



**PARENT/LEARNER/FACULTY**

**MCKINNEY-VENTO HANDBOOK**

# **Central Greene School District**

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*\*Portions of this handbook were adopted from the OCPS Homeless Program and the Title I Homeless Program St. Paul, MN*

***The McKinney-Vento Program promotes school stability and academic success of children and youth experiencing homelessness.***

## **What Do We Do?**

*Services We Provide:*

- Assistance with Central Greene School District's enrollment and registration process
- Technical assistance to schools, shelters and parents regarding any issues involving children and youth experiencing homelessness
- Assistance to obtain transportation to the child's school of origin, when possible
- Assistance with school supplies, clothing and other resources needed for school
- Assistance with fees related to the full participation in school and school activities (i.e. field trips, graduation)
- Transportation assistance to promote parental involvement
- Referrals to community resources that include medical, food, housing, mental health and others
- Distribution of donated materials

## **Who Are We?**

*The Roles of the McKinney-Vento Program Staff*

The Central Greene School District's **McKinney-Vento Liaison** is responsible for ensuring the identification, school enrollment, attendance, and opportunities for academic success of learners in homeless situations. Some of these activities may be performed by the McKinney-Vento Liaison while others are accomplished by coordinating the efforts of other staff, departments and or community organizations.

The McKinney-Vento Liaison must ensure that:

Children and youth in homeless situations are identified by school personnel through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.

Learners experiencing homelessness enroll, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed, in school.

Families, children, and youth experiencing homelessness receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and Pre-K programs; and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services.

Public notice of the educational rights of learners in homeless situations is disseminated where children and youth receive services.

Parents or guardians of learners experiencing homelessness are informed of educational

and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.

Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the Enrollment Disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act.

Parents, guardians and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness are fully informed of all transportation services provided under the McKinney-Vento Act, including transportation to the school of origin, and are assisted in accessing these services.

Homeless children and youth who do not have immunization or medical records are assisted in obtaining such records.

Unaccompanied youth are assisted in selecting and enrolling in a school, after considering the youths' wishes, and provide youth with notice of their right to appeal an enrollment decision that is contrary to their wishes.

Unaccompanied youth are enrolled in school immediately pending the resolution of any dispute that may arise over school enrollment or placement.

Collaborate and coordinate with Regional Coordinators for Homeless Education and community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to children and youth in homeless situations.

School personnel, service providers, and advocates who work with families in homeless situations are educated about the duties of the local homeless education liaison.

## **Who Qualifies for Services?**

### *Eligibility and Rights of Homeless Children*

Under McKinney-Vento legislation, homeless children and youth are individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

Children and youth sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing (doubled up), economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds; are living in emergency or transitional shelters, are abandoned in hospitals or are awaiting foster care placement

Children and youth 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 youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings; and

Migratory children to include immigrant children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

Learners in Homeless Situations Have the Right to:

Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there.

Continue in the school they attended before they became homeless

Receive transportation to the school they attended before their family became homeless, if possible

Receive the same programs and services that are provided to all other children

Automatically qualify for free breakfast and lunch

Enroll in a new school without immunization, proof of residential status, school records, proof of guardianship or other documents.

Go to school with children who are not homeless

Receive information and referrals to health, mental health, dental and other services.

Have enrollment disagreements settled quickly and go to school while disagreements are settled.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### *Disputes*

Varying interpretations of homelessness, school placement and Pennsylvania residence laws have led to confusion and in certain instances have prevented homeless learners from enrolling in and attending school. Learners experiencing homelessness have the right to attend either their “school of origin” (i.e. the school that the learner attended when permanently housed or the school in which the learner was last enrolled) or, if that is not in the learner’s best interest (taking into account feasibility and the wishes of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth), the local school.

**Disputes regarding school placement decisions should be promptly resolved, and learners should be enrolled in the school requested while placement disputes are resolved.**

### *Preschool*

Preschool education is a very important element of later academic success. Children experiencing homelessness have experienced many difficulties accessing preschool opportunities. To facilitate preschool enrollment and attendance, the provisions of this policy will apply to preschools. CGSD will ensure that children experiencing homelessness receive priority enrollment in preschool programs operated by the district, including exempting homeless children from waiting lists.

**Laws Implemented** 42 U.S.C 11431-11435

## *Homeless Education Procedures*

The McKinney-Vento Act protects the rights of homeless children and youth for the **duration** of their homelessness. This means learners have access to all rights and services from school year to school year if their living circumstance meets the definition of “homeless.”

Once a Central Greene School District learner has been identified as experiencing homelessness, he/she has access to services for one academic school year. If learners experience homelessness beyond one academic school year, all services are still accessible to these learners, although there are a few steps to take. Learners must be re-identified and coded in Alma. Once that has been done, procedures provided in this manual to access transportation, free lunch and additional services must be repeated.

If a learner is identified as experiencing homelessness and becomes permanently housed **during** the school year, all rights and services remain for the full academic year. This includes the right to remain at the school or origin, request for transportation, free meals, etc. Parents may choose to enroll their child in the school of their new residence although decision making should be based on the best interest of the learner.

The **following school year** in which a learner is permanently housed, learners no longer meet the definition of “homeless” and must enroll in the school for their permanent residence.

## *Identification Procedures*

The Central Greene’s McKinney-Vento Program has implemented a **Residency Questionnaire** to assist in the identification of homeless children and youth. These questionnaires are available in all schools.

**All district schools** should maintain a file of all residency questionnaires that indicate homelessness. A copy of these questionnaires should also be sent to the Director of Special Education. Questionnaires should not be maintained in the learner’s cumulative folder.

For the most up-to-date Residency Questionnaire and procedures, please contact the Director of Special Education or the form may be accessed on the district website.

## *Enrollment and Coding Procedures*

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures the **immediate enrollment** of children and youth experiencing homelessness even if the learners lack records (academic, medical, proof of residency or other documentation). Immediate enrollment includes attending classes and fully participating in school activities. All schools are required to follow these enrollment guidelines when registering a homeless learner in school.

The Central Greene School District’s McKinney-Vento Liaison may assist with referrals and/or transportation so families may obtain needed documentation. Upon enrollment and/or identification of an existing learner experiencing homelessness, coding must take

place in the district's SIS. This allows for accurate reporting and is vital to services such as free lunch and transportation. Building secretaries should contact the Special Education/PIMS Administrative Assistant if they have questions regarding the coding process.

### *Transportation Procedures*

Working to keep learners experiencing homelessness in school is a key component of the McKinney-Vento Program. The district provides transportation to and from the school of origin, at the parent or guardian's request whenever possible. All transportation is provided through the district's transportation department.

If a learner that is experiencing homelessness requests transportation back to their school of origin, it is important to follow these steps:

1. Make sure the current address and phone number is reflected in Alma
2. Ensure the learner is coded as "Homeless".
3. Contact the Director of Special Education and the Director of Transportation.

The parent will be contacted by the McKinney-Vento Liaison and or Director of Transportation once a route is established.

## **School Homeless Coordinator**

### *Procedures and Responsibilities*

- Building guidance counselors will serve as a point of contact for the CGSD McKinney- Vento Liaison
- Serve as a point of contact for school staff and parents regarding homeless issues
- Post given materials (posters) schools and ensure brochures are available in each school's front office.
- Maintain a file/list of current learners identified experiencing homelessness available at all times. This should include all residency questionnaires that indicate homelessness.
- Design a procedure for the building's registration process that informs administration of any learner that becomes homeless during the year.
- Coordinate services for the identified homeless children and youth.
- Bring awareness of the growing population to school staff and provide education on the rights of homeless children and youth. This may be accomplished by disseminating information and materials, or through awareness activities that ensure confidentiality of learners.



## *Service Request Procedures*

The Central Greene School District's McKinney-Vento Program has funding to help meet the educational needs of homeless children and youth. If items or funding is needed to assist learners in participating fully in school or school activities, these procedures need to be followed:

1. Ensure the learner is coded appropriately as "Homeless" in the SIS.
2. The building principal shall draft a memo requesting funds.
3. Send the request to both the business office and the Director of Special Education.

Some requests may require a purchase. The building principal must receive approval and directions from the business manager or Director of Special Education prior to purchasing.

## **Tips for Counselors**

### *Immediate Assistance*

- Be familiar with the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Recognize the common characteristics of children experiencing homelessness.
- Possible signs of homelessness may include:
  1. A history of attending many schools.
  2. Erratic attendance and tardiness.
  3. Consistent lack of preparation for class.
  4. Hostility and anger or extremes in behavior (shyness, withdrawal, nervousness, depression).
  5. Needy behavior (attention-seeking) or withdrawn behavior.
  6. Poor hygiene and grooming.
  7. Inadequate or inappropriate clothing for the weather.
  8. Hunger and/or hoarding food.
  9. Resistance to parting with personal possessions (i.e., not wanting to put coat in a locker).
- If you are your school's homeless coordinator, ensure learners receive free meals without the necessity of additional paperwork.
- Work with breakfast program staff to ensure that children who arrive late to school (due to transportation route) get fed.
- Ensure that homeless learners are afforded every opportunity that non-homeless learners have.
- Assist in the waiving of fees or securing of materials necessary for activities.

- With the parent/guardian's permission, talk to the learner's teachers to inform them of the current living situation and how this may affect the learner's ability to perform academically. For example, the learner may not have access to the necessary materials to complete assignments such as a computer.
- Advocate for alternative consequences for poor behavior (e.g. don't withhold recess because it may be the only time the children who are homeless get to play and/or play outdoors).

## Tips for Teachers of Learners Experiencing Homelessness

The child's classroom may be the only place where the child can experience quiet, interact with learners his/her own age, and experience success. School is the most normal activity that most children experience collectively. For homeless children it is much more than a learning environment. It is a place of safety, personal space, friendships, and support. Oakley & King, in *Promising Practices For Educating Homeless Students* by Stronge & Reed-Victor, 2000.

- Connect with your school's homeless coordinator to understand the learner's situation.
- Maintain homework/school supply kits. The guidance counselors have backpacks and basic school supplies. If you use additional supplies, have some available for homeless learners or contact the counselors to make a special request.
- Use mentors to provide one-on-one support.
- Plan accommodations for homework. Learners may not have access to computers and other tools to complete assignments.
- For learners with attendance concerns, connect with the building counselor as the child may qualify for district-provided transportation.

## Tips for Enrollment Personnel

Building secretaries are the first contact a family may have with the Central Greene School District. Be sensitive, patient, calm and reassuring. Provide the learner and family with confidentiality; take them to a private room to address questions. Have the parent fill out a ***Residency Questionnaire*** to identify homelessness.

Learn to identify possible signs of homelessness:

- Chronic hunger or tiredness
- Erratic attendance in schools
- Attendance in multiple schools
- Poor grooming or clothing that draws attention
- Lack of records, such as birth certificate, immunization record, preschool, physical, or incomplete records.

- Parent who seems confused when asked about the last school attended.
- Statements from family such as “We’ve been having a hard time lately.” “It’s a new address, I can’t remember it.” “We move a lot and are staying with friends until we can find a place.”
- Assure families that children can enroll if they are in “housing transition” due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason. Enroll the child immediately (**even without records**).

## Tips for School Administrators

- Be familiar with common characteristics of children and youth who are homeless.
- Welcome the learner and the family and let them know that the school is a safe and secure place.
- Ensure there is a process to immediately notify the school’s Food Services department of new learner enrollment.
- Ensure that the learner has every opportunity that a non-homeless learner has for participation in after-school activities and in-school programs.
- Inform parents about their child’s educational rights.
- Encourage parents to volunteer. Discuss their interests and offer suggestions that allow them to use their expertise. Many parents will help if invited to do so.
- Support the school staff as they work with the learner.
- Contact the school district’s McKinney-Vento liaison for additional support.

## Facts about Homelessness

- Families with young children are the fastest growing homeless population.
- No single factor causes homelessness.
- Abuse, chronic neglect, the death of a parent, or economic crisis are factors commonly reported as precursors to homelessness.
- Lack of a livable wage and a shortage of affordable housing are the primary problems facing homeless families.
- The physical and emotional well-being of homeless children is compromised by homelessness and the poverty they experience.
- The primary causes of homelessness among unaccompanied youth are physical and sexual abuse by a parent or guardian, neglect, parental substance abuse, and extreme family conflict.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Does the school district find housing or rental/utility assistance for families?*

No. Liaisons assist in providing educational services for learners experiencing homelessness. However, liaisons do make referrals to community agencies providing these types of services.

*Do learners living in transitional shelters or scattered sites qualify for the program?*

Yes. The McKinney-Vento Act specifically applies to children and youth living in transitional living programs.

*If a child moves into permanent housing, do they qualify for services for the remainder of the school year?*

Yes.

*Can children experiencing homelessness get transportation if they are living outside of the Central Greene School District?*

Learners experiencing homelessness residing out of the district may request transportation back to their school of origin. Transportation will be provided if it is in the best interest of the child and feasible for the district.

*Are children experiencing homelessness exempt from providing immunization records for enrollment?*

Yes. Learners experiencing homelessness are not required to produce immunization or other medical records to get enrolled in school and continue attending. After enrollment, contact the Director of Special Education if assistance is needed to obtain documents.

*If a learner is expelled from riding the bus, can they still receive transportation if they become homeless and reside out of the district?*

In most cases, no.

*What ages does the McKinney-Vento Act cover?*

21 and under. For special education learners, federal law provides the right to access services until age 22.

*Is there any procedure in place to prevent families who have permanent housing from claiming to be homeless just to obtain McKinney-Vento services?*

Yes. School districts must enroll learners experiencing homelessness immediately. If, after enrollment, it is determined that a learner is not experiencing homelessness as defined in the law, school districts should follow the policies that are in place to address other forms of fraud.

*If a learner experiencing homelessness enrolls in a new school because the parent/ guardian was not informed of the learner's rights to remain at the school of origin, does the learner still have the right to go back to their school of origin?*

Yes. School districts are required to inform families of their rights. Not knowing one's rights does not mean not having rights.

*How does the McKinney-Vento Act define "unaccompanied youth"?*

Unaccompanied youth is defined as a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian. If their living circumstance meets the homeless definition, they have full access to services under McKinney-Vento.

*Can a school require a caregiver to get legal guardianship to enroll a learner in school?*

No. The McKinney-Vento Act requires states to address the problem of guardianship issues in school enrollment and requires school districts to enroll youth experiencing homelessness in school immediately, even if they lack typically required enrollment documents. The decision to seek legal guardianship is a serious decision that significantly affects the legal rights of the parent and caregiver well beyond the school arena. While that step will be appropriate in school cases, it will not be in others.

A full list of ***Frequently Asked Questions on the Educational Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations***, drafted by the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, may be found on the OCPS Homeless Education website.

## **LeTendre Scholarships**

Children and youth in homeless situations face numerous barriers to educational success. Deep poverty, high mobility and school requirements often make attending and succeeding in school a challenge. Despite these challenges, many learners who experience homelessness not only graduate from high school, but wish to pursue a college education.

*What is the LeTendre Education Fund?*

Established in 1998 in memory of Andre E. LeTendre, husband of Mary LeTendre, former Director of Compensatory Education for the U.S. Department of

Education, the LeTendre Education Fund provides scholarship assistance for learners who are homeless or have experienced homelessness. For additional information on deadlines, selection criteria and application forms, please visit [www.naehcy.org](http://www.naehcy.org), or contact the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) at (202)364-7392.



Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Homeless Students
Code	251

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### **Authority**

The Board recognizes the need to promptly identify homeless children and youths within the district, facilitate their immediate enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations.[1][2][3]

The Board shall ensure that homeless children and youths have equal access to the same educational programs and services provided to other district students. [1][2][3][4]

The Board, authorizes the Superintendent to waive district policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, transportation, school stability and success in school of homeless children and youths.[3]

It is the policy of the Board that no student shall be discriminated against, segregated or stigmatized based on his/her homeless status.[5][6]

### **Definitions**

Enroll or Enrollment means attending classes and participating fully in school activities. [7]

Homeless children and youths means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:[7][8]

1. Children and youths who are:
  - a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
  - b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - c. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters; or
  - d. Abandoned in hospitals.
2. 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;

3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings;
4. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; and
5. School-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations.

School of origin is the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including preschool. When the child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.[6]

Unaccompanied youth means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth who have run away from home; been abandoned or forced out of home by a parent, guardian or other caretaker; or separated from a parent or guardian for any other reason.[7]

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Board designates the Director of Special Education to serve as the district's liaison for homeless children and youths.[6]

The district's liaison shall ensure outreach and coordination with:[6]

1. Local social service agencies and other entities that provide services to homeless children and youths and families.
2. Other school districts on issues of prompt identification, transfer of records, transportation and other inter-district activities.
3. District staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.[9][ 10]
4. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The district's liaison shall ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens. Such notice shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths.[6]

The district's liaison shall provide reliable, valid and comprehensive data to the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.[6]

### **Guidelines**

#### **Enrollment/Placement**

##### *Best Interest Determination -*

In determining the best interest of a child or youth, the district shall:

1. Presume that keeping the child or youth 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 parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.[6]
2. Consider student-centered factors related to impact of mobility on achievement, education, health and safety, giving priority to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.[6]

3. If, after such consideration, the district determines that it is not in the child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the district shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be in a manner and form understandable to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth and shall include information regarding the right to appeal.[6]

#### *Placement -*

In accordance with the child's or youth's best interest, the district shall continue to enroll a homeless student in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless and through the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing. [6]

Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living or other schools. [6]

The district's liaison shall assist an unaccompanied youth in placement or enrollment decisions, giving priority to the views of tile student in determining where s/he will be enrolled. [6]

The district shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of any district decision related to school selection or placement, including the right to appeal. [6]

#### *Enrollment -*

The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if:

1. The student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. [3][11][12][13][14][15][16][17]

2. The application or enrollment deadline has passed during any period of homelessness. [6][11]

The district's liaison shall immediately contact tile school last attended by the child or youth to obtain relevant academics or other records.[6][11][12][13][14][15][16][17]

The district may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information.[6]

#### *Assignment -*

If the district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, tile district shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's assignment within the school. [6][18]

#### *Dispute Resolution -*

If a dispute arises over eligibility, enrollment or school selection: [6].

1. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the district's liaison, who shall assist in the dispute resolution process.
2. The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.
3. The district's liaison shall issue a written decision of the dispute within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the dispute.

A parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal a district's written decision or file a complaint with tile Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

#### **Education Records**

Information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and shall not be deemed to be directory information.[16][17]



### Comparable Services

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to:[1][6] 19]

1. Transportation services.[20]
2. School nutrition programs.[21]
3. Career and technical education.[22]
4. Preschool programs.
5. Educational programs for which the homeless student meets the eligibility criteria, such as:
  - a. Services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs.[23]
  - b. Programs for English Language Learners.[24]
  - c. Programs for students with disabilities.[10]
  - d. Programs for gifted and talented students.[2.5)

### Transportation

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the school district. [1][6][20]

If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or homeless students live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation. [6]

### Training

The district's liaison shall participate in professional development programs and other technical assistance activities offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program. [6]

The district's liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff. [6]

School personnel providing services to homeless children and youths, including school enrollment **staff**, shall receive professional development and support to: [6]

1. Improve identification of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths;
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation; and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

Legal

1. [24 P.S. 1306](#)
2. [22 PA Code 11.18](#)
3. [42 u.s.c. 11431 et seq.](#)
4. [34 CFR 299.19](#)
5. [42 u.s.c. 11431](#)
6. [42 u.s.c. 11432](#)
7. [42 U.S.C. 11434a](#)
8. [34 CFR 200.30](#)
  
9. Pol. 103.1
10. Pol. 113
11. Pol. 200
12. Pol. 201
13. Pol. 203
14. Pol. 204
15. Pol. 209
16. Pol. 216
17. Pol. 113...4
18. Pol. 206
19. Pol. 146
20. Pol. 810
21. Pol. 808
22. Pol. 115
23. Pol. 918
24. Pol. 138
25. Pol. 114
  
- [22 PA Code 403.1](#)
- [20 u.s.c. 1232g,](#)
- [20 u.s.c. 6301 et seq](#)
- [34 CFR Part 99](#)
- [67 Fed. Reg. 10698](#)

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan

## Central Greene School District's – Dispute Procedure

*Policy & Procedure for Resolving School Enrollment Disputes for Homeless Students Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001.*

### **Policy:**

Varying interpretations of homelessness, school placement and Pennsylvania residence law have led to confusion and in certain instances have prevented homeless learners from enrolling in and attending school. Homeless learners have the right to attend either their “school of origin” (i.e. the school that the learner attended when permanently housed or the school in which the learner was last enrolled) or, if that is not in the learner’s best interest (taking into account feasibility and the wishes of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth), the local school. Disputes regarding school placement decisions should be promptly resolved, and learners should be enrolled in the school requested while placement disputes are resolved.

### **Procedure:**

If a parent/guardian or, in the case of unaccompanied youth, a learner requests a school placement with which the district homeless liaison disagrees, the learner must be enrolled in the school of his or her choice while the dispute is resolved. The District must give the learner, in writing, an explanation of the District’s enrollment decision and information about the learner’s right to appeal the decision. The district homeless liaison will generate the required letter and statement of appeal rights.

If the learner is an unaccompanied youth, the homeless liaison contact at the school will assist him or her with this dispute resolution process.

If the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the district superintendent’s decision and wishes to appeal to the local board of education, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall inform the district liaison of the intent to appeal. The district liaison shall ensure an appointment is made for the next, regularly scheduled board meeting to address the dispute. The district liaison shall also provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with the documentation collected up to that point, including the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth’s request for dispute resolution, the district liaison’s and superintendent’s written decisions and any other additional information submitted by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall be informed of the right to appeal and the local school board of education’s written decision shall include a statement of the right to appeal to the PDE if aggrieved.

**State Education Agency Level:**

Appeals made to the PDE shall be submitted in writing, signed by the complainant, and forwarded by the school district. The following steps are to be taken:

a. Address the complaint to:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Division of Federal Programs  
333 Market Street, 5th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

b. The complaint shall include the following:

1. A description of the situation that prompted the dispute
2. The name(s) and age(s) of the homeless child or youth
3. The name(s) of the LEA and personnel involved
4. A description of the attempts that were made to resolve the issue at the local level, including copies of any documentation used in making the decisions.

c. The State Homeless Coordinator will gather needed information from statements of the parties involved and forward the information to the Executive Director of the Office of Federal Programs, along with a recommendation for resolution or for further investigation.

d. Within ten (10) business days after receiving a complaint, the Chief of the Division of Federal Programs will recommend a resolution and will inform interested parties, in writing, of the decision.

If the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision of the State in a matter concerning homeless children or youth, the party may request a review of the decision by the United States Secretary of Education in accordance with 34 CFR Part 299.11.

**Central Greene School District's  
Notice of Enrollment Decision/Appeal  
Rights**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Learner(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Homeless Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

District McKinney-Vento Liaison:

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

After reviewing your request to enroll the learner(s) named above, your enrollment request is denied for the following reasons:

Instead, the learner(s) will be enrolled at \_\_\_\_\_.

You have the right to appeal this decision by completing the second page of this notice.

Sincerely,

Director of Special Education

*Copies of School Board Policy on Homeless Education Dispute Resolution Process are attached.*



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth  
Experiencing Homelessness - Dispute Letter**

Date:

State Coordinator  
Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness  
Pennsylvania Department of Education  
333 Market Street, 5th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear State Coordinator:

My name is

My child(ren) attend school in the  
School District.

I need your help with the following problem(s). I have checked the box that fits my situation. I have included a brief statement in the space provided.

The school district would not enroll my child (children).

Child(ren) couldn't begin school because they didn't have all their medical and/or school records.

Child(ren) not permitted to stay in their current school.

Special education testing/placement service denied or unavailable.

School District will not provide transportation to stay in the current school.

Other

I have written on the reverse side what has already been done to help me. (Optional)

Please call me at (    )                      , or at (    )                      .

Or, you can write to me at: (print full address)

Thank you in advance for looking into this matter.

Parent Name

## **Basic Education Circular**

### ***Education for Homeless Youth***

**42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.**

**Date of Issue:** February 3, 2010

**Date of Review:** December 10, 2016, August 19, 2015, September 1, 2011

#### **Purpose**

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, (subsequently renamed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) to aid homeless persons. The Act defines the term "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was enacted, amending McKinney-Vento.

#### **Procedures**

This Basic Education Circular (BEC) explains the categories of children who are "homeless" and entitled to the protections of the federal law. These categories include:

- 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; 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;
- iv. "migratory children" who qualify as homeless under federal law because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii) above. The term "migratory children" means children who are (or whose parent(s) or spouse(s) are) migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain (or accompany such parents or spouses in order to obtain) temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work; and,
- v. "Unaccompanied homeless youth" including any child who is "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." This includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents or guardians, or separated from their parents for any other reason.



Communication and collaboration among education and child welfare professionals is critical to support school stability and continuity for children in out-of-home care. The law requires child welfare and local education agencies to work together to promote school stability and continuity including trying to ensure children remain in the school in which they were enrolled at the time of placement when it is in their best interest. Best practice would suggest that decisions be made collaboratively between school personnel, child welfare agencies and any other individual involved in the child's case including the child, resource parent, child advocate and attorney. It is imperative that caseworkers and school district administration and staff work together to help ensure the educational progress of all students.

Under the Pennsylvania Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan, homeless children are defined as "children living with a parent in a domestic violence shelter; runaway children and children, and youth who have been abandoned or forced out of their home by parents or other caretakers; and school-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations."

The McKinney-Vento Act states that it is the policy of Congress that state educational agencies shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths 42 U.S.C. § 11431. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (3) (A) indicates that the local educational agency (LEA) shall, according to the child's best interest: In accordance with Section 722 (g) (3) (B) (ii), the local educational agency:

- I. must presume that keeping a homeless child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest unless 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;
- II. must consider student-centered factors related to a child's or youth's best interest, 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; or
- III. if the LEA determines that it is not in a child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin, or the school requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, it must provide a written explanation of the reasons for its determination, in a manner and form that is understandable.

According to the McKinney-Vento Act the term "school of origin" means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (3) (G).

## **Homeless Students Residing in Shelters, Facilities or Institutions**

Section 1306 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code (24 P.S. §13-1306) deals with the public school admission of nonresident students living in shelters, facilities or institutions.

Implementing regulations for Section 1306 are found in Section 11.18 of the State Board of Education regulations. 22 Pa. Code § 11.18 (a) addresses the public school admission of nonresident children who live in an institution, shelter or custodial care facility:

- a. *The board of school directors of a school district in which there is located a licensed shelter, group home, maternity home, residence, facility, orphanage or other institution for the care or training of children or adolescents, shall admit to the district's public schools school age children who are living at or assigned to the facility or institution and who are residents of the district or another school district in this Commonwealth.*

22 Pa. Code § 11.18, as it applies to homeless children and youth, includes within the definition of "licensed shelter" those facilities which provide temporary shelter for a specified, limited period of time. Therefore, children in temporary shelters and children who "lack a fixed, regular, adequate night time residence" – homeless children – are entitled to free school privileges from either the school district in which their person or the shelter is located or the school district of origin.

## **Homeless Students Not Residing in a Shelter, Facility or Institution**

Homeless students may reside in hotels, motels, cars, tents or temporarily doubled-up with a resident family because of lack of housing. In determining residence and in the case of homeless children, equating "residence" and "domicile" (home) does not apply. They are presently unable to establish "homes" on a permanent basis. Homeless families are not required to prove residency regarding school enrollment. These students should be enrolled without delay, in the district where they are presently residing or continue their education in the district of prior attendance.

Children experiencing homelessness are often highly mobile and may not stay in the same school district each night or each week. This is particularly true regarding children who stay overnight in vehicles, those who stay with different family members or friends, or those who receive services from agencies, organizations or networks which facilitate overnight accommodations in multiple school districts. These children should not be forced to change school districts every time their overnight accommodations change. Rather, these children are entitled to attend school in any school district where a parent, guardian, an adult caring for them or where an unaccompanied child:

- Spends the greatest percentage of his or her time; or
- Has a substantial connection such as where he or she is
  - regularly receiving day shelter or other services involving any of the 16 McKinney-Vento Activities (42 U.S.C. 11433(d)) for individuals who are

homeless;

- conducting daily living activities; or
- staying overnight on a recurring basis.

This policy helps maintain continuity and school stability for homeless children in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act.

The child or youth shall continue to be enrolled in the school in which he or she is seeking enrollment until the complaint or appeal is fully resolved by a McKinney-Vento coordinator, state coordinator, through mediation or in court.

## **School Placement**

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that, "local educational agencies will designate an appropriate staff person, who may also be a coordinator for other federal programs, as a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth." This person has the following responsibilities:

1. Identify homeless children and youths with assistance by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. Inform parents or guardians of educational rights and related opportunities available to their children, including Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs), early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, other preschool programs administered by the LEA, and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
3. Disseminate public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where children and youths receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act (such as schools, family shelters and food pantries).
4. Mediate enrollment disputes in accordance with the Enrollment Dispute section.
5. Inform the parent or guardian of a homeless child, youth and any unaccompanied youth, of all transportation options, including to the school of origin, and assist in accessing these transportation services.
6. Liaisons are required to ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement.
7. Liaisons are required to assist children and youths who do not have documentation of immunizations or medical records to obtain necessary immunizations or necessary medical documentation.
8. Understand the guidance issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the education of homeless students and be ready to explain the BEC related to homeless education to school district staff.
9. Get to know the best resources in their community to assist families with referrals for

things such as shelter, counseling, food and transportation.

10. Distribute information on the subject of homeless students and arrange staff development workshops and presentations for school personnel, including office staff.
11. Provide standard forms and information about enrollment procedures and key school programs to each shelter in their district.
12. Become familiar with the various program materials that are available from PDE.
13. Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated in locations frequented by parents and guardians of such children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchen, in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth.
14. Liaisons must collaborate with a school district's special education program to ensure that homeless children who are in need of special education and related services are located, identified and evaluated. This is a requirement under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which mandates that highly mobile children with disabilities, including homeless children, be identified and served. Liaisons should also ensure that homeless youths who have or may have disabilities have a parent or a surrogate parent to make special education or early intervention decisions. In the case of unaccompanied homeless youth, if a student is disabled or may be disabled and the youth does not have a person authorized to make special education decisions, the following people can be temporary surrogate parents: staff in emergency shelters; transitional shelters; independent living programs; street outreach programs; and state, local educational agency or child welfare agency staff involved in the education or care of the child. This rule applies only to unaccompanied homeless youth.
15. Liaisons should also identify preschool-aged homeless children by working closely with shelters and social service agencies in their area. In addition, the liaison should inquire, at the time they are enrolling homeless children and youths in school, whether the family has preschool-aged children.
16. Liaisons can identify unaccompanied homeless youth while respecting their privacy and dignity by providing specific outreach to areas where eligible students who are out of school may congregate.
17. Liaisons ensure that unaccompanied youths are enrolled in school, and have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards as the state establishes for other children and youths, are informed of their status as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) (20 U.S.C 1087vv), and their right to receive verification of this status from the local liaison.

Appropriate school placement arrangements, based on the child's best interest, should be implemented through the cooperative efforts of the respective chief school administrators. Each case presents a unique set of circumstances and, therefore, requires an individualized response. In all cases, the LEA shall comply, to the extent feasible, with the request made by a parent or guardian regarding school selection, shall attempt to minimize disruptions and shall maintain the highest possible degree of continuity in programs for all homeless students. The

choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

Homelessness alone is not a reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. Homeless children and youths should have access to education and other services that they need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student performance standards to which all students are held.

In determining the *best interest* of the child or youth under McKinney-Vento Act, the LEA shall:

- I. Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of the academic year even if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- II. Enroll the child or youth in 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.

The selected school shall immediately enroll the child or youth in school, *even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment*, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. Section 722 (g)(3)(C) (i)(II) requires that a school selected based on a homeless child's or youth's best interest must immediately enroll such child or youth even if he or she has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.

The terms "enroll" and "enrollment" are defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities. The enrolling school must immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant records.

In order to ensure immediate enrollment, in accordance with Section 722 (g)(6)(A)(ix), the LEA liaison is required to: train school enrollment staff about the legal requirement that homeless children and youths be immediately enrolled and provided transportation; review school regulations and policies to ensure that they comply with the McKinney-Vento Act requirements; inform families and youth, in a language they can understand, of their rights; develop clear, understandable and accessible written explanations of decisions and the right to appeal; and expeditiously follow up on any special education or language assistance needs presented by a student.

## **School/Health Records**

The educating district should immediately enroll and begin to provide instruction. The receiving school district may contact the district of origin for oral confirmation that the child has been immunized. Oral confirmation between professionals is a sufficient basis to verify immunization with written confirmation to follow within 30 days. The instructional program should begin as soon as possible after the enrollment process is initiated and should not be delayed until the procedure is completed. The law specifies that information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record, and shall not be deemed to be directory information. (Section 722 (g)(3)(G)).

According to federal law, "(iii) If the child or youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the child or youth to the local educational agency liaison designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records, in accordance with subparagraph (D)" 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(c)(iii).

## **Title I**

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (reauthorized December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act) mandates that funds be reserved to serve homeless children. Title I states, "A local educational agency shall reserve such funds as are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to children in schools funded under this part to serve homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live." Under Title I, homeless children are eligible for services if they are attending schools served by an LEA.

## **Transportation**

The state and its LEAs are required to adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. If the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another LEA, though continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the LEA of origin and the LEA in which the student is living must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. This includes students enrolled in public school Head Start and Early Head Start education programs. If the LEAs cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally. Distance, time of year, options available, the effects of a transfer, etc., should all be addressed.

The provision of transportation to the school of origin is based on a students' status as homeless. The provision to remain in the school of origin during the remainder of the academic year is offered to provide for school stability. Local education agencies must continue to provide transportation to and from the school of origin to formerly homeless students who have become permanently housed for the remainder of the academic year during which the child or youth becomes permanently housed. (Section 722(g)(3)(A)(II)).

## **Fiscal Responsibilities**

Fiscal responsibilities apply to all homeless students, whether in regular or special education classes.

The educating district should apply the following criteria when determining fiscal responsibility:

- A. The procedures outlined below will be followed in cases when the education of the child is provided by the district where the homeless student is temporarily living (doubled up, motel, shelter). The procedures shall also apply in cases when the district of prior attendance, where that is not the district the child attended when permanently housed, will educate the child.
1. Homeless individuals not in facilities (shelters) or institutions, as well as homeless individuals living in hotels, motels, cars, tents, doubled-up with a resident family, shall be reported and reimbursed as resident students;
  2. For homeless individuals in temporary shelters, the educating school district will send a PDE-4605 Determination of District of Residence for Student in Facilities or Institutions in Accordance with Section 1306 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code to the presumed district of residence;
  3. If PDE-4605 is acknowledged by the resident district, the educating district will enter the child on its rolls as a nonresident student from the acknowledging resident school district. The educating district will bill the resident district for tuition and will report membership data according to PDE child accounting procedures; and
  4. If PDE-4605 is disclaimed and a school district of residence cannot be determined, the educating school district should submit a written request to PDE's School Services Office to make a determination regarding the student's "ward of the state" status.
- B. In cases when the education of the child is provided by the district of origin, including preschool children, where that is the district the child attended when permanently housed, that district will continue to educate a homeless student for the period of temporary displacement and should maintain the homeless student on its roll as a resident student. When a child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, it also includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools. (Section 722(g)(3)(I)).
- C. In cases when the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year and continues in the school of origin, which is not in the district of new residence, the educating district will continue to educate the formerly homeless student, if requested by the student's parent or guardian, until the end of the academic year and should maintain the homeless student on its roll as a non-resident student. The educating district should advise the new district of residence of its financial responsibility for this student and send a tuition bill.

### **Categorical Eligibility under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs**

Effective July 1, 2004, Section 107 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 amended Section 9(b) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make runaway, homeless and migrant children categorically eligible for free meal benefits under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The following are guidelines set out by PDE for implementation of this amendment.

1. Homeless, runaway or migratory children are automatically certified as eligible for free meal benefits and can begin receiving free meal benefits upon proper documentation for meals. Please note that documentation as runaway, homeless, or migratory can only be provided by a school district migrant education or homeless education staff.
2. School district migrant education or homeless education staff are responsible for providing proper documentation of a child's status to the food service directors in each school district.

## **Dispute Resolution Process**

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, every state must develop procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youths. 42 U.S.C §11432(g)(1)(C). The state must ensure that LEAs comply with requirements set forth in the McKinney-Vento Act including ensuring immediate enrollment, providing written notice to families concerning school selection, enrollment decisions and providing enrollment and pendency in the school of choice while a dispute is being resolved. 42 U.S.C §11432(g)(2)(A).

PDE has developed the following procedures to govern the resolution of disputes regarding enrollment, school selection, homeless status and complaints of non-compliance with legal requirements pertaining to the education for homeless children and youths:\

### **Level 1 – A dispute may be raised with a LEA.**

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child or youth involved must immediately be admitted to the school in which they are seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute 42 U.S.C.§11432(g)(3)(E)(i). PDE recommends that the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth who initiates the dispute contact the LEA liaison for individuals experiencing homelessness as soon as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. If the person initiating the dispute does not contact the LEA liaison directly, the LEA shall be responsible for contacting the LEA liaison regarding the dispute as soon as possible and referring the family or youth involved to the liaison.

The LEA liaison shall ensure that the child or youth is immediately enrolled, explain the dispute resolution process to families and help them to use it 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(E)(iii). The LEA shall issue a written disposition of the dispute within 20 business days after the LEA liaison is notified of the dispute. The disposition shall be provided to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth and shall explain the basis for the decision and advise the parent, guardian or youth of the right to appeal. 42 U.S.C.§11432(g)(3)(E)(i).

*NOTE:* The LEA should use and maintain copies of PDE's "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" form (see attached) which ensures that all LEAs (a) inform families of the basis of their decision regarding enrollment or school selection; (b) notifies families of their right to remain in their school of choice pending resolution of the dispute and (c) explains the procedures for challenging the decision of the LEA.



## **Level 2 – A complaint may be filed with a McKinney-Vento coordinator.**

If the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth is dissatisfied with the LEA's disposition of a dispute or would like to raise any issue of McKinney-Vento Act noncompliance, they may file a complaint or appeal with a McKinney-Vento site or regional coordinator or with the state coordinator. (See attached list which contains contact information for all of the McKinney-Vento coordinators in Pennsylvania). In lieu of filing an appeal with a McKinney-Vento coordinator, a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth may elect to appeal the LEA decision directly to a court of competent jurisdiction. Participation in the appeal procedure is not required prior to taking legal action.

A regional or site coordinator with whom a complaint or appeal is filed must notify the state coordinator immediately. Upon being notified, the state coordinator will review the complaint or appeal and assign it to a site or regional coordinator for disposition. The coordinator to whom the appeal is assigned may contact, interview and accept documentation from any individual or LEA involved, and shall issue a written disposition within 20 business days after the complaint or appeal has been assigned. The disposition shall be provided to the LEA and the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth involved. The child or youth shall continue to be enrolled in the school in which he or she is seeking enrollment until the complaint or appeal is resolved or until a disposition from a McKinney-Vento coordinator is received.

The state coordinator may assist in the mediation of disputes directly and may also invite those involved to have the dispute mediated at any time in the process through the Dispute Resolution Program operated by the Commonwealth Office of General Counsel (OGC). The OGC Dispute Resolution Program is a voluntary informal process through which a trained mediator assists in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.

Participating in mediation is not a waiver of the right to file a lawsuit nor is participation in mediation required prior to taking legal action.

*NOTE:* The parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth may file a complaint with the McKinney-Vento site, regional or state coordinator on the attached complaint form. However, the use of the attached form is not mandatory. Any dispute raised by a homeless family or youth concerning school enrollment or any other right under the McKinney-Vento Act whether received via telephone, letter or any mode of communication shall be treated as a complaint.

## **References**

### **Purdon's Statutes**

[24 P.S. § 13-1301](#)

[24 P.S. § 13-1302](#)

[24 P.S. § 13-1306](#)

### **State Board of Education Regulations**

[22 Pa. Code § 11.18](#)

### **Federal Regulations**

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

**US Code**

42 U.S.C. §§11431-11435 (including section 722)

20 U.S.C 1087vv

**Other**

Pennsylvania Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan (PDF)

U.S. Dept. of Education Guidelines – Homeless Children and Youth Programs

OGC Dispute Resolution Program

Determination of District of Residence for Students in Facilities or Institutions (PDE-4605) (PDF)

**Attachments**

Procedural Safeguards Notice of Denial of Enrollment (PDF)

Enrollment Complaint to PA Department of Education (Word)

Pennsylvania McKinney-Vento Coordinators (State, Regional & Site)

## **Bureau/Office Contacts**

### **Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program**

Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction  
Pennsylvania Department of Education  
333 Market Street, 3rd Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Phone: 717-783-6466

### **Child Accounting questions should be referred to:**

Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management  
Division of Subsidy Data and Administration  
Pennsylvania Department of Education  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Phone: 717-787-5423

### **Transportation questions should be referred to:**

Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management  
Division of Subsidy Data and Administration  
Pennsylvania Department of Education  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Phone: 717-787-3195

### **For additional information, please contact:**

Storm Y. Camara | Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program  
333 Market Street, 3rd Floor | Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Phone: 717.772.2066  
[scamara@pa.gov](mailto:scamara@pa.gov)

Central Greene School District  
STUDENT RESIDENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parent or Guardian,



Your responses to these questions will help staff determine what residency documents are necessary for enrollment of your child(ren.) Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Person completing form: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

2. In what type of setting is the student living now?

Check one box below –

SECTION A	SECTION B
<p><input type="checkbox"/> In an emergency or transitional shelter</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In a motel, hotel, campsites, or cars due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In a car, park, public spaces, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other places not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodations for human beings</p> <p>CONTINUE to Question 3  if you checked any box in SECTION A</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> None of the choices in Section A apply.</p> <div data-bbox="1023 1018 1193 1165" style="text-align: center;"><p><b>STOP</b></p></div> <p>If you checked this section, you do not need to complete the remainder of this form. Submit the form to school personnel now.</p>

3. Contact number for person completing the form: \_\_\_\_\_

Address where student is now living: \_\_\_\_\_

4. The student lives with:

Check all that apply

Parent(s) or legal guardian

Relative, friend(s), or other adult(s)

Alone

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. School student attended last : \_\_\_\_\_

Address of school: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number of school: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person at school (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Does the student have an IEP or a Chapter 15/504 agreement?

NO

YES. Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_