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FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS  
POLICY MANUAL  
STUDENTS  
CHAPTER 5.0

5.14\*

HOMELESS STUDENTS

To expedite the school registration process to ensure continuity of the education for homeless children and homeless youth, FSUS will follow the mandates of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42U.S.C.11431 et seq.), hereafter referred to as the McKinney-Vento Act. The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently re-authorized in December 2015 by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

FSUS has designated a district's liaison for homeless children and youth who shall ensure that --

- A. homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies;
- B. homeless children and youths are enrolled in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of that local educational agency;
- C. homeless families and homeless children and youths receive referrals to health care services, dental services, mental health and substance abuse services, housing services, and other appropriate services;
- D. the parents or guardians of homeless children and youths 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;

- 5703 E. public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is  
5704 disseminated in locations frequented by parents or guardians of such  
5705 children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools,  
5706 shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens, in a manner and form  
5707 understandable to the parents and guardians of homeless children and  
5708 youths, and unaccompanied youths;
- 5709 F. enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the McKinney-Vento  
5710 Act.
- 5711 G. the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any  
5712 unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services,  
5713 including transportation to and from the school of origin, and is assisted in  
5714 accessing transportation to and from the school that is selected under  
5715 paragraph.
- 5716 H. school personnel providing services to student experiencing homelessness  
5717 receive professional development and other support; and
- 5718 I. Homeless unaccompanied youths—
- 5719 a. are enrolled in school;
- 5720 b. have opportunities to meet the same challenging State academic  
5721 standards as the State establishes for other children and youth; and
- 5722 c. are informed of their status as independent students under section 480  
5723 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vv) and that the  
5724 youths may obtain assistance from the local educational agency liaison  
5725 to receive verification of such status for purposes of the Free Application  
5726 for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 of such Act (20 U.S.C.  
5727 1090).

5728

5729 **Definitions**

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5731 Homeless Children and Youths: Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and  
5732 adequate nighttime residence and include--

- 5733 A. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to  
5734 loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels,  
5735 hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative  
5736 adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters;  
5737 or are abandoned in hospitals;
- 5738 B. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a  
5739 public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular  
5740 sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- 5741 C. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned  
5742 buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;  
5743 and
- 5744 D. migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the  
5745 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless  
5746 for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in  
5747 circumstances described above.

5748 Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: A homeless child or youth not in the physical  
5749 custody of a parent or guardian.

5750 School of Origin: The school that a child or youth attended when permanently  
5751 housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including  
5752 preschool.

5753

5754 Designated Receiving School: The next-level school that a homeless student,  
5755 whose homelessness continues into the next school year, may attend when the  
5756 next-level school is the designated school for other students in the school; for  
5757 example, elementary from prekindergarten, middle from elementary, and high  
5758 from middle.

5759

5760 Eligible School: The school of origin or school for the address where the student is  
5761 temporarily residing, or another school that students residing in that attendance  
5762 zone are eligible to attend.

5763

5764 Enroll and Enrollment: Attending classes and fully participating in school  
5765 activities.

5766

5767 **Enrollment**

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5769 FSUS enrolls students after being selected from the admissions process established  
5770 in FSUS Board Policy 5.10. Once admitted, FSUS shall remove any barriers that  
5771 affect identification and retention of homeless children and youth, including  
5772 attending classes and full participation in school activities, including before and  
5773 after school activities. FSUS shall immediately enroll the *admitted* homeless child  
5774 or youth, even if the child or youth is unable to produce records normally required  
5775 for enrollment, such as previous academic records, immunization or other health  
5776 records, birth certificates, proof of residency, proof of guardianship, or other  
5777 required documentation. *FSUS may waive any application or enrollment deadline for*  
5778 *a homeless child or youth.* Students' immediate enrollment and attendance cannot be  
5779 delayed due to lack of school uniforms or dress code requirements, outstanding  
5780 fees/fines or absences. All student records (immunization, health records,  
5781 academic records, guardianship records and evaluation for special services) shall  
5782 be held confidential, maintained in the students' records, and made available in a  
5783 timely fashion when a child or youth enters a new school. All students' records  
5784 shall not be deemed to be directory information as stated under section 444 of the  
5785 General Education Provision Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g)[s.722(g)(3)(G)].

5786

5787 The enrolling school shall immediately contact the last school attended by the  
5788 student to obtain relevant academic and other records. The child or youth should  
5789 be provided appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily  
5790 completed by homeless child or youth while attending a prior school. The school  
5791 shall also contact the District's homeless liaison.

5792

5793 Homeless children or youth may continue their education in the school of origin  
5794 for the duration of homelessness, in any case in which a family becomes homeless  
5795 between academic years or during an academic year. Keeping a child or youth in  
5796 the school of origin is presumed to be in the child's or youth's best interest except  
5797 when doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or  
5798 guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth. When  
5799 considering placement in a school other than the child's or youth's school of origin,  
5800 the District's homeless liaison will consider student-centered factors to determine  
5801 a placement that is in the student's best interest.

5802

5803 Homeless students who become permanently housed during the academic year,  
5804 may remain at their school of origin for the remainder of the academic year and  
5805 continue to receive all McKinney-Vento Act benefits.

5806

5807 The following can be used as admissible evidence for date of birth for homeless  
5808 children in the school registration process:

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5810 A. a duly attested transcript of the child's birth record filed according to law  
5811 with a public officer charged with the duty of recording births; or

5812

5813 B. a duly attested transcript of a certificate of baptism showing the date of  
5814 birth and place of baptism of the child, accompanied by an affidavit  
5815 sworn to by the parent; or

5816

5817 C. an insurance policy on the child's life which has been in force for at least  
5818 two (2) years; or

5819

5820 D. a bona fide contemporary bible record of the child's birth accompanied  
5821 by an affidavit sworn to by the parent; or

5822

5823 E. a passport or certificate of arrival in the United States showing the age of  
5824 the child; or

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5826 F. if none of these evidences can be produced, an affidavit of age sworn to  
5827 by the parent, accompanied by a certificate of age signed by a public  
5828 health officer or by a public school physician, or if neither of these shall  
5829 be available in the county, by a licensed practicing physician designated  
5830 by the School Board, which certificate shall state that the health officer or  
5831 physician has examined the child and believes that the age as stated in  
5832 the affidavit is substantially correct.

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5834 **Comparable Services**

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5836 Children and youth experiencing homelessness and who meet the relevant  
5837 eligibility criteria will have access to all available academic and extracurricular  
5838 activities. Homeless children and youth shall have equal access to the same free,  
5839 appropriate public education as provided to non-homeless children and youth,  
5840 including receiving comparable services such as transportation services;  
5841 educational services, including special education and related service; programs for  
5842 English learners; career and technical education programs; gifted programs;  
5843 school nutrition programs (free meals); Title I Part A programs; and before- and  
5844 after-school programs; offered to other students in the school.

5845

5846 Homeless children and youth shall have access to the education and other services  
5847 that such students need to ensure that such students have an opportunity to meet  
5848 the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all  
5849 students are held. Homeless and unaccompanied homeless high school youth will  
5850 receive counseling to prepare and improve their readiness for postsecondary  
5851 education or a career.

5852

5853 Homeless children and youth shall not be stigmatized or segregated or isolated on  
5854 the basis of their status as homeless.

5855

5856 Students considered to be homeless, if expelled, will be permitted to attend an  
5857 alternative school at their local school district, unless the student is expelled from  
5858 all schools.

5859

5860 Homeless preschool-aged children and their families will be provided access to  
5861 educational services for which they are eligible, including preschool programs  
5862 administered by the School District.

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#### 5864 **Transportation**

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5866 FSUS shall ensure transportation will be arranged or provided for a homeless  
5867 student or unaccompanied youth to and from the school of origin, at the written  
5868 request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student. Students who move  
5869 out of their attendance zone are eligible to continue enrollment in the school of  
5870 origin. The homeless liaison or designee shall ensure that the parent or guardian  
5871 of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of  
5872 all transportation services, including transportation to and from the school of  
5873 origin, and is assisted in accessing transportation to and from the school of origin.  
5874 The school will request transportation. The homeless liaison will work with the  
5875 parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, to determine if transportation to and  
5876 from the school of origin is in "the best interest" of the child or youth, given the  
5877 impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of the student.

5878

5879 When the child or youth's living arrangements in the area served by the local  
5880 education agency of origin terminate and the child or youth though continuing his  
5881 or her education in the school of origin, begins living in an area served by another  
5882 local educational agency, the local educational agency of origin and the local

5883 educational agency in which the child or youth is living shall agree upon a method  
5884 to apportion the responsibility and cost for providing the child or youth with  
5885 transportation to and from the school of origin. If the local educational agencies  
5886 are unable to agree upon such method the responsibility and cost shall be shared  
5887 equally.

5888

### 5889 **Dispute Resolution**

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5891 FSUS shall ensure that homeless students and their families are aware of the  
5892 student's right to remain in the school of origin and their right to dispute.

5893

5894 The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the district's  
5895 designated homeless liaison to carry out the dispute resolution process as  
5896 expeditiously as possible. When considering placement other than the child's or  
5897 youth's school of origin, the school district will consider student-centered factors  
5898 related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of  
5899 the homeless student, to determine a placement that is in the student's best interest  
5900 and will provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a written  
5901 explanation on their right to appeal the placement determination in a manner and  
5902 form understandable to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth.

5903

5904 During a school selection dispute, the child or youth will either remain enrolled in  
5905 the student's school of origin or shall be immediately enrolled in the school in  
5906 which enrollment is sought, either the school zoned for the address where the  
5907 student is residing or another school which students residing in that attendance  
5908 zone for the address are eligible to attend pending final resolution of the dispute  
5909 including all available appeals.

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5911 The parent or guardian of the child or youth or, in the case of an unaccompanied  
5912 youth, the youth shall be provided with a written explanation, in a manner



5913 understandable to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth of any decision  
5914 related to school selection or enrollment made by the school or the school district,  
5915 including the rights of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to appeal the  
5916 decision.

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5918 **Age Limit for Student Entry**

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5920 A student desiring to enroll is not eligible to register in a regular high school  
5921 program unless the student can graduate by completing a normal course load  
5922 prior to the student's 20th birthday. A principal may grant an extension of this  
5923 time if circumstances warrant such a decision.

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5929 **STATUTORY AUTHORITY:**

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5931 **LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: TITLE VII-B OF THE MCKINNEY-VENTO**  
5932 **HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT (42 U.S.C. 11431 ET SEQ.) (MCKINNEY-**  
5933 **VENTO ACT)**

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5935 **HISTORY: The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and**  
5936 **most recently re-authorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds**  
5937 **Act (ESSA).**

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**FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS**

**HISTORY:**  
**ADOPTED: 4/14/09**  
**REVISION DATES: 10/9/12; 12/11/18**  
**FORMERLY: NEW**