

Educational Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness



The McKinney-Vento Act is a federal law that ensures educational stability for students experiencing homelessness.

According to the McKinney-Vento Act, children and youth experiencing homelessness include individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.

This may include the following types of situations:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations
- In substandard housing

The McKinney-Vento Act also recognizes unaccompanied homeless youth. An unaccompanied homeless youth is a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian and not in fixed, regular and adequate housing.

Which School Can a Student Experiencing Homelessness Attend?

A student experiencing homelessness may attend their school of origin or the local attendance area school where they temporarily reside.

The School of Origin is the school last attended or the school the student attended when last permanently housed.

When determining school selection, a student should remain in their school of origin (to the extent feasible) unless it would not be in the best interest of the student. The parent or youth preference must also be considered.



Missouri Director of Homeless Education

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Enrollment

The McKinney-Vento Act requires the immediate enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness. These students must be allowed to attend school even if they are unable to produce previous academic records, immunization and medical records, proof of residency, birth certificates, or other documentation that is usually required for enrollment.

Transportation

School districts must provide transportation for children and youth experiencing homelessness to the school of origin.

Disputes

A parent or youth may dispute decisions about a student's enrollment, eligibility or school selection. A student must be immediately enrolled in the school where enrollment is sought and receive transportation assistance and educational rights while a dispute is pending.

The Homeless Liaison

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that every school district appoint a homeless liaison who serves as the link between families and youth experiencing homelessness and school staff, district personnel, and social-service providers.

Local Homeless Liaison Contact:

Liberty Public Schools #53
Student Services
816-736-5310
student.services@lps53.org