



The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Homeless Education Program (HEP) has designed the following guidance document to provide local education agencies (LEAs) and McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons with essential guidance for the identification, enrollment, and school retention of students experiencing homelessness.

### Statutory Requirements

- LEAs shall ensure that homeless children and youth (HCY) have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths [\(42 U.S.C. § 11431\)](#).
- Where proof of residency or other requirements in laws, regulations, practices, or policies, may act as a barrier to the identification of or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of HCY the State educational agency (SEA) and LEA will review and revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that HCY are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths [\(42 U.S.C. § 11431 \(2\)\)](#).
- HCY should have access to the educational and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held [\(42 U.S.C. § 11431\(4\)\)](#).
- Provision of both the **Student Residency Questionnaire** and the **Rights of Homeless Students** is required at **any time enrollment is requested** and twice annually [\(42 U.S.C. § 11432 \(g\)\(3\)\)](#).
- Students in homeless situations have the right either to continue attending their school of origin or to enroll immediately in the local school, according to each student's best interest [\(42 U.S.C. § 11432\(g\)\(3\)\(A\); \(42 U.S.C. § 11432\(g\)\(1\)\(J\)\(iii\)\)](#).
- The terms "enroll" and "enrollment" include **attending classes and participating fully** in school activities [\(42 U.S.C. § 11434a\)](#).
- LEAs must **presume** that keeping the child or youth in the **school of origin** is in the child's or youth's **best interest**, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth [\(42 U.S.C. § 11432\(g\)\(3\)\(B\)\(i\)\)](#).
- LEAs must establish policies and procedures to remove barriers to the immediate enrollment of HCY and unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY), including procedures to maintain and share records with a new school or district in a timely manner [\(42 U.S.C. § 11432 \(g\)\(1\)\(H\)-\(I\); 42 U.S.C. § 11432 \(g\)\(3\)\(A\)-\(D\)\)](#).
- LEAs must establish policies and procedures to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of children and youth experiencing homelessness through the prompt coordination and assistance of parents, guardians, and UHY in accessing transportation to and from the school of origin [\(42 U.S.C. § 11432 \(e\)\(3\)\(E\)\(i\)\(III\); \(g\)\(1\)\(J\); \(g\)\(4\)\(A\); \(g\)\(5\)\(A\)\(ii\); \(g\)\(6\)\(A\)\(vii\); \(g\)\(7\)\(B\)\)](#).

## Requirements to Ensure Programmatic Sustainability & Statutory Compliance

- LEAs are required to develop a written internal plan detailing the responsible personnel, process (i.e., sequential steps to be taken), timeline, and related documents required to ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness are identified, immediately enrolled, and services coordinated during the summer, intersession breaks, and any time when school is not in session.
- LEAs are required to establish a written internal plan detailing the responsible personnel, process (i.e., sequential steps to be taken), and timeline required to utilize the required **ADE Student Residency Questionnaire** to remove barriers to the identification and immediate enrollment of HCY and UHY.
- If individuals choose not to complete the Student Residency Questionnaire, but have been identified as potentially experiencing homelessness, immediate enrollment and referral to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison should occur to remove barriers to the identification and immediate enrollment of HCY and UHY. Please reference the flowcharts on pages 4 and 5 for the specific steps to be taken.
- LEAs are required to establish a written internal plan detailing the responsible personnel, process (i.e., sequential steps to be taken), and timeline to incorporate and utilize the **LEA's Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit** in place of guardianship requirements to remove barriers to the immediate enrollment of UHY.
- LEAs are required to develop a written procedure to establish an internal process to **coordinate** with LEA personnel to support the identification of HCY and UHY throughout the school year.
- LEAs are required to develop a written procedure to establish a process of **coordinating** with **nearby school districts** to streamline the identification and immediate enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- LEAs are required to develop a written procedure to establish a process of **coordinating** with local shelter and housing service providers and programs to streamline the identification and immediate enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- LEAs are required to develop an internal written plan to review and revise policies, procedures, and practices to support with the continued development, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability to identify, refer, and provide services for HCY and UHY.

## Resources

<a href="#">Arizona Student Residency Questionnaire and the Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youths</a>	Provision of both the Student Residency Questionnaire and the Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youths is required at any time enrollment is requested and twice annually ( <a href="#">42 U.S.C. § 11432 (g)(3)</a> ).
<a href="#">ADE Sample Identification and Eligibility Interview Questions and Checklist</a>	This checklist will help guide your conversations with the parent, guardian, or youth to determine if the child or youth meets the definition of homeless and identify the needs of the family, and child or youth.
<a href="#">ADE Sample Best Interest Determination (BID) Form</a>	This form will help ensure that the school placement decision is <b>student-centered and individualized</b> .
<a href="#">ADE Sample Written Notice of Eligibility and School Placement Determination</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once the LEA determines that a child or youth is eligible, <b>written notification</b>, including the Rights of Homeless Students shall be <b>provided immediately</b>.</li> <li>If, after examining the details acquired through the interview step, the LEA concludes that a child or youth is <b>not</b> eligible, <b>written notification</b>, including the Rights of Homeless Students shall be <b>provided immediately</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The written notice of ineligibility must detail the reason for the determination and include information regarding the right to appeal through the LEA's Dispute Resolution process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<a href="#">ADE McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison Trainings</a>	Recordings and other presentation materials are available for your reference and use.
<a href="#">The National Center for Homeless Education</a>	<a href="#">Brief into Practice Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations</a>



The following flowcharts detail the basic identification process beginning with the completion of a Student Residency Questionnaire or notification by any other means that indicates a student may be experiencing homelessness. Each process outlines the steps required for McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons through the identification process, as well as next steps if the student **MEETS THE DEFINITION of HOMELESS** versus if the student **DOES NOT MEET THE DEFINITION OF HOMELESS**.

It is highly recommended that the flowcharts be incorporated into the annual McKinney-Vento training that each McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison is statutorily required to provide to their LEA. Additionally, placing the flow charts in areas where registrars and other LEA staff can easily reference them ensures the effective identification, immediate enrollment, and removal of educational barriers.



