

McKinney-Vento Act

Overview

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law that works to ensure educational stability for homeless youth. The McKinney-Vento act allows homeless students to enroll in school and receive transportation without delay. Homeless children are defined as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence." Examples of children who fall under this definition include:

- Children sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing;
- Children living in "motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative accommodations"
- Children living in "emergency or transition shelters"
- Children whose primary nighttime residence is not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation (e.g. park benches, etc.)
- Children living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations

Homeless Children and Youth Have the Right to:

Immediate Enrollment: In school even if lacking paperwork normally required for enrollment. If during the registration process, a family experiences difficulty obtaining/providing educational or medical records, The district homeless liaison may assist.

Choice of School: Changing schools frequently can negatively impact your student's education, causing them to fall behind. Students that qualify for educational assistance through the McKinney-Vento Act can stay at the school they have been attending or transfer to the district in which they are temporarily staying. This does not mean that you can go to any school, it must be one of the schools above. Once you and your family become permanently housed, your student may finish the school year at their current school or transfer to the new district. Your school's liaison can assist you in whichever decision you make for your students.

Transportation: Homeless children and youth have the right to receive transportation to his/her school of origin. If the ride to school is estimated to be more than one hour, the district or liaison can request a meeting with you to determine how this may affect your student's education.

Preschool: Children under the age of five (5) may qualify for educational services. Speak with your liaison for available early childhood programs in your area.

Free Lunch and School Fees: Because of your unstable housing situation, your student is eligible to receive a free lunch each day and if the district provides a breakfast program, that will also be provided at no cost. In

addition, your student should not be charged to attend school. This includes books, locks, gym uniforms, class fees, sports programs, and graduation fees.

Removal of Barriers: Homeless children and youth have the right to services comparable to those received by housed schoolmates, including transportation and supplemental educational service and the right to an “equal playing field”. Segregation based on a student's status as homeless is strictly prohibited.

District Review Process: After 18 months of enrollment, and annually thereafter, the District has the right to conduct a review to determine whether the hardship continues and whether a student continues to be eligible for homeless services under State and federal law, including enrollment in the District. The district liaison will be in contact with any families that will be included in this review process that will occur annually.

Settling Disputes: With your McKinney-Vento eligibility, you must be provided with a written explanation of the district's intent to dispute. Your school district must also provide you with a list of low-cost or free legal services to assist you during the dispute/appeal process. Once you have received notice that your district has filed for dispute, please contact your regional liaison. In the event of a dispute, your Regional Office of Education or Intermediate Service Center will appoint a mediator. The mediator will set a meeting time that is convenient for you and the school district in an attempt to resolve the dispute. If you do not agree with the decision of the mediator, you can appeal to the Illinois State Board of Education.

Monmouth-Roseville CUSD #238 Homeless Liaison

Every Local Education Agency (LEA) is required by law to designate a local liaison for children and youth experiencing homelessness. CUSD #205 has a Homeless Liaison who serves as one of the primary contacts between homeless families and school staff along with other service providers.

The liaison works to make sure that homeless children and youth enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically. The liaison ensures that student's rights are protected and that the district fulfills its responsibilities under the McKinney-Vento Act. Please contact the Homeless Liaison for more information on services provided by CUSD #238:

Andrea Frieden
309-734-2213
afrieden@mr238.org

For more information, please visit <https://www.isbe.net/pages/homeless.aspx>.