



BACK-TO-SCHOOL:
Resources for Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness

September 10, 2025
Welcome!

Our Time Today



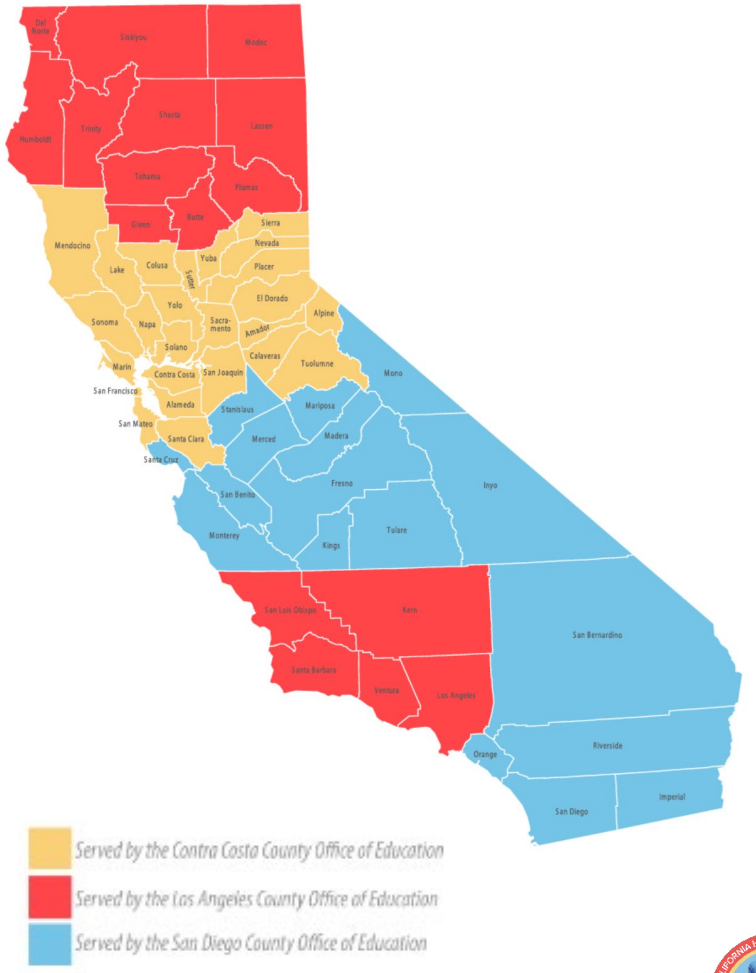
- Review the McKinney-Vento Act requirements for student Identification and immediate enrollment
- Learn about the Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC)
- Explore the HETAC website through a guided virtual tour
- Learn about the range of technical assistance and resources available from HETAC
- Access tools and materials connected to National Homeless Youth Awareness Month (NHYAM)

About the HETAC

The California Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC)

- is funded by the California Department of Education to serve as the state's homeless education technical assistance center
- is operated jointly by the Contra Costa, Los Angeles, and San Diego County Offices of Education

Learn more about the HETAC that serves your county on the HETAC contact us webpage



Meet the HETAC Team!





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Back-to-School with the McKinney-Vento Act

Welcome to the 2025-2026 School Year!

Back-to-school is a key time to

- ensure that students experiencing homelessness are identified;
- ensure that students experiencing homelessness are enrolled in school immediately;
- ensure that students and families experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied youth, are aware of the school- and community-based resources available to support the student's education and address their basic needs; and
- equip school staff with the knowledge and resources they need to support students experiencing homelessness well.



McKinney-Vento Act Basics



Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- was reauthorized by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act;
- establishes the **definitions of *homeless* and *unaccompanied youth*** used by U.S. public schools; and
- establishes the **educational rights** to which children and youth experiencing homelessness are entitled, including removing barriers to school enrollment, attendance, and success

McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless

Children and youth who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including

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

Educational Rights and Supports

Educational Rights Under the McKinney-Vento Act

- Immediate school enrollment, even if lacking required documentation
- School selection (school of origin or local school, as statutorily defined)
- School of origin transportation
- College preparation and readiness assistance
- Comparable services
- Title I, Part A services
- Free school meals
- Removal of barriers

Visit the website of the California HETAC or the National Center for Homeless Education for more information



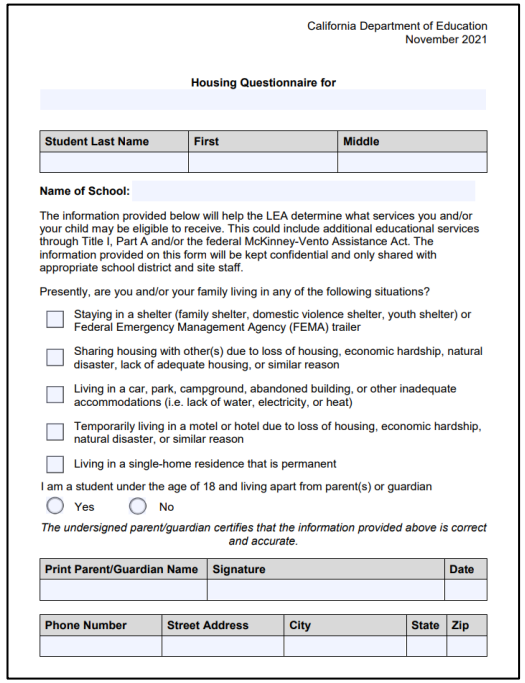
Questions?



Identification and Enrollment

Using a Housing Questionnaire

- Under Cal. Ed. Code § 48851, local educational agencies (LEAs) **must administer a housing questionnaire (HQ) to all students annually** to ensure the identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness
- Use the information gathered on the HQ during enrollment to assist with making determinations of McKinney-Vento eligibility
- While the HQ must be administered at least annually, LEAs may want to administer the HQ at other times throughout the school year in case a student's housing has changed (e.g. sending the HQ home with report cards or after winter break)
- See the HETAC's *Identifying Students Without Stable Housing: A Critical First Step* tip sheet



California Department of Education
November 2021

Housing Questionnaire for

Student Last Name	First	Middle

Name of School:

The information provided below will help the LEA determine what services you and/or your child may be eligible to receive. This could include additional educational services through Title I, Part A and/or the federal McKinney-Vento Assistance Act. The information provided on this form will be kept confidential and only shared with appropriate school district and site staff.

Presently, are you and/or your family living in any of the following situations?

- ☐ Staying in a shelter (family shelter, domestic violence shelter, youth shelter) or Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailer
- ☐ Sharing housing with other(s) due to loss of housing, economic hardship, natural disaster, lack of adequate housing, or similar reason
- ☐ Living in a car, park, campground, abandoned building, or other inadequate accommodations (i.e. lack of water, electricity, or heat)
- ☐ Temporarily living in a motel or hotel due to loss of housing, economic hardship, natural disaster, or similar reason
- ☐ Living in a single-home residence that is permanent

I am a student under the age of 18 and living apart from parent(s) or guardian

○ Yes ○ No

The undersigned parent/guardian certifies that the information provided above is correct and accurate.

Print Parent/Guardian Name	Signature	Date

Phone Number	Street Address	City	State	Zip

Training LEA and School Staff

- Ca. Educ. Code § 48851.3 requires LEA homeless liaisons to **offer homeless education training at least annually**
- Training topics to cover include the LEA's homeless education program policies, recognizing signs of homelessness among students, key rights and services for McKinney-Vento students, and referring students to the local liaison for assistance
- Live and recorded trainings are available from the California Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC), CDE, and the National Center for Homeless Education

Posting Information

- The McKinney-Vento Act requires LEA homeless liaisons to ensure that **information on the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness** is disseminated in locations frequented youth and families experiencing homelessness, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchens (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(vi)
- Posting homeless education information on LEA and school websites, in public areas in schools, and in locations throughout the community provides **another way for students, families, an to access information**
- Access CDE *You Can Enroll in School!* posters on the HETAC identification webpage



Immediate Enrollment (1)



- Schools must **enroll students experiencing homelessness immediately**
  - ➢ even if they are unable to provide records normally required for enrollment
    Note: Records that may be lacking include previous academic records, immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, or other documentation
  - ➢ even if they have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)(i)]
- Enrollment is defined as "**attending classes and participating fully in school activities**" [42 U.S.C. §11434a(1)].

Immediate Enrollment (2)

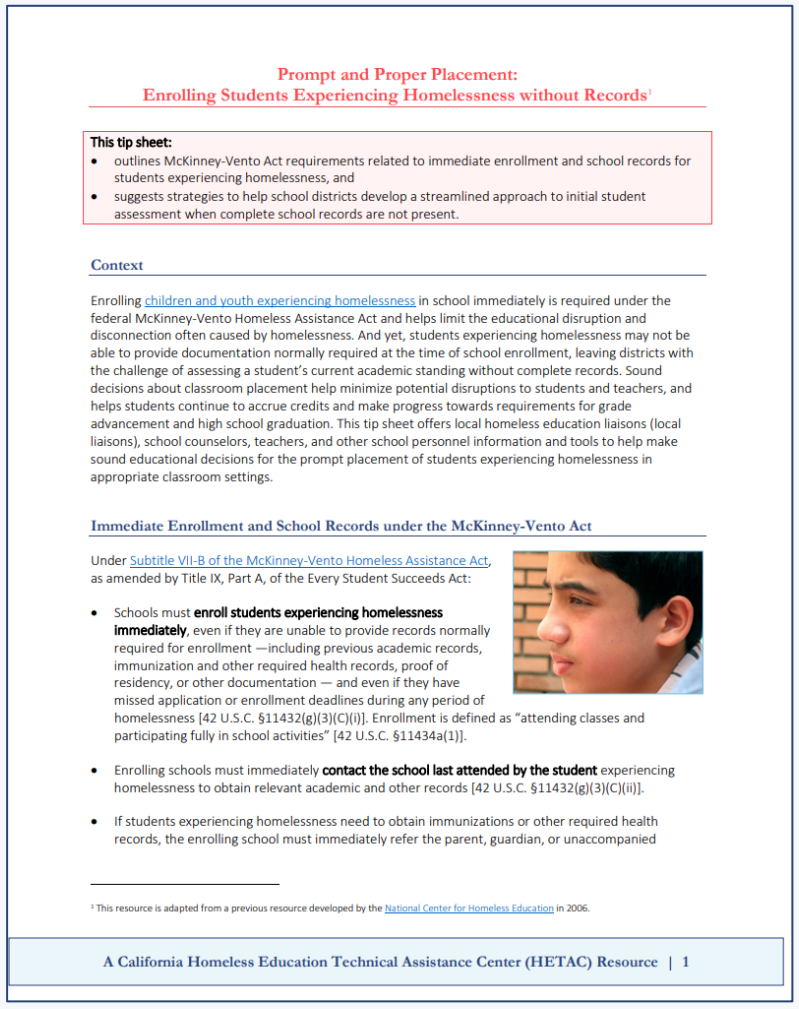
- Enrolling schools must immediately **contact the school last attended** by the student experiencing homelessness to obtain relevant academic and other records [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)(ii)]
- While waiting for official records, if phone/e-mail contact information is available, it may be helpful for enrolling schools to **speak with the student's previous teachers, school counselors, and other school personnel** familiar with the student's education for informal assistance with placement decisions

Immediate Enrollment (3)

- It may be helpful for enrolling schools to **speak with parents and students themselves**, as they often can provide useful information that may help the school understand the student's abilities and needs.
- If students experiencing homelessness need to obtain immunizations or other required health records, the enrolling school must immediately refer the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth to the local liaison to **assist with obtaining needed immunizations, screenings, or immunization or other required health records** [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)(iii)]



HETAC Resource



Prompt and Proper Placement:
Enrolling Students Experiencing Homelessness without Records[1]

This tip sheet:

- outlines McKinney-Vento Act requirements related to immediate enrollment and school records for students experiencing homelessness, and
- suggests strategies to help school districts develop a streamlined approach to initial student assessment when complete school records are not present.

Context

Enrolling children and youth experiencing homelessness in school immediately is required under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and helps limit the educational disruption and disconnection often caused by homelessness. And yet, students experiencing homelessness may not be able to provide documentation normally required at the time of school enrollment, leaving districts with the challenge of assessing a student's current academic standing without complete records. Sound decisions about classroom placement help minimize potential disruptions to students and teachers, and helps students continue to accrue credits and make progress towards requirements for grade advancement and high school graduation. This tip sheet offers local homeless education liaisons (local liaisons), school counselors, teachers, and other school personnel information and tools to help make sound educational decisions for the prompt placement of students experiencing homelessness in appropriate classroom settings.

Immediate Enrollment and School Records under the McKinney-Vento Act

Under Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by Title IX, Part A, of the Every Student Succeeds Act:

- Schools must **enroll students experiencing homelessness immediately**, even if they are unable to provide records normally required for enrollment —including previous academic records, immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, or other documentation — and even if they have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)(i)]. Enrollment is defined as "attending classes and participating fully in school activities" [42 U.S.C. §11434a(1)].
- Enrolling schools must immediately **contact the school last attended by the student** experiencing homelessness to obtain relevant academic and other records [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(C)(ii)].
- If students experiencing homelessness need to obtain immunizations or other required health records, the enrolling school must immediately refer the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied

[1] This resource is adapted from a previous resource developed by the National Center for Homeless Education in 2006.

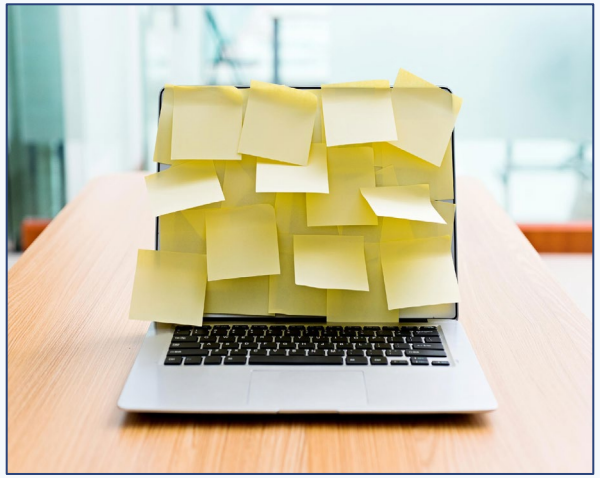
A California Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center (HETAC) Resource | 1

Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students Experiencing Homelessness without Records

- Immediate enrollment under the McKinney-Vento Act
- Sample questions to ask parents and students
- Informing classroom placement using assessment tools
- Receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework and graduation exemption eligibility



Questions?



HETAC Resources

A Tour: HETAC Website and Resources 👀

- Let's tour the HETAC website at https://www.hetac.org/
  - About
  - Statutes and Guidance
  - HETAC Resources
  - Topical Resources
  - Training and Events
  - Get Help

HETAC Back-to-School (BTS) Webpage



The HETAC BTS webpage provides essential resources to support LEAs and schools as they welcome children and youth experiencing homelessness back to school, including:

- Student identification
- Student enrollment
- Staff and parent awareness
- Staff training and capacity building
- Sample county office of education (COE) and LEA resources

HETAC Resources

The HETAC Resources webpage links a variety of resources related to supporting educational access and success for California's children and youth experiencing homelessness, including

- Tip sheets
- Toolkits and other written resources
- Archived webinars
- Recorded trainings
- Archived e-newsletters

HETAC Tip Sheets

HETAC Tip Sheets include

- *Addressing the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness Who Have Disabilities*
- *Dispute Resolution Under the McKinney-Vento Act*
- *Expanded Graduation Options for Students Experiencing Homelessness in California*
- *Homeless Education and Community Schools: A Crosswalk of Partnership Opportunities*
  Homeless Education and Community Schools: A Primer on Pillar Alignment
- *Identifying Students Without Stable Housing: A Critical First Step*
- *Local Educational Agency Homeless Education Policies: Understanding and Implementing Federal and California Law*
- *Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students Experiencing Homelessness Without Records*
- *Supporting Evacuee and Refugee Children and Youth Under McKinney-Vento*
- *Supporting Families with Young Children Experiencing Homelessness: Identification and Referral Strategies*
- *Unaccompanied Youth: Understanding and Addressing the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness on Their Own*

HETAC Toolkits and Other Resources

HETAC Toolkits and other resources include

- *A Guide to the Homeless Liaison Role in California: Legal Guidelines and Implementation Strategies*
- *Back-to-School: Resources for Supporting Students Experiencing Homelessness*
- *California Early Care and Education Resource Guide* (in English | en español) (for liaisons and other service providers)
- *Local Early Care and Education Programs: A Resource for Families in Transition* (in English | en español) (customizable companion resource for caregivers)
- *National Homeless Youth Awareness Month (NHYAM) Toolkit*
- *School-Community Partnerships Toolkit*
- *The Educational Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness: A Primer for California Local Educational Agencies*

HETAC Training and Events Webpage

The HETAC Training and Events webpage connects to

- HETAC Training and Events Calendar
- HETAC Recording Trainings and Professional Development Modules webpage
- California Statewide Homeless Education Conference webpage

HETAC Recorded Training Videos

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Training

- for New LEA Homeless Liaisons
- for School Counselors
- on the ED and HUD definitions of homelessness
- for Early Childhood Education Providers
- on Supporting Unaccompanied Homeless Youth with the FAFSA and Post-secondary Education
- on Qualifying Doubled-Up Students
- on Identification of Students with Unstable Housing
- on Attendance
- for School Transportation Staff
- for Teachers
- for Principals and School Site Administrators
- for Front Office and Attendance Personnel
- for School Staff
- for Principals and Front Office Staff

HETAC Professional Development Modules

- Registration required
- 3 modules per training and quiz
- Printable certificate of completion
- Topics include
  - Best Practices for County Office of Education McKinney-Vento Programs
  - Laws and Best Practices for LEA Liaisons
  - McKinney-Vento 101 for Role Groups



HETAC Get Help Feature

- Use the HETAC Get Help feature to submit a homeless education question via the HETAC website
- A HETAC team member will follow up with you to respond to your question and/or direct you to additional resources
- Note: Depending on the nature of the request, your HETAC team member may loop in your COE homeless liaison for more direct information and assistance



“Hot Off the Press!”



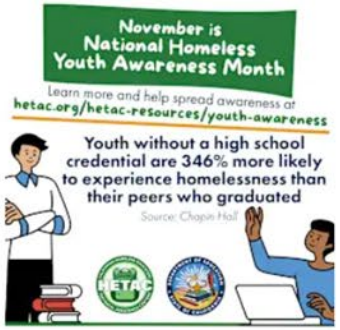
Now available:

The HETAC 2025 National Homeless Youth Awareness Month (NHYAM) Toolkit

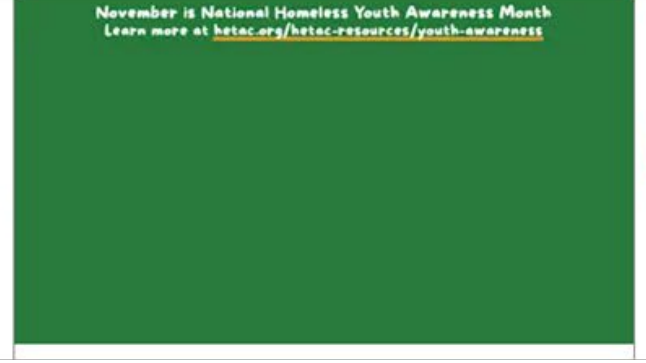
HETAC NHYAM Resources

- Sample National Homeless Youth Awareness Month Board Resolution
- Sample Press Release
- Calendar of Activities
- Book and Movie List
- HETAC Awareness Videos Webpage
- Downloadable and Customizable Social Media Resources
- Downloadable Zoom/Teams Backgrounds
- Links to Additional NHYAM Resources

Social Media Graphics

Portrait (branded)	Portrait (blank, for use with "did you know?" messages)	Square (branded)	Square (blank, for use with "did you know?" messages)	Landscape (branded)
				 Twitter/X banner
				 Facebook cover photo

Zoom/Teams Backgrounds

Light Background 1	Light Background 2	Dark Background 1	Dark Background 2
			



Questions?

Webinar Evaluation

Please take a few moments to fill out our webinar evaluation

Thanks for Joining!



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