



McKinney Vento Act & COVID-19

Homeless Children and Youth Definition

- The McKinney Vento Act protects the educational rights of children and youth who are homeless. Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act defines “homeless children and youths” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Did you know that students experiencing housing loss due to COVID-19 are covered by the McKinney-Vento Act?

- Students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate primary nighttime residence due to COVID-19 are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. They are entitled to the same legal protections and services as other students experiencing homelessness and/or housing crises.

Homeless families and COVID 19

- During this time of health and economic insecurity, families with children are likely to experience economic hardships that put them at high risk of losing their housing. Since school buildings may be closed due to COVID-19, varied practices are required for identifying and providing services to children and youth who may qualify under the McKinney-Vento Act. Consider these identification strategies during COVID-19.

School systems have methods in place to maintain communication with students experiencing homelessness.

- Students identified as experiencing homelessness should receive information and services from homeless liaisons as it relates to COVID-19, and liaisons should proactively maintain contact with these students and their families to ensure they are connected to school instruction and other schools- and/or community-based supports, as needed and appropriate.

How can the school help families and unaccompanied youth who are experiencing homelessness with much-needed resources?

- Many communities are closing schools in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While this is an important step to protect public health, it poses challenges for families and youth who depend on the support their local school provides, including a safe place for students to be and learn during the day, and free school meals. Communities may opt to keep certain schools or community sites open for food, hygiene, and health care, or provide drive-by options.
- Processes for providing school meals and other services should be modified to ensure that unaccompanied youth are able to access meals and services, consistent with applicable McKinney-Vento Act requirements.
- Schools should work with local public health officials and community partners to identify temporary, safe and stable shelter options for families or youth experiencing homelessness who must quarantine.

How can schools and communities work together to ensure access to virtual or distance learning opportunities for students experiencing homelessness when schools close?

- Students experiencing homelessness may lack access to technology - including the internet, a computer, and/or an appropriate mobile device - that would allow them to participate fully in online learning. In order to eliminate this barrier to full participation in school, schools and communities should work together to provide students experiencing homelessness with access to mobile hotspots, laptops/tablets, and any other materials necessary to fully participate in online learning.
- Schools and communities should work together to establish and implement a sensitive and discreet protocol for asking students and their families about their possible lack of supplies or other barriers to online learning. Through working together, schools and communities can address the challenge presented by COVID-19 with innovation, creativity, and partnership.

References (Missouri)

Mckinney Vento-for the State of Missouri <https://dese.mo.gov/quality-schools/federal-programs/homeless/serving-homeless-children>

Homeless Liaisons by School District <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-hmls-liaisons-19-20.pdf>

National (National)

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg116.html>

<http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/m-v>

<https://nche.ed.gov/legis/mv.php>

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/dropoutprevention/covid-faq-mckinney-vento>