



**FEBRUARY 2023**

# HOMELESS ED NEWS

## DATES TO CONSIDER

Professional Learning opportunities hosted by the ADE HEP Team.

**Tuesday, February 21, 2023, from 10:00 am to 11:00 am**

**Wednesday, February 22, 2023, from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

**Thursday, February 23, 2023 from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm**

**Wednesday, March 1, 2023, from 9:00-10:00am**

See page 2 for information and registration links.

**The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) is offering webinars during the month of February. See page 2 for more information.**

**FY24 EHCY Year 1 Grant opens March 1, 2023, and closes May 1, 2023**

## ***ABOUT OUR PROGRAM***

The [Arizona Homeless Education Program](#) (HEP) is a federally funded program, under Subtitle VII-B of The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The act authorizes the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program and is the primary piece of federal legislation related to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness. It was reauthorized in December 2015 by Title IX, Part A, of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

The mission of the Homeless Education Program is to ensure positive comparable academic outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness through implementation of the McKinney-Vento statute.

Our office provides support to the Local Education Agency (LEA) to improve the provision of comprehensive education and related services to homeless children and youths and their families. Our office strategically gathers and makes available dependable, valid, and comprehensive materials and professional development. The goal of this coordination is to provide higher quality learning experiences and improve education and other outcomes for children and families experiencing homelessness.

For oversight of HEP program, please contact [Dr. Brittani \(Didi\) Roy](#), Director of Educational Policy and Program Integrity, or [Rita Rodriguez](#), State Homeless Education Program Coordinator.

For questions or technical assistance, email us at [Homeless@azed.gov](mailto:Homeless@azed.gov).

*Please note that you are receiving this newsletter because you either you have signed up for it or, are currently listed as the McKinney-Vento McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison for your district. To update contact information contained in this list, please [click on this link](#) and you will be redirected to the form.*

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# Professional Learning

The McKinney-Vento Act requires State Coordinators to provide professional learning opportunities for LEA personnel and the McKinney-Vento (MV) Homeless Liaison to assist them in identifying and meeting the needs of homeless children and youths, and to provide training on the definitions of terms related to homelessness (42 U.S.C. § 11432(f)(6)). In addition, the law requires States to adopt policies and practices to ensure participation by McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons in professional learning and other technical assistance activities (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(J)(iv)).

To better understand the role of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison, it is helpful to know the requirements of LEAs. LEAs are instrumental in ensuring that rights and services are implemented, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons are the key individuals responsible for making this happen at their LEAs. The McKinney-Vento Act includes a “job description” for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison in the form of a list of duties (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)). You can read the document here [Local Educational Agency Liaison Duties](#).



**Our office is hosting professional learning opportunities for McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons!**

## **Training Requirement and Certificates**

As a reminder, liaisons are required to attend 8 hours of professional learning every school year. This includes district and building site liaisons. If you are responsible for making McKinney-Vento eligibility determinations, you must attend.

Following each session, you will be directed to a survey. The completion of the survey along with registration and full attendance of the session will be used as proof of your participation. Once we have compiled these reports, we will send out a certification of participation. Please allow us time to analyze results and send these out.

## **Awareness, Identification, District Training and How It is all Tied to Data**

Topics that will be covered in this training include the identification, awareness and district training strategies that can be implemented at your LEA. We will also demonstrate how these processes are critical to data collection.

- Tuesday, February 21, 2023 from 10:00 am to 11:00 am to register [click here](#).
- Wednesday, February 22, 2023 from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm to register [click here](#).

## **FY24 Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Competitive Grant Application - What to Expect and How to Apply**

In this session, we will provide a project overview of the FY24 EHCY Competitive Grant by detailing eligibility requirements, joining a consortium, allowable uses of funds, how to apply, and what to expect when applying. LEAs will leave prepared to develop and apply for a data-centered program to address the unique needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. McKinney-Vento Liaisons are strongly encouraged to attend, along with any LEA staff that make

programmatic and funding decisions related to homeless children and youth attend, such as Federal Grants Coordinators, Title I Directors, etc.

- Thursday, February 23, 2023, from 12:30-1:30pm to register [click here](#).
- Wednesday, March 1, 2023, from 9:00-10:00am to register [click here](#).

### **Additional Learning Resources**

#### **National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)**

NCHE operates the U.S. Department of Education's technical assistance and information center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program. NCHE SERVE offers resource publications for organizations, parents, and students to help educate them regarding their rights and the tools available to them. [Register for training](#) today!

- Paving the Way to College for Students Experiencing Homelessness  
Wednesday, February 22, 2023 | 2:00PM-3:00PM ET

#### **SchoolHouse Connection-Q & A**

SchoolHouse Connection is a national non-profit organization working to overcome homelessness through education. They provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with early childhood programs, schools, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth. [Click here](#) to view the webinar schedule.

#### **Education for Homeless Children and Youths Programs Non-Regulatory Guidance**

#### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

#### **42 USC CHAPTER 119, SUBCHAPTER VI, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths**

#### **NCHE Brief - Partnering to Support Educational Success for Runaway and Homeless Youth**

#### **Head Start Policy and Regulations**

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## ***ADE Sample Forms***

Our Homeless Education Program Office has devised example forms for your use. Please check the [Guidance and Procedures page on the ADE Homeless Education Program website](#) for additions and revisions on an ongoing basis. Please note that these revised sample forms and guidance documents may be adapted for use at your LEA.

### **ADE Identification, Eligibility, & Assessment of Need Interview Tool Sample**

Each local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youths, designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), shall ensure that homeless children and youth are identified by school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies (42 U.S.C. § 11432 (g)(6)(A)(i)). The process of identification and eligibility determination involves three basic steps, 1) Gather all the relevant information, 2) Analyze what you know, 3) Seek consultation as needed.

Each student has a unique housing situation; as a result, determinations regarding eligibility and services under McKinney-Vento must be determined on a case-by-case basis for each student. Remember, McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons are responsible for developing rapport and trust during the interview process. It is important to allow families to share their story to ensure you are

obtaining necessary details to make a proper determination. Understanding the entire scope of the situation will enable you to make a well-informed decision.

As you conduct your interview process, consider consulting with school staff and community partners to gather information about the student's situation. Staff often build a relationship with the student, or parent, and can be privy to additional details. Use this document to help guide your conversation with the parent, guardian, caregiver, or student to determine if the student's living situation is considered fixed, regular, and adequate.

### **[ADE Consent to Release of Information \(ROI\) Sample](#)**

This sample form can be implemented in your LEA/Charter as a collaboration tool between schools, parent, guardian, caregiver, student, and homeless service providers. Implementation of such collaborations is essential to ending homelessness and its effect on the lives of children and youth. To aid in this collaboration local school districts can establish Release of Information (ROI) protocols for student identification, service referrals, and data or information sharing. The ROI should specify mutually accepted expectations, protocols, and parameters.

Each local educational agency serving homeless children and youths that receives assistance under this part shall coordinate the provision of services with local social services agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and youths and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. § 5701 et seq.); and with other local educational agencies on inter-district issues, such as transportation or transfer of school records.

The coordination required is to ensure that homeless children and youths have access and reasonable proximity to available education and related support services; and raise the awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(5)(A)).

### **[ADE Written Notification of McKinney-Vento Eligibility Decision Sample](#)**

In compliance with 42 U.S. C. § 11432(g)(3)(E) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, written notification must be provided to the parent, guardian, caregiver, or student. The right to appeal the decision and how to go about that process must be included in the letter.

The LEA should ensure that all decisions and notices are drafted using language and formatting appropriate for low-literacy, limited vision readers, and individuals with disabilities. For children and youth and/or their parents or guardians who are English learners or whose dominant language is a language other than English, LEAs must provide translation and interpretation services in connection with all stages of the dispute resolution process, consistent with the requirements of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (20 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.). If the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth has access to email, the LEA should provide notices electronically followed by a written notice provided in person or sent by mail. ([Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)).

Use this sample to guide the development of your LEAs written notification. Remember, all determinations require a written notification, whether they qualify or not. Additionally, a copy of the [Rights of Homeless Students](#) should accompany the notice.

### **[ADE Dispute Resolution Procedures](#)**

The McKinney-Vento Act mandates basic protections and procedures to follow when a dispute arises "over eligibility, or school selection or enrollment in a school." The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth must be provided with a written explanation of any decisions related to school selection or enrollment made by the school, the LEA, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or

unaccompanied youth to appeal such decisions. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth must be referred to the local liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible. Additionally, the child or youth “shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.” [\[42 U.S.C. § 11432\(g\)\(3\)\(E\)\]](#).

Having established a procedure ahead of time will help streamline the process and ensure your LEA is not creating barriers to enrollment and full participation. Please note, your LEA will be required to submit your official notice of rights for students experiencing homelessness and the written dispute resolution process for both the upcoming FY24 EHCY grant application and as an assurance during the monitoring process.

### [ADE Dispute Resolution Procedure \(Student/Family vs. LEA\)](#)

This form outlines the process to file a request for dispute resolution with the Office of the State Homeless Education Coordinator. This process shall be used by the parent, guardian, caregiver, or youth AFTER the appeal process has been requested and a determination has been made at the LEA level.

### [ADE Dispute Resolution Procedure \(LEA vs. LEA\)](#)

This form outlines the process to file a request for dispute resolution with the Office of the State Homeless Education Coordinator if a dispute occurred between two LEAs regarding eligibility, school selection, enrollment, or transportation of a child or youth experiencing homelessness.

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## ***Technical Assistance***

Through strong leadership, collaboration, and communication with local McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons, the State Coordinator can help ensure that districts carry out the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act. State Coordinators should establish clear-cut policies and procedures at the State level and communicate this information to districts to facilitate the smooth and consistent implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act (U.S. Department of Education (ED), 2016, p.11).

Examples of questions that are frequently addressed through technical assistance include:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to community resources</li><li>• Attendance</li><li>• Best Interest Determination (BID)</li><li>• Data Reporting</li><li>• Dispute Resolution procedures</li><li>• Enrollment and identification</li><li>• Eligibility dates</li><li>• ESS and McKinney-Vento guidance</li><li>• Grant related questions</li><li>• Immunizations</li><li>• Mentoring</li><li>• Preschool and Head Start enrollment</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Procedures &amp; Sample forms</li><li>• Roles &amp; Responsibilities of LEA</li><li>• School supplies/clothing</li><li>• School of origin</li><li>• Training opportunities</li><li>• Transportation</li><li>• Unaccompanied youth enrollment</li><li>• Written notification</li><li>• *General inquiries</li></ul> |
|---|--|

**If you encounter a situation that you are unsure of and would like support, our office is available to provide technical assistance, please contact us at (602) 542-4963 or via email at [Homeless@azed.gov](mailto:Homeless@azed.gov).**

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# Grants & Monitoring Updates

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is enacted via the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, and was reauthorized by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Through the EHCY program the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) provides annual grant award to State Education Agencies (SEAs) to then subgrant to Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The purpose of the EHCY subgrant funds is to [supplement the services provided to all students](#) to eliminate the specific barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, and academic success of children and youth experiencing homelessness (42 U.S.C. § 11433(a)(3)).

**Grant Application Details:** ADE awards the EHCY subgrants through a competitive and discretionary process. While the subgrant awards are contingent upon the annual state allocation provided by the USDE, the EHCY subgrants run on a three-year grant cycle. FY24 constitutes the first year of the forthcoming three-year EHCY grant cycle. Please note that the FY24 EHCY grant application will open on **March 1, 2023**, and close on **May 1, 2023**.

**Updated Subgrant Funding Guidelines:** Selection of EHCY subgrantees will be made based on the proposed project's quality, a data-driven assessment of the educational and related needs of students, and the ability of the applicant to meet these needs. Applicants must be able to demonstrate need by having a minimum of 50 students experiencing homelessness enrolled as of March 1, 2023. An LEA may consider joining a consortium comprised of LEA Consortium Members within their service area or zip code to meet or exceed the minimum threshold requirement of this application.

- **Summary of Update:** The minimum threshold required for LEAs to apply for FY24 EHCY funding is to have 50 students experiencing homelessness enrolled in their Student Information System (SIS) for SY 22-23, **as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023**.

**Subgrant Consortium Guidelines:** Please note that it is the responsibility of the LEAs that must join consortia to meet or exceed the minimum requirement of the application to identify, communicate, and establish consortium requirements **prior** to the fiscal agents submitting an FY24 EHCY grant application on behalf of their consortia.

To this end, each consortium must establish a fiscal agent to **submit a single FY24 EHCY grant application on behalf of the consortium during the grant application submission window** and ensure compliance with the terms of the grant. These requirements include but are not limited to uploading its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Assurances and Certifications for each LEA Consortium Member, program narrative responses reflective of the identified needs of each LEA Consortium Member, and a proposed budget that is reflective of the fiscal agreements comprised in the MOU at the time of the initial submission of the FY24 EHCY grant application.

**Considerations:** It is important to acknowledge that the project availability of the ARP-HCY I & II grant funds concludes September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and that this EHCY grant cycle ends September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2027. To this end, when considering whether to apply for the FY24 EHCY grant, please note that the additional EHCY funds will surpass the duration of the ARP-HCY I & II funds. Applying for funding is highly encouraged.

**Recommended Next Steps:** LEAs should begin preparing for the FY24 EHCY grant application process by reviewing and utilizing the updated grant application materials below:

- **FY24 EHCY Grant Application Materials – ALL LEAs and Consortia Fiscal Agents**
  - **General Grant Application Components**

- [Program Information and Instructions](#)
- [Updated FY24 EHCY Program Narrative Questions](#)
  - Please note that the program narrative questions have been revised, and the number of questions reduced.
  - The program narrative questions are shared with the intention of supporting LEAs / fiscal agents in preparing for the March 1<sup>st</sup> – May 1<sup>st</sup> grant application submission window.
- [EHCY Assurances](#)
- **Related Documents**
  - [Checklist of Supplemental Materials to be Uploaded into the Related Documents](#)
  - [Collaborations within the LEA](#)
  - [Collaborations with CBOs](#)
- **Resources**
  - [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act – Funding Uses](#)
  - [EHCY Use of Funds Tip Sheet](#)
  - [USFR for Arizona School Districts](#)
  - [EHCY Grant Budget Cheat Sheet](#)
  - [EHCY Budget Revision Guidance](#)
- **FY24 EHCY Grant Application Materials – ONLY Consortia Fiscal Agents**
  - **Related Documents**
    - [Sample Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#)
    - [Required EHCY Program Assurances and Certifications](#)

Additional information, including the FY24 EHCY grant application scoring rubric, funding tiers, information sessions, and other resources will be made available within the coming weeks on the [EHCY Funding website](#).

Please email [Homeless@azed.gov](mailto:Homeless@azed.gov) with any questions and feedback regarding the FY24 EHCY grant application.

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## ***Did you know?***

Our office has received requests for clarification surrounding the topic of **treatment centers** and McKinney-Vento eligibility criteria. For clarification, there is nothing within statute that specifically addresses treatment centers, so it is important to consider these situations just as you would any other possible McKinney-Vento scenario.

Remember, McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons are responsible for developing rapport and trust during the interview process. It is important to allow families to share their story to ensure you are obtaining necessary details to make a proper determination. Understanding the decision on the parent's part to make a choice to join a treatment center for actual treatment vs. joining a treatment center due to the promise of temporary housing is important to know.

Here are two examples of treatment facilities and how they are being used that are important to consider.

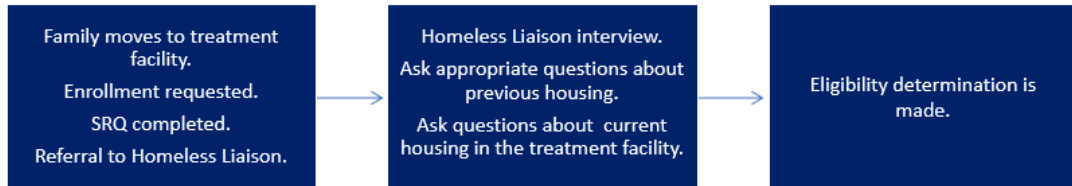
1. Treatment facility programs that are designated to address substance abuse treatment.
2. Treatment facilities that are being used in lieu of shelters and not for treatment.
  - a. These families would be considered MV-eligible just as if they were in a shelter or transitional housing.

- b. We have learned that some tribal communities throughout Arizona may be utilizing these locations to support families experiencing homelessness.

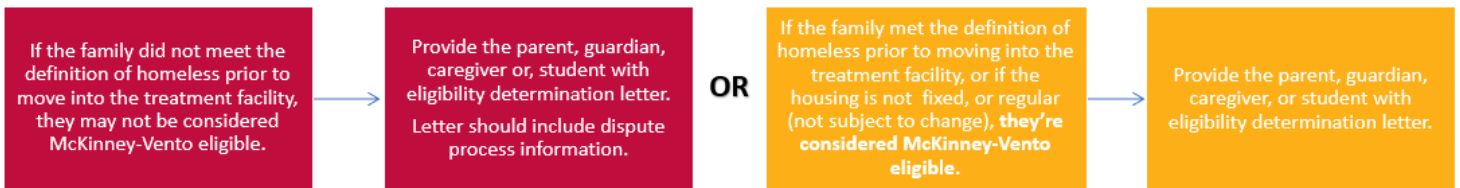
During the interview process it is important to ask the following questions,

1. Did the family meet the definition of homeless prior to placement in the treatment facility?
2. Is the treatment facility considered fixed, regular, and adequate?
  - a. The term "homeless children and youths" (A) means individuals who lack a fixed (not subject to change), regular, and adequate nighttime residence. ([Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#))

Please reference the flow chart below for support with the sequence of actions required to determine MV eligibility centered around treatment centers. You may also reference the following [NCHE brief](#) for additional information.



### Eligibility Determination Outcome



## Celebrating the Work You Do!

Mr. Chris Brown of [Concho Elementary School District #6](#) has been named "Arizona Housing Coalition McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison of the year"! Mr. Brown will receive the award at this year's Annual Conference on February 28<sup>th</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup> in Mesa, Arizona.



The nomination process began in early January and during that time, colleagues submitted nominations in honor of Mr. Brown. One individual shared the following message, "This is a small town, and everyone is aware of the crisis much our community lives in. A sizable percentage lives without running water, electricity, and essentials, meanwhile living in tents in a mountain community where temperatures can reach far below zero. In some cases, students come to school during winter in shorts, and flip flops. Mr. Brown makes sure they have access to warmer things." Another writing, "As a mentor, Mr. Brown is always helping the community and invites others to do the same. He likes to visit people where they live, so he can assess the true needs of the families."

Mr. Brown has held the position of McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison at Concho Elementary for the past seven years. He credits much of his success to his former mentor and friend, Ms. Ronda Sharp.

In conjunction with his school employment, Mr. Brown along with Cori Brown have also founded "[Concho Kitchen United](#)" a successful 501c3. The mission of the non-profit is to help feed people in Apache and Navajo counties. The Browns provide food boxes to families and individuals in the community that are in need.



Mr. Brown is a gentle and humble soul who adds, "I am blessed with many helping hands." He went on to say, "Life is not what you have, it is what you do with what you have in the time that you have been given."

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Amazing work is going into the support of homeless children and youth across Arizona, and we would love to celebrate it. Please continue to share events you will be hosting throughout the year so that we can highlight your work. Send your pictures and event information to [Rita Rodriguez](#), State Homeless Education Program Coordinator.