

McKinney Vento Handbook



K-12 Teachers

2017-2018

MCKINNEY-VENTO REQUIREMENTS FOR LEAs

An understanding of the requirements that LEAs must carry out to serve homeless children and youth will enable you to know both what you must do to follow the law and what you should do to help homeless children and youth succeed in school.

Following is a summary of the McKinney-Vento Act's requirements for LEAs in serving homeless children and youth:

The law requires State Plans to ensure that LEAs

- give homeless children and youth opportunities to meet the state's challenging academic standards;
- identify homeless children and youth;
- resolve disputes promptly;
- increase the awareness of all school personnel of the needs of homeless children and youth;
- enable homeless children and youth to participate in federal, state, and local nutrition programs for which they are eligible;
- ensure that preschool-aged homeless children have access to public preschool programs;
- identify unaccompanied homeless youth and youth separated from public schools and link them to appropriate secondary education and support services;
- remove barriers to receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school;
- remove barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if available;
- address problems resulting from enrollment delays caused by requirements for immunizations or other required health records; residency requirements; lack of birth certificates, school records, or other documents; guardianship issues; or uniform or dress code requirements;
- revise policies to remove barriers to identification and school retention of homeless children and youth, including barriers to enrollment and retention due to outstanding fees or fines, or absences;
- ensure that homeless children and youth are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homelessness;

McKINNEY-VENTO ACT DEFINITION OF HOMELESS

The term "homeless children and youth"—

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and

(B) includes—

(i) children and youth 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;

(ii) 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;

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

(iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

[42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)]

The term "unaccompanied youth" includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. [42 U.S.C. § 11434a(6)]



STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Look for indicators that a student may be experiencing homelessness, and make a referral to the local homeless liaison.
- Make the classroom a welcoming place for homeless students.
 - Assure the student that you care.
 - Connect a newly enrolled student with other students, such as a lunch buddy.
 - Inform the student of extracurricular activities that may be of interest, and arrange participation.
 - Do not hold homeless students accountable for situations over which they have no control, such as not having a place to do homework or not being able to pay fines.
 - Do not disclose the student's living situation.
- Encourage the student, and hold him or her to high expectations.
- Discuss with the homeless student what his or her school challenges are and connect the student with services or make appropriate accommodations.
 - Adjust assignments so students not living in permanent settings can complete them. (A student living in a hotel room or who has limited supplies may not be able to carry out science activities or bring in newspaper articles or information from the Internet.)
 - Provide a time and place before, during, or after school for a student to complete assignments.
 - Arrange tutoring, supplemental instruction, or counseling expeditiously because many homeless students will be in your school for only a short period of time.
- Assist other students in understanding family homelessness and treating their peers with kindness and respect.
- Look for any signs that other students are teasing or bullying a student who may be experiencing homelessness, and intervene or report the students to the principal.
- Assess students frequently so that you can determine progress even if the student is in your class only a short time.
- Communicate with a student's parents or guardians about their concerns or ways to help their child or youth be more successful in school.
 - Contact the parent or guardian if the student is absent or exhibits concerning behaviors.