

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

What is McKinney-Vento?

McKinney-Vento is a federal law that helps students who are experiencing homelessness or don't have a stable place to live. It ensures that these students have the opportunity to go to school and receive an education, just like any other child.

Under McKinney-Vento, schools are required to provide certain supports and services to homeless students. These include things like:

1. **Immediate enrollment:** Homeless students have the right to enroll in school immediately, even if they don't have the usual documents like proof of residency or school records.
2. **School stability:** If a homeless student has to move, the school must make every effort to keep them in their current school, even if they move to a different school district. This helps provide stability and continuity in their education.
3. **Transportation assistance:** If a homeless student has to move to a new school, the school district must provide transportation to and from school, so that the student can continue attending their original school if that is in their best interest.
4. **Access to support services:** Schools must ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational services and programs as other students. This includes things like free school meals, special education services, and extracurricular activities.

Students of homeless individuals and unaccompanied homeless youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian) residing in the District shall have equal access to the same free appropriate public education including comparable services, as provided to other students and youth who reside in the District. Homeless students and youth shall not be required to attend a separate school or program for homeless students and shall not be stigmatized by school personnel.

Definition of Homeless Students and Unaccompanied Youths

The term "homeless students and unaccompanied youths" means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship. It includes students and youths who are:

- Living in an emergency shelter or transitional housing.
- Abandoned in hospitals or awaiting foster care.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.

- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- “Doubled up” living with friends or family due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.

Migratory students and unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may be considered homeless if they meet the above definition.

If you or someone you know is experiencing homelessness or facing housing instability, it's important to reach out to your child's school. They can provide information and support, and help ensure that your child's educational needs are met. Remember, McKinney-Vento is there to help ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed in school, regardless of their housing situation.

North Central Parke C.S.C.

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Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

The McKinney Vento Act provides certain rights for homeless students. They include waiving certain requirements such as proof of residency when students are enrolling and allowing categorical eligibility for certain services, such as free textbooks. The Act also states:

- Homeless students may attend their school of origin or the school where they are temporarily residing;
- Homeless students must be provided a written statement of their rights when they enroll and at least two times per year;
- Homeless students may enroll without school, medical, or similar records;
- Homeless students have a right to transportation to school;
- Students must be provided a statement explaining why they are denied any service or enrollment;
- Students must receive services, such as transportation, while disputes are being settled;
- Students are automatically eligible for Title I services;
- School districts must reserve a portion of Title IA funds to serve homeless students;
- School districts must review and revise policies that provide barriers to homeless students;
- Schools must post information in the community regarding the rights of homeless students, in schools and other places that homeless families may frequent; and
- School districts must identify a McKinney Vento Liaison to assist students.