Flowchart for McKinney-Vento Eligibility Determinations

This flowchart is meant to aid you in making decisions about a student’s eligibility as homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.), but it may not capture every housing situation. For the complete definition of homeless, visit https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento-definition/. For more information on making determinations, see the related issue brief from the National Center for Homeless Education at https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/det_elig.pdf.

**NIGHTTIME RESIDENCE**
- Missing one or more of the following traits: fixed, regular, and adequate
- Fixed, regular, and adequate; Living in the same place each night in a safe and sufficient space

**DOUBLED UP**
- Due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Mutual decision made to live together for mutual benefit

**HOTELS, MOTELS, TRAILER PARKS, CAMPGROUNDS**
- Due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Due to family choice; e.g., when a permanently housed parent accepts a new job and the family stays temporarily in a hotel, RV, etc. until they obtain new, permanent housing

**HOMELESS**
- NOT HOMELESS
**Housing Type**

- A place not meant for people to live; e.g., porch, barn, storage unit, streets, car, etc.

- Substandard housing; e.g., unsafe, not up to code, etc. (Contact district liaison for guidance)

**Situations below pertain to unaccompanied youth, i.e., youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian**

- Family lost housing; unable to stay together in same place; placed child temporarily with someone else

- Child or youth lives apart from parent/guardian due to domestic violence or family conflict; housing is not fixed, regular, adequate

- Parent abandoned child; did not make long-term child care arrangements

- Parent has a work conflict & made arrangements for child to stay with others

- Incarcerated or hospitalized parent did not make arrangements for child’s care

- Incarcerated or hospitalized parent arranged for child to stay with caregiver
Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility Flowchart

**Is the student residing with someone who is not a parent or court-appointed legal guardian?**

**HOMELESS:**
SHOULD be enrolled as UHY under MV

**NOT HOMELESS:**
SHOULD NOT be enrolled as UHY under MV

**Why is the student with this person?**

- **Family was evicted; cannot find housing all together; parent placed child temporarily with a friend or relative**
- **Student left home due to danger or extreme conflict; student was put out of home by parent for a similar reason**
- **The family was homeless prior to the parent’s incarceration or the caregiver arrangement is not fixed, regular, and adequate**
- **The family lost housing; the parent placed the child temporarily with a friend or relative**
- **Parent transferred for work; plan for student care & support in place so student can stay to finish school**
- **Student moved in with a friend, relative, or coach to play sports, be in the band, attend a magnet school, etc.**
- **Parent is incarcerated and a relative or friend agreed to care for the child**
- **Parent enrolled the student and then left the area**
- **Student did not change residences, caregiver moved in; parent made arrangements for the student prior to incarceration**
- **Parent’s work schedule was problematic, so the child stays with relatives for school**

**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 McKinney-Vento Eligibility of Unaccompanied Youth

1. Is the student residing with someone who is not his/her parent or court appointed guardian?

   If yes, continue to the next question. If no, the student may be homeless, but is not unaccompanied.

2. Does the student meet the definition of homeless under McKinney-Vento?

   These are sample questions that can be asked to determine McKinney-Vento eligibility. Reminder: homeless is defined as “lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.”

   - Why is the student living with someone who is not his/her parent/guardian?
   - Is the student placed in this residence as a temporary plan for housing because the entire family became homeless?
   - Did the student leave home because of severe family conflict?
   - How long can the student continue living where he or she is?
   - Does the student have his or her own space/bedroom in the residence?
   - Does the student have adequate privacy?
   - Can the student come and go as needed?
   - Where would the student live if not able to live there?
   - What are the expectations of the student while staying there?

A student who is considered homeless (lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence) and unaccompanied (not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) can be registered as an unaccompanied homeless youth under the McKinney-Vento Act.

A student who is not homeless, even though residing with a person other than the parent or court-appointed guardian, does not qualify as an unaccompanied homeless youth under the McKinney-Vento Act.