

PERTINENT DEFINITIONS
From the 2018-19 Application and Verification Guide³ and
the July 29, 2015 U.S. Dept. of Education Dear Colleague Letter⁴

Homeless

A student is considered homeless if he lacks fixed, regular, and adequate housing. This is broader than just living “on the street.” It includes temporarily living with other people because he had nowhere else to go; living in substandard housing (if it doesn’t meet local building codes or the utilities are turned off, it is generally not adequate); living in emergency or transitional shelters, for example, trailers provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after disasters; or living in motels, camping grounds, cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, or any public or private place not designed for humans to live in. It also includes living in the school dormitory if the student would otherwise be homeless. A student living in any of these situations and fleeing an abusive parent may be considered homeless even if the parent would provide support and a place to live.

Unaccompanied

When a student is not living in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Youth

The Application and Verification Guide defines youth as a student under 22 years old. However, the July 29, 2015 Dear Colleague Letter states: “Applicants who are between the ages of 21 and 24 and who are unaccompanied and homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless qualify for a homeless youth determination, and will be considered independent students.”

Recognized third parties

Recognized third parties include: private or publicly-funded homeless shelters and service providers; financial aid administrators from another college; college access programs such as TRIO and GEAR UP; college or high school counselors; other mental health professionals; social workers; mentors; doctors; and clergy. Unlike McKinney-Vento liaisons and HUD or RHYA-funded shelters, these third parties do not have the statutory authority to make a determination of homelessness. However, they can provide “relevant information” to financial aid administrators who are making a determination of unaccompanied homeless youth status in the absence of a statutory determination.

³ <https://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/1819FSAHbkAVG.pdf>

⁴ <https://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1516.html>

**Independent Student Status of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
Determination for the 2019-2020 FAFSA¹**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am providing this letter to convey my determination that after July 1, 2018, [NAME OF STUDENT] was

an unaccompanied homeless youth, as defined by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act and the U.S. Department of Education’s July 29, 2015, Dear Colleague Letter.

an unaccompanied, self-supporting youth at risk of homelessness.

Student’s SSN:

Student’s DOB:

Student’s Mailing Address: *[if the student does not have a stable address, you may list the name, phone number and mailing address of a friend or relative, or the school]*

As per the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110-84), I am authorized to document this student’s living situation and determine his/her independent student status as an unaccompanied homeless youth or unaccompanied, self-supporting youth at risk of homelessness. The financial aid office is not required to confirm this determination in the absence of conflicting information. It is not conflicting information if the financial aid administrator disagrees with my determination.² Feel free to address any questions to me at the number or e-mail address listed below.

Signature	Date
Print Name	Phone
Email	
Title	
Agency	
Role (Circle One): <i>McKinney-Vento Liaison; Director/Designee of a HUD-funded shelter; Director/Designee of a RHYA-funded shelter; Financial Aid Administrator</i>	

¹ Applicable for a student enrolling in college between July 1st, 2019 - June 30, 2020

² 2018-19 Application and Verification Guide, page 115; July 29, 2015 U.S. Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter. <https://ifap.ed.gov/dpclatters/GEN1516.html>