

## **Homeless Children and Youth**

OTPS Residency Officer

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“Homeless children and youth” means students who lack fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:

1. Children and youth who are sharing the house of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in hotels, motels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement.
2. 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.
3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this section because the children are living in circumstances described in this section, clauses A through D.

## **ENROLLMENT, RECORDS, AND IMMUNIZATIONS**

Federal law provides that homeless children and youth, individually or through a parent or guardian, may choose to attend the school in the area in which they are currently living. The district's residency officer will determine whether a student is a homeless child or youth for purposes of establishing residency and promptly advise the parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child of the decision, both orally and in writing, if possible. If there is no such person, the residency officer will advise the student. The district will enroll each homeless student and permit his or her full participation in all school programs, whether or not the student is accompanied by a parent, guardian or person having custody of the child, and without proof of residence, proof of immunizations and traditional enrollment documentation, such as school records and medical/immunization records. The district's homeless liaison may assist the student and school in obtaining those items. A parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child who disagrees with the residency officer's determination may appeal the decision to the board of education under the procedure identified in this policy. If there is no parent, guardian or person having legal custody of the child available, the student may appeal the decision.

## **APPEALS PROCEDURE**

The district will make every effort to resolve disputes regarding homeless children at the lowest level possible by utilizing the following process:

1. At the time a homeless student seeks enrollment, the district will notify the student or his/her family of these procedures and provide the student/family with a copy of this policy.

2. The district will promptly notify the district's homeless coordinator that a homeless student seeks enrollment, and will seek to involve the coordinator in decisions regarding the student's education.

3. Students/families who disagree with a decision regarding the student's education may meet with the coordinator for an informal resolution. The coordinator will notify the student/family that a written complaint may be submitted within five (5) days (or longer if agreed upon by both parties).

4. If the coordinator receives a written complaint, the coordinator will prepare a decision (plan of action) and provide it to the student/family within five (5) days of receipt of the written complaint. The coordinator will also notify the student/family of the right to appeal to the superintendent.

5. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file a written appeal with the superintendent within five (5) days of receipt of the coordinator's plan. The superintendent will meet with the student/family within five (5) days of receipt of the appeal. The superintendent will issue a decision within five (5) days of the meeting with the student/family. The superintendent will also notify the student/family of the right to appeal to the board of education.

6. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file a written appeal with the board of education by submitting a written notice to the superintendent within five (5) days of the superintendent's decision. The appeal will be placed in the next agenda (or the following agenda, if the appeal is received after the agenda posting deadline) and the board's decision is final at the district level. Students/families who are still dissatisfied with a decision regarding the student's education may file an appeal with the Oklahoma State Department of Education utilizing the procedures established by the OSDE.