

Settling Disputes

If your school district does not agree 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, named on the back tab of this pamphlet.

In the event of a dispute, your Regional Office of Education or Intermediated 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.

During the entire dispute process, the school district must continue to provide all educational services, including transportation.



Contact Information

For more information regarding your student's educational rights, please contact any of the following numbers below:

School District McKinney-Vento Liaison

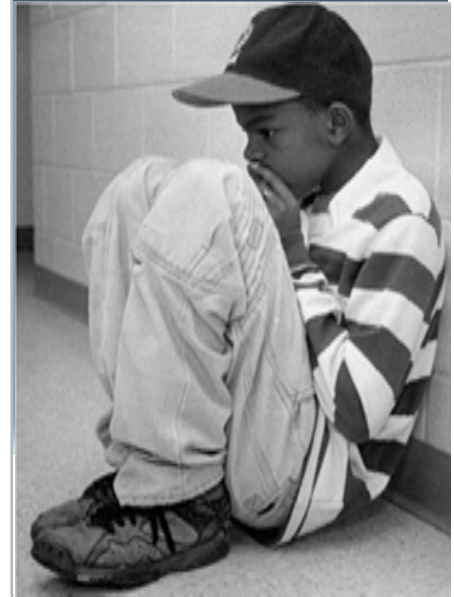
Suburban Cook County McKinney-Vento Contact

Dr. Tom Bookler
(630) 386-0883
tbookler@ncisc.org

Illinois State Board of Education

(800) 215-6370
www.isbe.net/homeless

Understanding Educational Rights for Children in Temporary Living Situations



McKinney-Vento

A Guide to Provide Support and to Ensure Success for All Students

The Educational Rights of Students in Temporary Living Situations

When families are living in temporary living situations, it is frequently difficult for students to get to school and maintain their enrollment in a specific school for an extended period of time. During these frequent moves, your student's school records may get lost in the shuffle between schools. All school districts have an assigned liaison whose job it is to assist you in obtaining these important records.

This brochure will explain how the Illinois Education for Homeless Children Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act can support you and your student to obtain a high quality education.

Who qualifies for this help?

The law states, any student that does not have a *fixed, regular, and adequate* place to sleep at night qualifies for educational assistance. This includes students and families that stay at a shelter, on the street, a car or abandoned building. Families that have lost their housing and need to double-up with friends or relatives because they cannot afford their own place, also qualify.

Choice of Schools

Frequently changing schools 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. The caregiver of the student will make the choice. This does not mean you can go to any school. It has to 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.

Immediate Enrollment

School districts are required to enroll McKinney-Vento eligible students without delay; even if you do not have your student's school or medical records. If you need assistance getting educational or medical records ask to speak with the district's liaison. They will assist you.



Transportation

If you, as the caregiver, choose for your student to remain at their home school, the school district will work with you on transportation options. 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.

Free Lunch & School Fees

Because of your unstable housing 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.

Early Childhood

Children under the age of five (5) may qualify for educational services. Speak with your liaison or district's early childhood staff for available programs in your area. Studies show PreK programs can help children get off to a good start in school.