

MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT

Rights for homeless students

The McKinney-Vento program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending and succeeding in school. Under this program, schools must ensure each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education as other children and youth.

Homeless children and youth should have access to the educational and other services they need to enable them to meet the same challenging student academic achievement standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. School districts are required to review and undertake steps to revise regulations, practices or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance or success in school of homeless children and youth.

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The McKinney-Vento Act defines “homeless children and youth” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters
Abandoned in hospitals
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or Private place not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

RESIDENCY AND EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS

Students who are in temporary, inadequate, and homeless living situations have the following rights:

- 1) Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally require at the time of enrollment;
- 2) Access to free meals and textbooks, Title I and other educational programs, and other comparable services including transportation;
- 3) To attend the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their house situations;
- 4) Other services and resources may be available, contact your local McKinney-Vento Liaison.

Any questions about these rights can be directed to the local McKinney-Vento Liaison. Carol Sepaniak (317)495-6494 or the State Coordinator at (800)833-2199