

# **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT**

## **Definition of McKinney-Vento Act**

### 42 USC §11431. Statement of Policy

The following is the policy of the Congress:

(1) Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths.

(2) In any State where compulsory residency requirements or other requirements, in laws, regulations, practices, or policies, may act as a barrier to the identification of, or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of, homeless children and youths, the State educational agency and local educational agencies in the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.

(3) Homelessness is not a sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment.

(4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held.

## **Eligibility under McKinney-Vento**

Children or youth who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances

## **Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Rights**

Unaccompanied homeless youth are ensured the same educational rights that the McKinney-Vento Act provides for other homeless students, which includes the right to:

- Enroll immediately, even if they do not currently have paperwork normally required for enrollment
- Attend either the local attendance area school or the school of origin, with the placement decision based on the student's best interest
- Remain in the school of origin for the duration of the homelessness or until the end of the school year in which the student becomes permanently housed
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin

- Receive educational services, such as free school meals, Title I services, and participate in gifted and talented programs, vocational education, alternative education, and any other services comparable to what housed students receive
- Not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless

In addition to the provisions that apply to all homeless students, the McKinney-Vento Act includes the following provisions specifically for unaccompanied homeless youth:

- Unaccompanied homeless youth shall be immediately enrolled without proof of guardianship
- During a dispute over school selection or enrollment, unaccompanied homeless youth shall receive a written statement explaining the school's decision, the youth's right to appeal the decision, and a referral to the local liaison

Local Liaisons shall assist unaccompanied homeless youth in:

- Selecting a school of attendance and enrolling in school
- Requesting transportation to and from the school of origin
- Enrolling in school immediately while disputes are resolved

### **National Center for Homeless Education Parent & Youth Educational Rights Brochures & Posters**

[Parent Rights Brochure - English](#)

[Parent Rights Brochure - Spanish](#)

[Parent Educational Rights Poster - English & Spanish](#)

[Youth Educational Rights Poster - English & Spanish](#)

### **Contact Information Regarding Eligibility & Services**

#### **Southwest Charlotte STEM Academy**

##### **McKinney-Vento Liaison:**

Cindy Gittens, Mental Health Specialist

(980) 505-8344

cindygittenslcsw@gmail.com

##### **State Coordinator:**

Lisa Phillips, State Coordinator

lphillip@serve.org

##### **State Website:**

NC Homeless Education Program

<https://hepnc.uncg.edu/>

<https://hepnc.uncg.edu/about/>

**National Center for Homeless Education**  
<https://nche.ed.gov/>

[National Homeless Data](#)  
[North Carolina Data](#)