

CFISD COMPLIANCE COURSE (2020-21)

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Module 11: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

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Introduction



The word homeless typically does not suggest images of children and youth, but the reality is that many people experiencing homelessness are under the age of 18; some are a part of families experiencing homelessness, while others are youth experiencing homelessness on their own. Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized in 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act, (42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.) is a Federal law that addresses the educational needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

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Who is Homeless?



MCKINNEY-VENTO DEFINITION OF HOMELESS 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2) The term "homeless children and youth"

A. means individuals who ~~lack a fixed, regular, and adequate~~ *nighttime residence...*; and

B. includes

- children and youths who are **sharing the housing** of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings...;
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- migratory children...who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Note: The definition lists specific examples of living arrangements that would be considered homeless, but the list is not exhaustive.

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Guaranteed Educational Services Supported under McKinney-Vento Act



This law guarantees homeless children and youth the following:

- **Immediate Enrollment** - The right to be enrolled immediately in school, without immunization or academic records, and birth certificate, regardless of district policy.
- **Choice of Schools** - A student experiencing homelessness has two choices in deciding which school to attend:
 - The school of origin (the school the student attended when he/she became homeless).
 - The school in the zone where the student is currently residing.
- **Transportation** - Students in highly mobile or homeless situations are entitled to transportation to and from the school of origin, if it is feasible, in the student's best interest, and requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
- **Services** - Students experiencing homelessness are entitled to the same programs and services that are available to other children in the District, such as gifted and talented education, special education, vocational education, English Language Learner services, and tutoring. Students are automatically eligible for **Title I services** and Districts must set aside funds as necessary to provide services.
- **Dispute Resolution** - If problems arise between the school and parents or between districts, the parent shall be referred to the school's homeless liaison. In the meantime, the student must remain in school and receive transportation.

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Think about it...

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that:

Multichoice

Answer 1 : enrollment is immediate

Response 1 That is incorrect!

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that enrollment is immediate, students may stay at their school of origin, and unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access.

Score 0

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Answer 2 : students may stay at their school of origin

Response 2 That is incorrect!

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that enrollment is immediate, students may stay at their school of origin, and unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access.

Score 0

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Answer 3 : unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access

Response 3 That is incorrect!

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that enrollment is immediate, students may stay at their school of origin, and unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access.

Score 0

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Answer 4: enrollment is immediate, students may stay at their school of origin, and unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access

Response 4 That is correct!

The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that enrollment is immediate, students may stay at their school of origin, and unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access.

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Think about it...

Students who share housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardships, or a similar reason *are* considered homeless by the federal guidelines.



True/false

Answer 1: True

Response 1 That is correct!

Students who share housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardships, or a similar reason *are* considered homeless by the federal guidelines.

Score 1

[Jump](#) Next page**Answer 2 :** False**Response 2** That is incorrect!

Students who share housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardships, or a similar reason *are* considered homeless by the federal guidelines.

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Think about it...

Students who qualify as homeless, may choose any school.

True/false**Answer 1:** False**Response 1** That is correct!

A student experiencing homelessness has two choices in deciding which school to attend:

- The school of origin (the school the student attended when he/she became homeless).
- The school in the zone where the student is currently residing.

Score 1[Jump](#) Next page**Answer 2 :** True**Response 2** That is incorrect!

A student experiencing homelessness has two choices in deciding which school to attend:

- The school of origin (the school the student attended when he/she became homeless).
- The school in the zone where the student is currently residing.

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What's Next? Identification! ❖ # 🔍 ✕

Every school district must designate a homeless liaison. The local liaison serves as the key homeless education contact for the district, and must carry out the duties of the position as outlined in the Act [42 U.S.C. § 11432(6)(A)].

The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

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Helpful Terms to Know ⚙️ ⚙️ 🔍 ✕



- *Homeless Liaison* – An administrator who ensures that homeless children and youth are identified and provided services needed to be successful in school.
- *Families in Transition (FIT)* – The Student Services Families in Transition program provides support and services to students and families that have been identified as homeless based on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.
- *EASE Counselor* – An EASE (*Enrollment, Attendance, Success academically, and Educational Services*) Counselor is a designated school counselor at each campus to assist and support students approved under the (FIT) program.
- *Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ)* – a tool used to collect information and evaluate program eligibility.

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Student Residency Questionnaire ⚙️ ⚙️ 🔍 ✕



This tool is effective in identifying homeless students upon enrollment.

Remember to:

1. **Advocate**

- Talk with the student or refer them to the EASE Counselor on your campus.
- Request the parent/guardian to complete a Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) as part of the identification process.

2. **Collaborate**

- Collaborate with the campus EASE Counselor
- Speak with the Registrar

3. **Communicate**

- Share the SRQ form with the EASE Counselor/Registrar/Homeless Liaison

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Identification Tool for School Staff



Homeless students are significantly more at risk of losing services during the COVID-19 pandemic. LEAs should consider the following when developing identification tools for school staff (e.g. teachers, counselors, social workers, etc.) that will provide increased awareness of indicators and risk factors of students experiencing homelessness.

Possible Indicators of Student and Families Experiencing Homelessness

Below are examples of possible indicators to listen for when working with students and families during COVID-19:

- "We are staying with friends right now."
- "I don't know where I will be staying tonight."
- "We have been moving around a lot."
- "We are staying with a family member." (e.g. aunt, uncle, grandmother, etc.)
- "It's a new address, we are far away from school."
- "We were locked out of the house or apartment."
- "It's hard to focus with so many people living here."
- "It's hard to get sleep with so many people living here."
- "I don't feel good, I am really hungry."
- "We had to leave or move quickly."
- "We are living in a shelter."
- "We are living in our car."
- Statements that indicating they are living in unsheltered situations (e.g. cars, parks, abandoned buildings, etc.)

Possible Indicators of an Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Below are examples of possible indicators to listen for when working with unaccompanied youth during COVID-19:

- "I don't have time for school, I need to work."
- "I cannot live at home anymore."
- "I was locked out of my house or apartment."
- "I am staying with friends right now."
- "We are staying with a family member." (e.g. aunt, uncle, grandmother, etc.)
- "I don't know where I will be staying tonight."
- "It's hard to focus with so many people living here."
- "It's hard to get sleep with so many people living here."
- "I am living in a car."
- "I am living in a shelter."
- Statements indicating, they are living in unsheltered situations (e.g. cars, parks, abandoned buildings, etc.)
- Statements indicating, they are moving from place to place (couch surfing)

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Follow-up Questions

Below are examples of possible follow-up questions to ask to help determine if the student or family should be referred to your homeless liaison:

- Have you recently moved?
- Was your move due to a loss of housing?
- Did you lose your housing due to unemployment or reduced hours at work?
- Did you lose your housing due to high medical bills?
- Did you lose your housing due to domestic abuse? Are you in a safe place?
- Did you lose your housing due to an eviction or foreclosure?
- Are you unable to get to our food sites? Are you far away from the school?
- Are family members or friends staying with you due to COVID-19? If so, how many? Did they lose their housing?
- What type of resources and services do you need assistance with? (e.g. academic, basic, safety)

Strategies to Support Identification

When working with students and families, try not to use the word "homeless." Here are some suggestions to use other than "homeless":

- Family in transition
- Temporary housing
- Loss of housing
- Unstable housing
- Moving from place to place

Have your local homeless liaisons information readily available. The family may want to contact them directly.

- Discuss the student's or family's living situation discreetly if utilizing a virtual meeting platform.
- Utilize an LEA approved method of communication to ensure confidentiality when sharing any personal information.
- Do not disclose information about a student's living situation to anyone other than the homeless liaison, other school administrators, and/or school staff only as needed.
- Ensure you provide the students and families with LEA and homeless education program information and resources.

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TEHCY Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Sample Script for School Staff:

“There is someone here at our school that might be able to help you with additional support services and resources. Can I provide them your contact information? Her/his name is ____, and they will be calling/emailing you to share more information about this program and determine if you may be eligible for these additional support services and resources.”

Next Steps

Utilize your LEAs information-sharing systems to communicate:

- Student contact information and change in housing status to your homeless liaison. This will help to facilitate prompt identification and services for newly identified students.
- That the student or family has moved outside of their attendance zone.
- Student safety concerns
- Number of people in the home, hotel, or motel.
- If the student or the family is now living in a shelter.
- Academic and social services needed.

LEAs should ensure policies regarding privacy and sharing of personal information of students and families experiencing homelessness are in place and have been provided to all LEA staff. For more information, please visit: [FERPA FAQ](#)

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To effectively identify homeless youths, one must be able to detect red flags and understand the definition of homeless. Homelessness creates significant educational barriers for children and youth. Students experiencing homelessness lack basic resources like a safe and stable place to live, food, and clothing, all of which impacts their ability to attend and succeed in school. Below is a list of red flags to be aware of:

- Truancy (Tardiness and Chronic Absenteeism)
- Poor Hygiene
- Behavior Problems
- Fatigued or Stressed
- Ran away from home
- Living with friends or relatives\Withdrawn
- In a hotel
- Tattered clothing
- Human trafficking, including exchanging sex for basic life needs
- Hoarding food
- Multiple addresses in a short time frame
- Domestic violence & family violence
- Staying late on campus grounds
- Incarcerated parents
- Sleeping at different houses

Note: this list is not inexhaustible....

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Q5



Think about it...

If you identify a student who may be experiencing homelessness, you should:

Multichoice

Answer 1: Speak with the student and probe for additional information

Response 1 That is incorrect!

If you identify a student who may be experiencing homelessness, you should speak with the student and probe for additional information, refer the student to their counselor or EASE counselor, and speak with the registrar.

Score 0

Jump Next page**Answer 2 :** Refer the student to their counselor or EASE counselor**Response 2** That is incorrect!

If you identify a student who may be experiencing homelessness, you should speak with the student and probe for additional information, refer the student to their counselor or EASE counselor, and speak with the registrar.

Score 0**Jump** Next page**Answer 3 :** Speak with the registrar**Response 3** That is incorrect!

If you identify a student who may be experiencing homelessness, you should speak with the student and probe for additional information, refer the student to their counselor or EASE counselor, and speak with the registrar.

Score 0**Jump** Next page

Answer 4: Speak with the student and probe for additional information, refer the student to their counselor or EASE counselor, and speak with the registrar

Response 4 That is correct!

If you identify a student who may be experiencing homelessness, you should speak with the student and probe for additional information, refer the student to their counselor or EASE counselor, and speak with the registrar.

Score 1**Jump** Next page

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Think about it...

Students who are experiencing homelessness may demonstrate:

**Multichoice****Answer 1 :** Poor Hygiene**Response 1** That answer is incorrect!

Students who are experiencing homelessness may demonstrate poor hygiene and tattered clothing.

Score 0**Jump** Next page**Answer 2 :** Talkative and social behaviors**Response 2** That answer is incorrect!

Students who are experiencing homelessness may demonstrate poor hygiene and tattered clothing.

Score 0**Jump** Next page**Answer 3 :** Tattered or same clothing**Response 3** That answer is incorrect!

Students who are experiencing homelessness may demonstrate poor hygiene and tattered clothing.

Score 0

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Answer 4: Poor hygiene and tattered clothing

Response 4 That answer is correct!
Students who are experiencing homelessness may demonstrate poor hygiene and tattered clothing.

Score 1

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Think about it...

School districts may choose to have homeless liaison.

True/false

Answer 1: False

Response 1 This is correct!
School districts must designate a homeless liaison.

Score 1

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Answer 2: True

Response 2 That is incorrect!
School districts must designate a homeless liaison.

Score 0

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Think about it...

The homeless liaison is an advocate for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

True/false

Answer 1: True

Response 1 This is correct!
The homeless liaison is an advocate for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Score 1

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Answer 2: False

Response 2 This is incorrect!
The homeless liaison is an advocate for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Score 0

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Think about it...



Betty reported that she is living in a hotel with her sister because of the death of her parent. Betty may meet the criteria for McKinney-Vento.

True/false

Answer 1: True

Response 1 This is correct!

Betty lives in a hotel, so she may meet the criteria for McKinney-Vento.

Score 1

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Answer 2: False

Response 2 This is incorrect!

Betty lives in a hotel, so she may meet the criteria for McKinney-Vento.

Score 0

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Children and youths experience traumatizing events prior to homelessness, so they are at a greater risk of being exposed to violence, abuse, trafficking, and other traumatic experiences (including hunger and illness). The word “homeless” typically does not bring to mind images of children and youth; but in reality, more than 1 million children and youth experiencing homelessness have been identified by U.S. public schools every year since the 2010-2011 school year (National Center for Homeless Education, 2016). School leaders may help by ensuring that all staff members are trained in trauma-informed care.

Administrators, teachers, counselors, and other school staff, are directly involved with children and should always employ sensitivity and understanding in conversations with homeless students. Talk to children and youth about their home situation with care and sensitivity. Understand that although youth may hesitate to disclose it, their home may be a toxic, unsafe, or even an abusive environment.

Note: *These posters should be located somewhere close to your registrar's office to increase awareness.*

For more information about McKinney-Vento or to download a digital copy of these posters, please visit: <https://www.cfsid.net/en/about/know-your-district/departments/student-services/families-transition-fit-program/>

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