

Who is homeless?

(McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001 – Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act – Sec 725)

The term “homeless children and youth” –

- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...; and
- B. includes –
 - i. Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; awaiting foster care placement;
 - j. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is public or private not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings...
 - k. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
 - l. Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purpose of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clause (i) through (iii).

Educational Rights

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, children in homeless situations have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there,
- Attend either the local school or the school of origin, if this is in their best interest; the school of origin is the school the child attended when he/she was permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled,
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin,
- Enroll in school immediately, even if missing records and documents normally required for enrollment such as a birth certificate, proof of residence, previous school records, or immunization/medical records,
- Enroll, attend classes, and participate fully in all school activities while the school arranges for transfer of records,
- Have access to the same programs and services that are available to all other students including transportation and supplemental educational services,
- Have access to free school meals/lunch programs,
- Attend school with children not experiencing homelessness; segregation based on a student's status as homeless is prohibited.



Education for Homeless Iowa Administrative Code - IAC [281] Ch 33

- A homeless child or youth ages 3-21;
- A child who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes the following:
- A child who is sharing the housing of others (includes doubled-up families) due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; is living in a motel, hotel, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; is living in an emergency or transitional shelter; is abandoned in a hospital, or is awaiting foster care placement.
- A child who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans beings
- A child who is living in a car, park, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting; or
- A migratory child/youth who qualifies as homeless because of the living circumstances described above
 - Includes youth who have runaway or youth being forced to leave home.

Resources

Local Homeless Liaison: Every Iowa public school district is required to have a liaison for homeless students. Contact the local school district administration office.

State Coordinator for Homeless Education
Sandy Johnson, Iowa Department of Education
Sandra.johnson@iowa.gov 515-281-3965
<http://www.educateiowa.gov>

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)
<http://www.serve.org/nche>
Toll-free Helpline: 800-308-2145

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAECHY)
<http://www.naehcy.org>