

I. Homeless children and youth who live within the county shall be admitted to school in the District, shall have equal access to free public education, including preschool, as provided to other children and youth and other services need to ensure an opportunity to meet the same challenging local and state academic achievement standards to which all students are held, and shall be included in state and District assessments and accountability systems.

II. Definitions:

A. Homeless Child or Youth – One who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth who:

1. Are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
2. Are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Are living in emergency or transitional shelters, or are abandoned in hospitals;
4. Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed or normally used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
5. Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or

Are migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described in II.A.1 through II.A.5.

B. Unaccompanied Youth – A homeless child or youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

C. School of Origin – The school that the student attended when permanently housed or the school where the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool.

D. Enroll and Enrollment – Attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

- E. Immediate – Without delay.
 - F. Parent – Parent or guardian of a student.
 - G. Liaison – The staff person designated by the District as the person responsible for carrying out the duties assigned to the liaison by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
 - H. Designated Receiving School - includes the next level school, elementary from prekindergarten, middle from elementary, high from middle, that a homeless child or youth, whose homelessness continues into the next school year, may attend when that next level school is the district designated school for those students in the homeless student's school of origin.
 - I. Eligible School - the school of origin, the school zoned for the address where the student is temporarily residing, or another school which students residing in that attendance zone are eligible to attend.
 - J. Certified Homeless Youth – as defined in Section 382.002, Florida Statutes, is a minor, homeless child or youth, including an unaccompanied youth as those terms are defined in 42 U.S.C. s. 11434a, who has been certified as homeless or unaccompanied by a school district homeless liaison, the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or designee, or the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program funded by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services or designee
 - K. Certified Unaccompanied Homeless Youth – as defined in Section 743.067, Florida Statutes, is an individual who is 16 years of age or older and is not in the physical custody of a parents or guardian, including a youth who has run away from home, who has been forced to leave his or her home, or whose parents have left the area and left the youth behind and who has been certified as homeless and unaccompanied by a school district homeless liaison, the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or designee, or the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Services, or designee; or a continuum of care lead agency, or its designee
- III. The District shall identify homeless students as defined by federal and state law. If the District's liaison for homeless children and youth determines that the minor is a certified unaccompanied homeless youth, the liaison shall issue to the youth a certificate documenting his/her status as required by law to be used for accessing health services, a state identification card at no charge, or a certified copy of his/her

birth certificate at no charge.

- IV. The District shall seek to remove barriers to the immediate enrollment and retention of homeless children and youth, even if they cannot produce required records (e.g., previous academic records; immunizations or other health records, birth certificate, proof of residency, guardianship) or other required documentation, or otherwise meet enrollment requirements (e.g., uniform or dress code requirements, outstanding fees, fines, or absences).
- V. The District shall ensure that homeless students records are held confidential and treated as a student education record, and shall not be deemed to be directory information, under section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). Homeless students' records, include immunization or other required health records, birth certificates, academic records, guardianship records
- VI. The District shall ensure the immediate enrollment of homeless students, even if the students missed an application or enrollment deadline during any period of homelessness.
 - A. The District shall assist homeless children and youth to provide documentation to meet state and local requirements for entry into school.
 - B. A homeless child or youth shall be given a thirty (30) school day exemption to provide proof of age, certification of a school-entry health examination, proof of immunization and other documentation required for enrollment.
- VII. The District shall coordinate district programs and collaborate with other school districts, community service providers and organizations, including local social services and other community agencies to provide support to homeless students and their families; other school districts regarding homeless student-related transportation and exceptional education, transfer of school records, and other inter-district activities, as needed; and housing authorities.
- VIII. Each homeless student shall be provided the services that are available for all other students including transportation, school nutrition programs, before and after school programs, and education services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria such as exceptional education, gifted education, career and technical programs, preschool programs, Title I, and limited English proficiency programs.
- IX. Homeless students shall be given meaningful opportunities to succeed in school, and will have access to and fully participate in all available District academic and extracurricular activities for which they meet relevant eligibility criteria
- X. Homeless students shall be provided appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed by such students while attending a prior school.

- XI. Unaccompanied homeless high school youth will receive counseling to prepare and improve their readiness for postsecondary education.
- XII. Homeless students shall remain in their school of origin, as it is presumed to be in the students' best interest to do so, unless this is contrary to the wishes of the parent or guardian or (in the case of an unaccompanied homeless youth) the youth, for the duration of homelessness or in any case in which a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year Homeless students who become permanently housed during the academic year may remain at their school of origin for the remainder of the academic year and continue to receive all McKinney-Vento Act benefits.
- XIII. Homeless students and/or parents shall have the right to dispute school assignment if placement is other than the school of origin or eligible school. The District shall provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth with a written explanation in a manner and form understandable to them and the information on the right to appeal the placement determination. When considering placement in a school other than the student's school of origin, the district will consider student-centered factors to determine a placement that is in the student's best interest. The District shall ensure that unaccompanied youth and the parents or guardians of homeless students are notified of the right to remain in the school of origin or ensure they immediately are enrolled in the eligible school during the dispute process, including all appeals, and referred to the liaison to carry out the process as expeditiously as possible.
- XIV. If requested by the parent of a homeless child or by the liaison on behalf of an unaccompanied youth, the District shall be responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin throughout the duration of homelessness. The District shall share the responsibility for transportation if a homeless student begins living in another district in a homeless status and continues to attend the school of origin. If the districts are unable to agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs for transportation shall be shared equally.
- XV. Homeless students shall not be stigmatized, segregated, or separated in any educational program on the basis of their homeless status.
- XVI. The District shall follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Florida Statutes.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

1001.42, 1001.43, 1003. 1003.21 F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: 382.002, 743.067, 1000.21, 1001.43,
1003.01, 1003.21, 1003.22, F.S.
MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT, P.L.100-77

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FORMERLY: