (fixed), every night (regular) to sleep in a safe and sufficient space (adequate)?

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

National Homeless Education Data



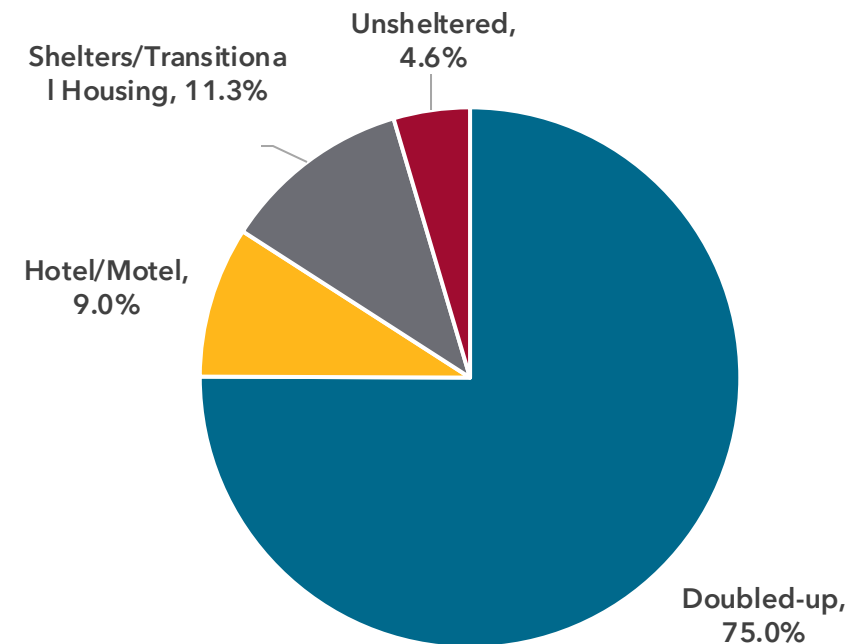
1,374,537

children and youth experiencing homelessness were enrolled in U.S. public schools during the 2022-23 school year

123,972

of those students were **unaccompanied youth**

Enrollment by Primary Nighttime Residence during 2022-23 School Year



Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations



National Center for Homeless Education
Supporting the Education of Children
and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
<http://nche.ed.gov>



McKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES

Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations

This NCHE brief:

- summarizes the key provisions of Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act related to the identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness; and
- provides an overview of implementation strategies at the state and local levels.

INTRODUCTION

The word *homeless* typically does not bring to mind images of children and youth; but in reality, more than 1 million children and youth experiencing homelessness have been identified by U.S. public schools every year since the 2010-2011 school year (National Center for Homeless Education, 2016). Further, the number of students experiencing homelessness identified by schools nearly doubled between the 2004-2005 and 2013-2014 school years (2016). At the same time, poverty rates among children increased from 16.3% in 2000 (Proctor & Dalaker, 2002, p. 1) to 19.7% in 2015 (Proctor, Semega, & Kollar, 2016, p. 12). Given that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (n.d.) estimates that roughly 12 million households spend more than 50% of their annual income on housing, it is not surprising that school districts must dedicate more attention to the identification of children and youth in homeless situations.

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless

McKINNEY-VENTO DEFINITION OF HOMELESS 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

The term "homeless children and youth"—

- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and
- B. includes —
 - i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;
 - ii. children and youths 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...;
 - iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - iv. migratory children...who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Potential Warning Signs of Homelessness



Common Signs of Homelessness

Note: While these are considered common signs, please recognize that they only offer general guidance. There is significant variability within the school-age homeless population. Individual students may differ significantly from the following general characteristics.

Lack of Educational Continuity

- Attendance at many different schools
- Missing records needed to enroll
- Inability to pay fees
- Gaps in skill development
- Mistaken assessment of abilities
- Poor organizational skills
- Poor ability to conceptualize

Poor Health/Nutrition

- Missing immunizations & medical records
- Unmet medical & dental needs
- Respiratory problems
- Skin rashes
- Chronic hunger or food hoarding
- Fatigue (may fall asleep in class)

Transportation & Attendance Problems

- Erratic attendance and tardiness
- Numerous absences
- Lack of participation in afterschool activities
- Lack of participation in field trips
- Inability to contact parents

Poor Hygiene

- Lacking shower facilities/washers, etc.
- Wearing clothes several days
- Inconsistent grooming

Lack of Personal Space After School

- Consistent lack of preparation for school
- Incomplete or missing homework

- Unable to complete special projects
- Lacking basic school supplies
- Loss of books and supplies on regular basis
- Elevated concern for safety of belongings

Social and Behavioral Concerns

- A marked change in behavior
- Poor/short attention span
- Poor self-esteem
- Extreme shyness
- Unwilling to form relationships with peers & teachers
- Difficulty socializing at recess or lunch periods
- Difficulty trusting people
- Aggression
- "Old" beyond years
- Overly protective of parents
- Clinging behavior
- Developmental delays
- Fear of abandonment
- School phobia (afraid to leave parent)
- Anxiety, especially late in the school day

Reactions or Statements by Parents, Guardians, or Students

- Exhibiting anger or embarrassment when asked about current address
- Avoidance of questions related to current address
- Statements about staying with grandparents, other relatives, friends, or in motels & campgrounds
- Statements such as:
 - "I don't remember the name of the last school."
 - "We've been moving around a lot."
 - "Our address is new; I can't remember it."
 - "We're staying with relatives until we get settled."
 - "We're going through a bad time right now."

Adapted from flyers developed by the Illinois & Pennsylvania Departments of Education. For more information on homeless education, visit the National Center for Homeless Education website at: nche.ed.gov

Unaccompanied Youth

The term “unaccompanied youth (UY)” includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

According to the McKinney-Vento Act section 726(6) for a student to be a UY, they must meet two criteria:

1 They must be **experiencing homelessness** (in a living arrangement that meets the definition of **homeless**)

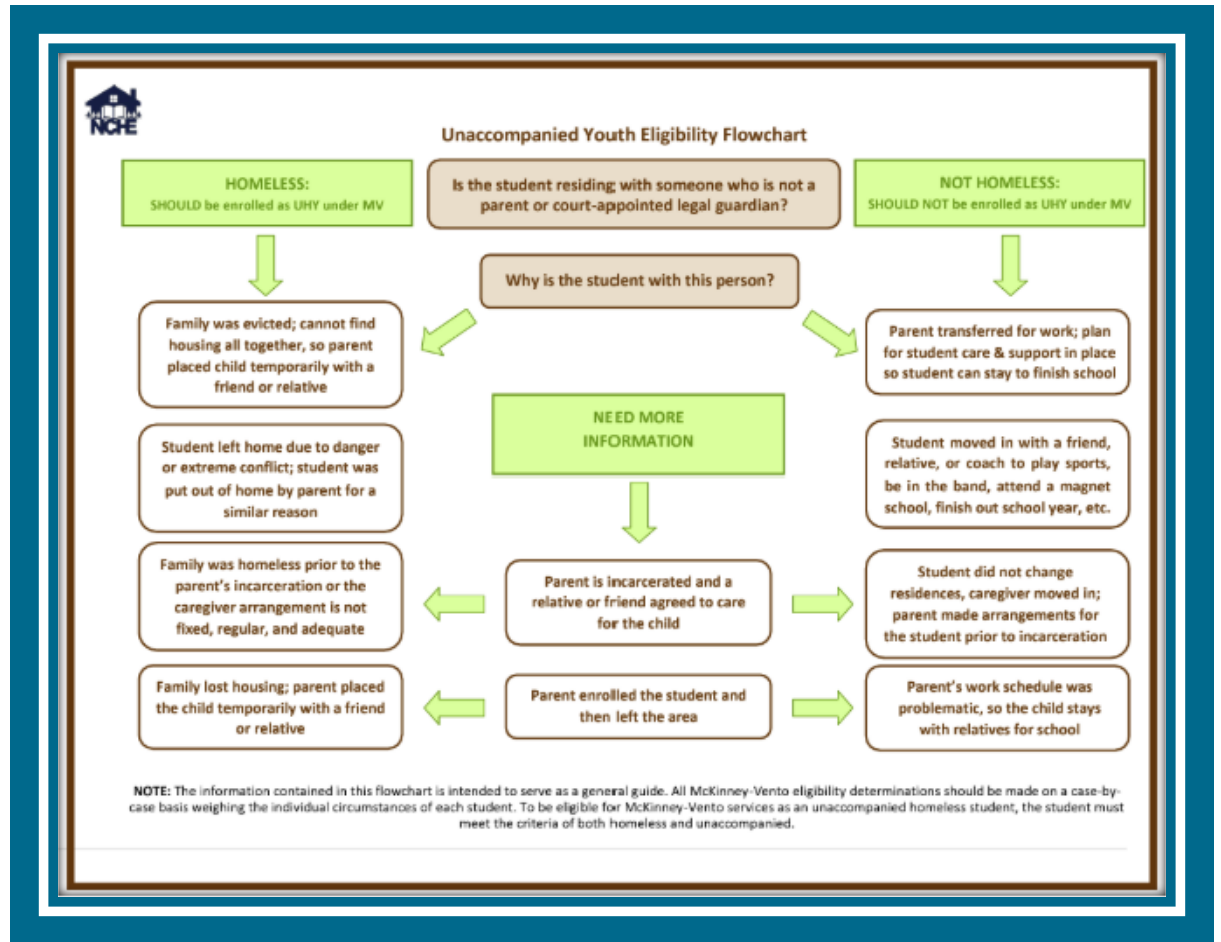
AND

2 They must be **unaccompanied** (not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian)

NCHE’s [*Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness*](#) webinar

Eligibility Flowchart for UY

This NCHE flowchart provides a simple process of determining the McKinney-Vento eligibility of students living apart from parents and/or guardians. Using common living arrangements, it guides users to make accurate determinations of a student's eligibility as an unaccompanied homeless youth.



Related resource: NCHE's [Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility Flowchart](#)

Identification

Children and youth experiencing homelessness must be identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(6)(A)(i)).

- **Raise awareness** of homeless definitions, student rights, and liaison roles across schools and the community
- **Ensure policy compliance** by working with district authorities to align procedures with McKinney-Vento requirements
- **Implement targeted outreach** through housing questionnaires, posted notices, and informational materials in strategic locations



Information for Parents

IF YOU ARE STAYING IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

- In a shelter or transitional housing
- In a motel, hotel, or campground because you don't have another safe and stable place to stay
- In a car, park, public place, abandoned building, or bus or train station
- In someone else's house because you lost your housing or are going through a hard time financially and don't have another safe and stable place to stay

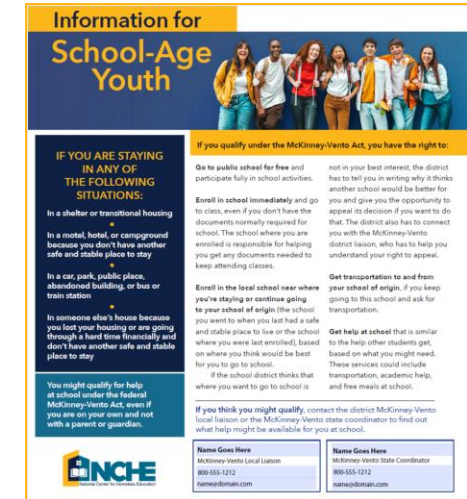
IF YOU ARE STAYING IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

- In a shelter or transitional housing
- In a motel, hotel, or campground because you don't have another safe and stable place to stay
- In a car, park, public place, abandoned building, or bus or train station
- In someone else's house because you lost your housing or are going through a hard time financially and don't have another safe and stable place to stay

Your school-age child(ren) might qualify for help at school under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

Name Goes Here
McKinney-Vento Local Liaison
800-555-1212
name@domain.com

Name Goes Here
McKinney-Vento State Coordinator
800-555-1212
name@domain.com



Information for School-Age Youth

IF YOU ARE STAYING IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

- In a shelter or transitional housing
- In a motel, hotel, or campground because you don't have another safe and stable place to stay
- In a car, park, public place, abandoned building, or bus or train station
- In someone else's house because you lost your housing or are going through a hard time financially and don't have another safe and stable place to stay

You might qualify for help at school under the federal McKinney-Vento Act, even if you are on your own and live with a parent or guardian.

Name Goes Here
McKinney-Vento Local Liaison
800-555-1212
name@domain.com

Name Goes Here
McKinney-Vento State Coordinator
800-555-1212
name@domain.com

School Selection and Stability

Students experiencing homelessness, according to each student's best interest, have the right to:

- Continue attending the same school (**the school of origin**) for the duration of homelessness in any case in which the student becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year and for the remainder of the academic year if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year (McKinney-Vento Act section 722 (g)(3)(A)(i)), or
- Enroll in any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend (**the local school**) (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(A)(ii)).

School Selection and Stability

In determining best interest related to a student's school selection, LEAs must:

- Presume that **keeping the student in the school of origin** is in the child's or youth's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(B)(i)); and
- 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 child's or youth's parent or guardian or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(B)(i)).

School Definitions

School of Origin



The school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(B)(i))

Local Attendance Area School



Any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(I)(i))

Receiving School




When the child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term "school of origin" shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(I)(ii))

School Selection and Best Interest Determination Brief

Resource Sharing

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION



School Selection and Best Interest Determination
Strategies for Educators

This National Center for Homeless Education brief

- provides an explanation for the provisions in the McKinney-Vento Act that local liaisons can implement when supporting students experiencing homelessness and their families in the school selection process;
- provides recommendations for local liaisons to help students and their families determine the school that is in their best interest to attend; and
- provides strategies for local liaisons to discuss school selection choices with young people and their families as well as to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible.

School Selection: Supporting Educational Stability

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, reauthorized in 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (42 U.S.C. § 11431) guarantees a child or youth identified as homeless the right to attend either the school of origin or the local attendance area school in the area in which they are currently residing. The decision should depend on a range of student-centered factors that focus on the best interest of the student as well as the family's preference. This brief explains the provisions in the law related to school selection, offers strategies for linking students experiencing homelessness to services in their school of origin, provides practical suggestions for determining the school that is in the best interest of a student experiencing homelessness to attend, and provides practical suggestions for discussing school selection choices with youth experiencing homelessness, their parents, and their guardians, within the framework of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Briefs on additional topics pertaining to the education and well-being of children and youth experiencing homelessness can be accessed at <https://nche.ed.gov/>.

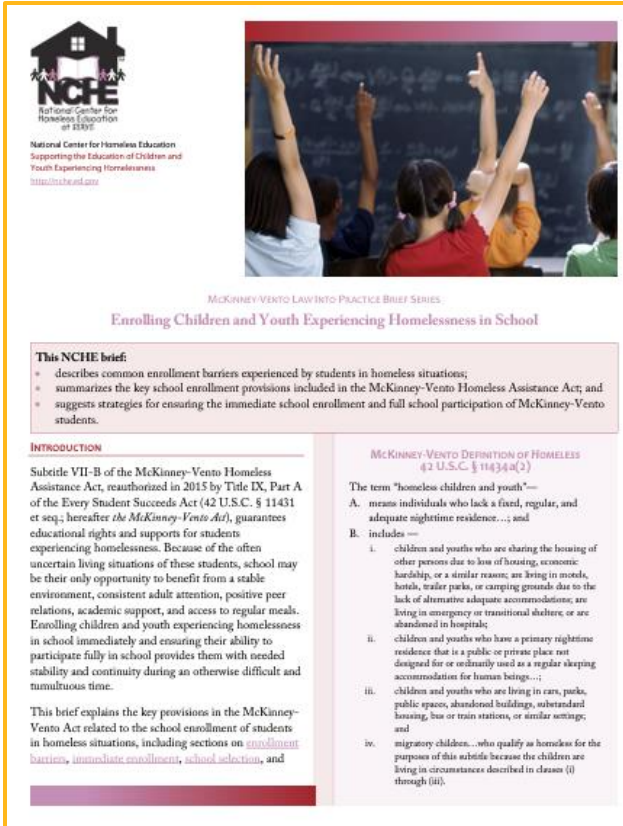
For more information and resources, visit [NCHE's School Selection and Best Interest webpage](#)

Immediate School Enrollment

CYEH have the right to enroll in school immediately

- Even if unable to produce **records normally required for enrollment**, such as previous academic records, records of immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, birth certificates, or other documentation (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(C)(i)(I)).
- Even if the child or youth has **missed application or enrollment deadlines** during any period of homelessness (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(C)(i)(II)).
- Even if the child or youth is **not under the physical custody** of a parent or guardian (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(1)(H)).

Enrolling Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in School Brief



Enrolling Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in School

This NCHE brief:

- describes common enrollment barriers experienced by students in homeless situations;
- summarizes the key school enrollment provisions included in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; and
- suggests strategies for ensuring the immediate school enrollment and full school participation of McKinney-Vento students.

INTRODUCTION

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized in 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.; hereafter *the McKinney-Vento Act*), guarantees educational rights and supports for students experiencing homelessness. Because of the often uncertain living situations of these students, school may be their only opportunity to benefit from a stable environment, consistent adult attention, positive peer relations, academic support, and access to regular meals. Enrolling children and youth experiencing homelessness in school immediately and ensuring their ability to participate fully in school provides them with needed stability and continuity during an otherwise difficult and tumultuous time.

This brief explains the key provisions in the McKinney-Vento Act related to the school enrollment of students in homeless situations, including sections on [enrollment barriers](#), [immediate enrollment](#), [school selection](#), and

McKINNEY-VENTO DEFINITION OF HOMELESS
(42 U.S.C. § 11434 a(2))

The term "homeless children and youth"—

- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and
- B. includes —
 - i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;
 - ii. children and youths 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...;
 - iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - iv. migratory children...who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

The McKinney-Vento Act section 725(1) defines enrollment as "attending classes and participating fully in school activities."

For more information, visit NCHE's [Enrolling Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness in School - National Center for Homeless Education](#) webpage


School of Origin Transportation

- CYEH have the right to **receive transportation** to and from the **school of origin** at the **request of the parent or guardian** (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the LEA homeless liaison) (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(1)(J)(iii)).


Section J of the [Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#) is all about transportation.

Transporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness - National Center for Homeless Education

Resource Sharing



National Center for Homeless Education
Supporting the Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
<http://nche.ed.gov>



MCKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES
Transporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

This NCHE brief:

- summarizes the key provisions related to the transportation of children and youth experiencing homelessness included in the McKinney-Vento Act;
- suggests transportation implementation strategies at the state and local levels; and
- recommends resources for funding transportation costs.

INTRODUCTION

Changing schools may greatly impede the academic achievement and social development of students experiencing homelessness. Research studies have demonstrated a link between high mobility due to homelessness and poor school performance (Cunningham, Harwood, & Hall, 2010; Obradovic, Long, Cutuli, Chan, Hinz, Heistad & Masten, 2009). Students who transfer to a new school often experience educational discontinuity and, as a result, lose academic credits. Moreover, the mobility experienced by these students separates them from their social network, and from teachers and school staff who know their academic strengths and weaknesses. Coupled with the distress caused by the loss of housing and the economic strain that often accompanies this, changing schools puts students in homeless situations at risk of academic failure.

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento

McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless*
42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

The term "homeless children and youth" —

A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and

B. includes —

- i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;
- ii. children and youths 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...;
- iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- iv. migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

For more information and resources, visit [NCHE's Transportation webpage](https://www.nche.ed.gov/transportation)

Comparable Services

McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(4) states CYEH have the right to be provided with services comparable to those offered to other students attending the same school, including

- **Transportation** services.
- **Educational services** for which the child or youth meets the eligibility criteria, including Title I (or similar state or local programs), educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for English learners.
- Programs in **career and technical education**.
- Programs for **gifted and talented** students.
- School **nutrition** programs.

Access to Higher Education

- Students **experiencing homelessness** have the **right to receive college preparation and readiness assistance** from school counselors, including receiving information and individualized counseling regarding
 - College readiness
 - College selection
 - The college application process
 - Financial aid
- UY have the **right to receive documentation of their status as independent students** on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid from the local liaison (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(6)(A)(x)(III))

Section Q of the Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance provides on-campus support information.

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

- CYEH have the right to **participate fully in school**, including in **extracurricular activities** (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(1)(F)(iii) and 725a(1))
- CYEH have the right to receive **transportation to and from school-administered extracurricular activities** in instances where lack of access to transportation would create a barrier to extracurricular participation
- For more information, access the NCHE's brief [*Extracurricular Activities and Transportation for Students Experiencing Homelessness*](#)

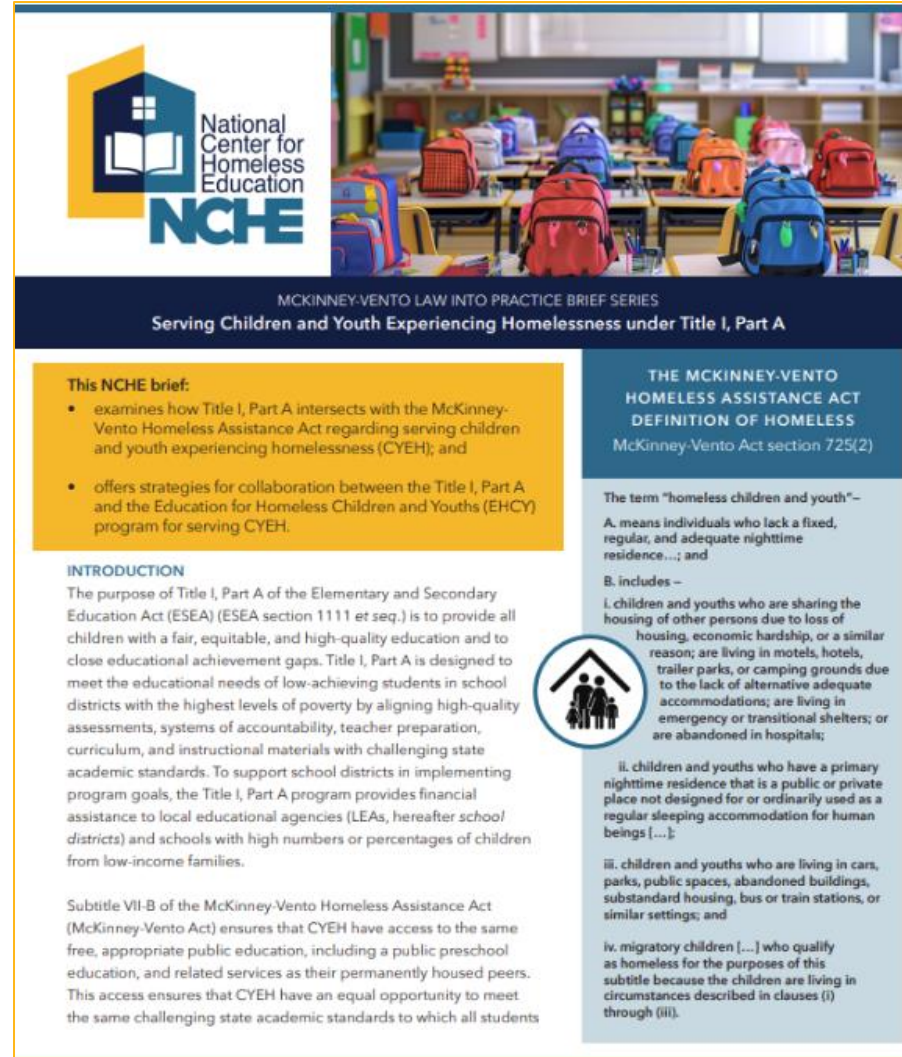
Visit the [Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#) for tips on ensuring access to extracurricular activities

Title I, Part A Services

- Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) section 1115(c)(2)(E) states that CYEH are **automatically eligible for Title I services**, whether they live in a Title I school attendance area or meet the academic standards required of other students for eligibility.
- All LEAs receiving Title I, Part A funds must include a **description in their local plans** of how the LEA's Title I, Part A program is coordinated with its EHCY program (ESEA section 1112(a)(1)(B)).
- The development of the local plan should include timely and meaningful **consultation with the local liaison** (ESEA section 1112(a)(1)(A)), and must describe the Title I, Part A services that will be provided to CYEH, including through homeless set-aside funds (ESEA section 1112(b)(6)).

Resource Spotlight

Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness Under Title I, Part A



The cover features the NCHE logo on the left and a photograph of a classroom with several colorful backpacks on desks in the center. Below the photograph is a dark blue banner with white text.

**National Center for Homeless Education
NCHE**

MCKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES
Serving Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness under Title I, Part A

This NCHE brief:

- examines how Title I, Part A intersects with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act regarding serving children and youth experiencing homelessness (CYEH); and
- offers strategies for collaboration between the Title I, Part A and the Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) program for serving CYEH.

THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT DEFINITION OF HOMELESS
McKinney-Vento Act section 725(2)

The term "homeless children and youth"—

A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and

B. includes —

i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;

ii. children and youths 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 [...];


iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

iv. migratory children [...] who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (ESEA section 1111 et seq.) is to provide all children with a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and to close educational achievement gaps. Title I, Part A is designed to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students in school districts with the highest levels of poverty by aligning high-quality assessments, systems of accountability, teacher preparation, curriculum, and instructional materials with challenging state academic standards. To support school districts in implementing program goals, the Title I, Part A program provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs, hereafter school districts) and schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families.

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) ensures that CYEH have access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, and related services as their permanently housed peers. This access ensures that CYEH have an equal opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic standards to which all students



Free School Meals


- The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 authorizes all of the federal school meal and child nutrition programs, which provide funding to ensure that low-income children have access to healthy and nutritious foods. The Act **extends categorical eligibility** for child nutrition programs to **homeless**, migrant, and runaway children.
- CYEH are considered **automatically** eligible for **free school breakfast and lunch** without the need for further application or eligibility determination (42 U.S.C. section 1758(b)(12)(A)(iv)).
- Please visit NCHE webpage for more information: [Child Nutrition – National Center for Homeless Education](#).

Dispute Resolution


- CYEH are entitled to **dispute school decisions** related to McKinney-Vento eligibility, school selection, or school enrollment (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(E))
- Disputes may be **initiated by the student's parent or guardian** or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, by the youth (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(E))
- CYEH have the right to **immediate enrollment** in the school in which enrollment is sought (whether the local school or school of origin) pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(E)(i))
- In instances of a dispute, parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth must be provided with a **written explanation of any dispute-related decisions** made by the LEA or SEA, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to appeal such decisions (McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(3)(E)(ii))

Dispute Resolution

Resource Sharing



National Center for Homeless Education
Supporting the Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness
<https://nche.ed.gov>



McKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES

Dispute Resolution

This NCHE brief:

- summarizes the key provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act related to dispute resolution, and
- provides an overview of implementation strategies at the State and local levels

INTRODUCTION

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.; hereafter *the McKinney-Vento Act*), reauthorized in 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, guarantees educational rights and supports for students experiencing homelessness. The Act requires State educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs; commonly referred to as *school districts*) to follow a dispute resolution process when parents, guardians, or unaccompanied youth disagree with schools over eligibility for services, school selection, or school enrollment under the Act [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E)]. The dispute resolution process is intended to represent each party's views for objective consideration so that disagreements can be resolved expeditiously and in keeping with McKinney-Vento provisions. This NCHE brief summarizes the key provisions related to dispute resolution included in the McKinney-Vento Act, and suggests strategies for

McKINNEY-VENTO DEFINITION OF HOMELESS
42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

The term "homeless children and youth"—

A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and

B. includes—

- i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;
- ii. children and youths 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...;
- iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- iv. migratory children...who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

For more information and resources, visit [NCHE's Dispute Resolution webpage](https://www.nche.ed.gov/dispute-resolution)



Questions or comments?

Roles and Responsibilities

[NCHE Homeless Liaison Toolkit 2020 Edition](#)

NCHE's Homeless Liaison Toolkit is a comprehensive resource that will assist both new and veteran local liaisons in carrying out their responsibilities.

Homeless Liaison Toolkit | 2020 Edition

Complete Toolkit

[Homeless Liaison Toolkit](#) (complete)

Cover Page

[Homeless Liaison Toolkit cover page](#)

Chapters

[Chapter One: Overview and History](#)

[Chapter Two: Local Educational Agency and Local Liaison Responsibilities](#)

[Chapter Three: Identification of Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)

[Chapter Four: Determining Eligibility](#)

[Chapter Five: Enrolling Homeless Students](#)

[Chapter Six: School Selection](#)

[Chapter Seven: Transportation](#)

[Chapter Eight: Dispute Resolution](#)

[Chapter Nine: Unaccompanied Homeless Youth](#)

[Chapter Ten: Working with Parents](#)

[Chapter Eleven: Collaboration](#)

[Chapter Twelve: Training and Awareness](#)

[Chapter Thirteen: Data Collection and Requirements](#)

[Chapter Fourteen: Subgrants](#)

[Chapter Fifteen: Managing the Work](#)

[Chapter Sixteen: Related Legislation](#)

Description

NCHE's Homeless Liaison Toolkit is a comprehensive resource that will assist both new and veteran local liaisons in carrying out their responsibilities. Updated to reflect the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the 2020 edition of the Homeless Liaison Toolkit includes requirements of the law, good practices, sample forms, and links to resources. Sixteen chapters on topics essential to implementing the McKinney-Vento Act synthesize in an easy-to-read format the essentials that local liaisons must know in order to carry out their responsibilities.

Appendices

[Appendix 2.A Homeless Liaison Responsibilities](#)

[Appendix 2.B Quick Guide to Important Sections of the McKinney-Vento Act](#)

[Appendix 2.C Understanding My LEA's Homeless Education Program](#)

[Appendix 3.A Sample Housing Information Form](#)

[Appendix 4.A Legal Definition of Homelessness](#)

[Appendix 6.A School Selection Checklist for Decision-Making](#)

[Appendix 7.A Transportation Memorandum of Understanding](#)

[Appendix 8.A Written Notification of Decision](#)

[Appendix 8.B Dispute Review Guide](#)

[Appendix 9.A Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility Flowchart](#)

[Appendix 10.A Suggested Guidelines for a Parent Agreement](#)

[Appendix 11.A McKinney-Vento Act Provisions and Guidance Related to Collaboration](#)

[Appendix 11.B Collaborations Required by Law](#)

[Appendix 11.C Basic Tips for Collaboration](#)

[Appendix 12.A Presenter Tips](#)

[Appendix 12.B Common Signs of Homelessness](#)

[Appendix 14.A McKinney-Vento Subgrant Authorized Activities](#)

[Appendix 15.A Template of Quadrants to Determine Priorities](#)

[Appendix 15.B Top 5 List](#)

[Appendix 15.C School Level Point of Contact Information](#)

[Appendix 15.D Needs Assessment Worksheet and Summary](#)

[Appendix 15.E Sample Barrier Tracking Form](#)

Duties of the Local Liaison

Local liaisons must ensure that

1. CYEH are **identified** by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. CYEH are **enrolled** in and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of that LEA.
3. CYEH and the families have **access to and receive educational services for which they are eligible**, including services through Head Start, early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and other preschool programs administered by the LEA.

Duties of the Local Liaison

4. CYEH and their families **receive referrals** to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services.
5. CYEH's parents and guardians are **informed** of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
6. Public **notice** of the **educational rights of CYEH is disseminated** in locations frequented by CYEH and their families (including unaccompanied homeless youth), including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens. Please note: this notice must be provided in a manner and form understandable to the students and families.

Duties of the Local Liaison

7. Enrollment **disputes are mediated** in accordance with the **McKinney-Vento Act**.
8. CYEH and their families are **fully informed of all transportation services**, including transportation to the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing school transportation.
9. School personnel providing services to CYEH **receive professional development** and other support.

Duties of the Local Liaison

10. According to the **McKinney-Vento Act section 722(g)(6)(A)(x)**, local liaisons are to ensure that **unaccompanied youth**
- Are **enrolled** in school,
 - Have opportunities to meet the same **challenging State academic standards** as the State establishes for other children and youth, and
 - Are informed and receive verification of their **independent student status** on the **FAFSA**.

Available Funding Sources

General LEA funds

**Title I, Part A funds
(general or
homeless set-
aside)**

**McKinney-Vento
subgrant funds**

**Other federal
and/or state grants**

**Public community
partners**

**Philanthropic and
private funds**

Title I Homeless Set-Aside Uses

Title I, Part A funds may be used to provide a wide variety of services to CYEH, including services that may not ordinarily be provided to other Title I students

- **Guiding Principle 1:** The services must be **reasonable and necessary** to assist CYEH to take advantage of educational opportunities
- **Guiding Principle 2:** Title I, Part A funds must be used only as a last resort when funds or services are not available from other public or private sources

Education for Homeless
Children and Youths
Program Non-
Regulatory Guidance,
Section M

Title I Homeless Set-Aside Uses

- Items of clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school's dress or uniform requirement
- Clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes
- Student fees that are necessary to participate in the general education program
- Personal school supplies such as backpacks and notebooks
- Birth certificates necessary to enroll in school
- Immunizations
- Food
- Medical and dental services
- Eyeglasses and hearing aids
- Counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that is impeding learning
- Student outreach
- Extended learning time to compensate for lack of quiet time for homework in shelters or other overcrowded living conditions
- Tutoring services, including in locations where homeless students live
- Parent outreach and involvement
- Fees for AP and IB testing
- Fees for college entrance exams
- GED testing for school-age students

Resource Spotlight

Serving Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness with Title I, Part A



**National Center for Homeless Education
NCHE**

MCKINNEY-VENTO LAW INTO PRACTICE BRIEF SERIES
Serving Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness under Title I, Part A

This NCHE brief:

- examines how Title I, Part A intersects with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act regarding serving children and youth experiencing homelessness (CYEH); and
- offers strategies for collaboration between the Title I, Part A and the Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) program for serving CYEH.

THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT DEFINITION OF HOMELESS
McKinney-Vento Act section 725(2)

The term "homeless children and youth"—

A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and

B. includes —

i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;

ii. children and youths 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 [...];

iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

iv. migratory children [...] who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (ESEA section 1111 *et seq.*) is to provide all children with a fair, equitable, and high-quality education and to close educational achievement gaps. Title I, Part A is designed to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students in school districts with the highest levels of poverty by aligning high-quality assessments, systems of accountability, teacher preparation, curriculum, and instructional materials with challenging state academic standards. To support school districts in implementing program goals, the Title I, Part A program provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs, hereafter *school districts*) and schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families.

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) ensures that CYEH have access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, and related services as their permanently housed peers. This access ensures that CYEH have an equal opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic standards to which all students



McKinney-Vento Subgrant Uses

1. Tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services
2. Expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths
3. Professional development for educators
4. Health referrals (medical, dental, mental, etc.)
5. Excess cost of school-of-origin transportation
6. Early childhood education programming not available through other sources
7. Services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain McKinney-Vento children and youth in school (especially those not enrolled in school)
8. Before- and after-school, mentoring, and summer programs

[McKinney-Vento Act section 723\(d\)](#) for
further details

McKinney-Vento Subgrant Uses

9. Fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary for school enrollment
10. Engaging McKinney-Vento parents
11. Coordination between schools and service providers
12. Specialized instructional support services and referrals
13. Addressing needs that may arise from domestic violence and parental mental health or substance abuse problems
14. The adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for non-school facilities
15. The provision of school supplies
16. Other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and participate fully in school activities

[McKinney-Vento Act section 723\(d\)](#) for
further details

Other Fiscal Resources

Community-Based Resources

- Local governments often allocate funds for youth services, housing, or education support.
- Collaborate with departments like transportation, nutrition, or special education for shared funding opportunities.

Philanthropic and Private Foundations

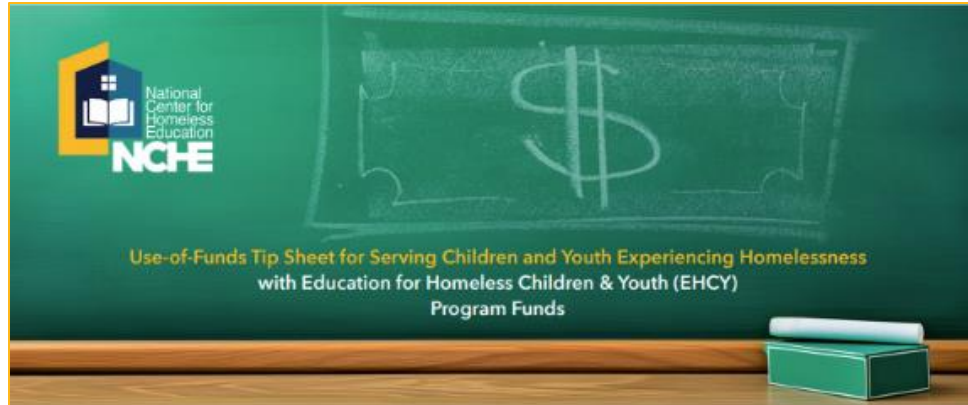
- Local community foundations offer mini-grants or targeted funding for youth and education.
- Churches and religious groups may provide direct support or funding for student needs.

Corporate and Business Partnerships

- Local businesses can sponsor school supply drives, provide in-kind donations, or fund specific student needs.

Resource Spotlight

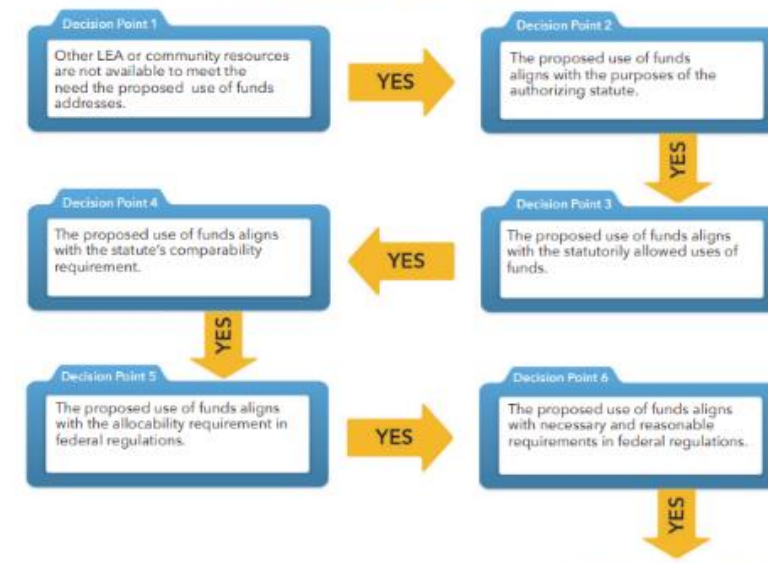
Use of Funds Tip Sheet



Use-of-Funds Tip Sheet for Serving Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness with Education for Homeless Children & Youth (EHCY) Program Funds

NCHE's **Use-of-Funds Tip Sheet** provides educational administrators in local educational agencies (LEAs) with information and guiding questions to assist them in determining how to spend subgrant funds in their Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program authorized by Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act). LEA subgrantees should consider the following six decision points in the order in which they are listed when making funding decisions. A proposed expenditure must meet the requirements in each of these decision points to be allowable.

Is the proposed use of funds allowable?



```
graph TD; DP1[Decision Point 1: Other LEA or community resources are not available to meet the need the proposed use of funds addresses.] -- YES --> DP2[Decision Point 2: The proposed use of funds aligns with the purposes of the authorizing statute.]; DP2 -- YES --> DP3[Decision Point 3: The proposed use of funds aligns with the statutorily allowed uses of funds.]; DP3 -- YES --> DP4[Decision Point 4: The proposed use of funds aligns with the statute's comparability requirement.]; DP4 -- YES --> DP5[Decision Point 5: The proposed use of funds aligns with the allocability requirement in federal regulations.]; DP5 -- YES --> DP6[Decision Point 6: The proposed use of funds aligns with necessary and reasonable requirements in federal regulations.]; DP6 -- YES --> AUF[Allowable Use of Funds];
```

Decision Point 1: Other LEA or community resources are not available to meet the need the proposed use of funds addresses.

Decision Point 2: The proposed use of funds aligns with the purposes of the authorizing statute.

Decision Point 3: The proposed use of funds aligns with the statutorily allowed uses of funds.

Decision Point 4: The proposed use of funds aligns with the statute's comparability requirement.

Decision Point 5: The proposed use of funds aligns with the allocability requirement in federal regulations.

Decision Point 6: The proposed use of funds aligns with necessary and reasonable requirements in federal regulations.

Allowable Use of Funds



Questions or comments?

Takeaways and Next Steps



**How familiar are you with
the McKinney-Vento Act,
now?**

Big Session Takeaways

- What is one key takeaway from this presentation?
- What is one concrete action you can take to begin implementing McKinney-Vento provisions in your role?

NCHE Helpline



Operational hours: 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM
ET, Monday through Friday



Phone line: +1 305-306-8495



Dedicated email address:
NCHE.helpline@safalpartners.com

Thank you! We'd love to hear from you.

- Please take ~3 min to complete our feedback form
- Link to survey:
<https://safalpartners.jotform.com/251965643174969>

As a reminder, **today's objectives** were:

1. Be able to describe the purpose and main themes of the McKinney-Vento Act, including the definition of homelessness and rights of eligible students.
2. Learn how to identify CYEH using appropriate tools, strategies, and ensure their immediate enrollment and access to services.
3. Explore best practices including collaborating with community partners.

