

Homeless Education (McKinney-Vento Act)

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, which was signed into law in 1987, required states to review and revise residency requirements for the enrollment of homeless children and youth to address the challenges that they face in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, state educational agencies (SEAs) must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children, and youths. Homeless children and youths must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging state academic standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. SEAs and local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths.

The law provides children and youth experiencing homelessness with the following:

- Immediate enrollment even when records not present
- Right to remain in the school of origin, if in the student's best interest
- Transportation to the school of origin
- Support for academic success

Who Are Homeless Children and Youths?

Homeless children and youths are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Children and youths 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.
- Children and youths 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.
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described above.

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<https://schoolhouseconnection.org/mckinney-vento-act/>