



McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

For Employees of the Randolph County School
System



McKinney-Vento Act

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law designed to help schools identify students experiencing homelessness, increase their school enrollment, attendance and success.

- First enacted in 1987
- Most recent reauthorization in 2015 as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Who Qualifies?

- Students qualify for the McKinney-Vento program if they lack a *fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence*.
 - Fixed Residence - a residence that is stationary, permanent and not subject to change.
 - Regular Residence - a residence that is used on a regular basis (i.e. nightly)
 - Adequate Residence - a residence that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.
- If all three criteria are not met then the living situation may be considered homeless.

Examples

Sharing a home due to loss of housing or economic hardship	Living in motels/hotels	Living in a shelter
Abandoned in a hospital	Living in cars	Living in campgrounds
Living in parks	Living in abandoned buildings	Living under bridges
Living at bus/train stations	Migratory children	Unaccompanied homeless youth

*Eligibility decisions are made on a case by case basis

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

An *unaccompanied youth* is a student not living in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian.

An *unaccompanied homeless youth* is not living in the physical custody of a parent/legal guardian and meets eligibility for McKinney Vento because their living situation is not fixed, regular and adequate.

Unaccompanied + Homeless = Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

- Eligibility for McKinney-Vento is based on whether the living situation is fixed, regular, and adequate. A student's living situation is evaluated first to determine if the student is an unaccompanied homeless youth.
- No lower age limit, upper age limit is 21 (based on NC guidelines)
- No citizenship requirement
- School districts cannot:
 - Require a caregiver to obtain legal guardianship
 - Discontinue enrollment due to a lack of a responsible adult or the inability to produce guardianship or other paperwork.

Common Signs of Homelessness

- A marked change in behavior
- Chronic hunger or food hoarding
- Numerous absences
- Inability to contact parents
- Attendance at many different school
- Avoidance of questions related to current address

Causes of Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing
- Poverty
 - Increase in low vs middle wage employment
- Health problems
 - Lack of health insurance leading to lack of care and/or high medical bills
 - Addiction disorders, mental health
- Domestic Violence
- Disasters - Natural and Manmade
- Abuse/neglect/family dysfunction (unaccompanied youth)

Impact of Homelessness

- Higher incidences of acute and chronic illnesses, depression and anxiety
- Poor classroom engagement and poor social skills
- Achievement gap between homeless and low-income students that can persist and/or worsen over time
- Lack of engagement - students who experience homelessness are 87% more likely to drop-out of school

Barriers to Education for Homeless Youth

Poor health, and hunger	Emotional trauma, depression, anxiety	Stereotypes and lack of awareness by adults and classmates
Under-identification	Lack of school stability and educational continuity due to high mobility	Lack of documents needed for school enrollment (proof of residence, health records etc)
Lack of transportation	Lack of school supplies, clothing etc.	Fatigue due to unstable living conditions

McKinney-Vento Student Enrollment

- Students can attend either their school of origin (if feasible and in the student's best interest) or their local school.
 - School of Origin - the school attended when the student was permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled. Also includes the feeder school for the next grade level in years of transition.
 - Local School - the school district in which the student is currently living
- Students are enrolled immediately and school staff will work to obtain any missing records after enrollment.
- Students must have equal access to programs and services.
- Students are automatically eligible for free meals at the time of enrollment/identification.

McKinney Vento Student Enrollment

- At the parents request students can receive transportation to and from the school of origin.
- Students can attend their school of origin the entire school year in which they are identified.
- In order to receive services in subsequent school years the student's living situation is be reassessed at the beginning of the school year to determine eligibility.
- Parents/legal guardians have access to an appeal/dispute process when there is a disagreement over identification and school selection decisions.

Randolph County Data

Living Situation	20-21	21-22	22-23
Doubled Up	142	194	213
Hotels/Motels	43	45	70
Shelters	5	10	5
Unsheltered	2	7	1
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth	31	36	18
Total # Identified	192	256	289

Do you know a student that may qualify?

- Share your concerns with your school social worker and/or school counselor.
 - Every school district is required to have a McKinney-Vento homeless liaison who is ultimately responsible for all identifications in their school district. RCSS also has building level contacts who address potential qualifying cases on an immediate basis. You can refer to the RCSS website and/or your school principal for more information.
 - The district homeless liaison and building level contacts are responsible for ensuring immediate enrollment and providing services after identification.
- Additional services such as clothing, shoes, food, student fee payments or waivers may be provided based on student need.

Resources

- North Carolina Homeless Education Program (NCHEP)
 - North Carolina Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
 - [North Carolina Homeless Education Program](#)

- National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
 - US Department of Education Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
 - [National Center for Homeless Education](#)