



Arizona Homeless Education Program

Supporting Unaccompanied Homeless
Youth, Preschool Through 12th Grade

October 2025

Housekeeping Items

- If you have questions throughout today's session, please share them in the following ways:
 - Enter simple questions into the Q&A feature or type them into the chat.
 - Save in-depth questions for after session office hours.
 - Email homeless@azed.gov with any LEA-specific questions.
- Today's session is being recorded. The recording and presentation slides will be made available to attendees after the training.
- All resources referenced in this training as well as the recording and presentation slides will be shared following the session on the Arizona Homeless Education Program website.
- AI note-taking and other tools are not permitted in ADE sessions.

Arizona Department of Education

The Arizona Department of Education is a service organization committed to raising academic outcomes and empowering parents.

Arizona Homeless Education Program

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

Mission Statements





Meet the Team



Dr. Brittani (Didi) Roy
*Director of
Educational Policy
& Program Integrity*

**Homeless Education
Program**

**Homeless, Foster Care,
and Refugee Student
Support**



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Arizona Homeless Education Program





Self Care Check-In

Self Care Check-In

McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons consistently....

- Listen as individuals share intimate details about their life
- Act swiftly to establish immediate help and seek support for long term solutions
- Form connections with parent, guardians, youth, community partners, school personnel, state agencies.
- Problem solve
- Ensure programmatic compliance
- Serve with compassion and empathy

“Every single call or interaction I had daily, involved a conversation where someone was reaching out with a problem or a crisis, hoping I could help or fix it.”

On a scale of 1 – 5, how much do you relate to this statement?

**Answer
in the
pop-up
poll!**

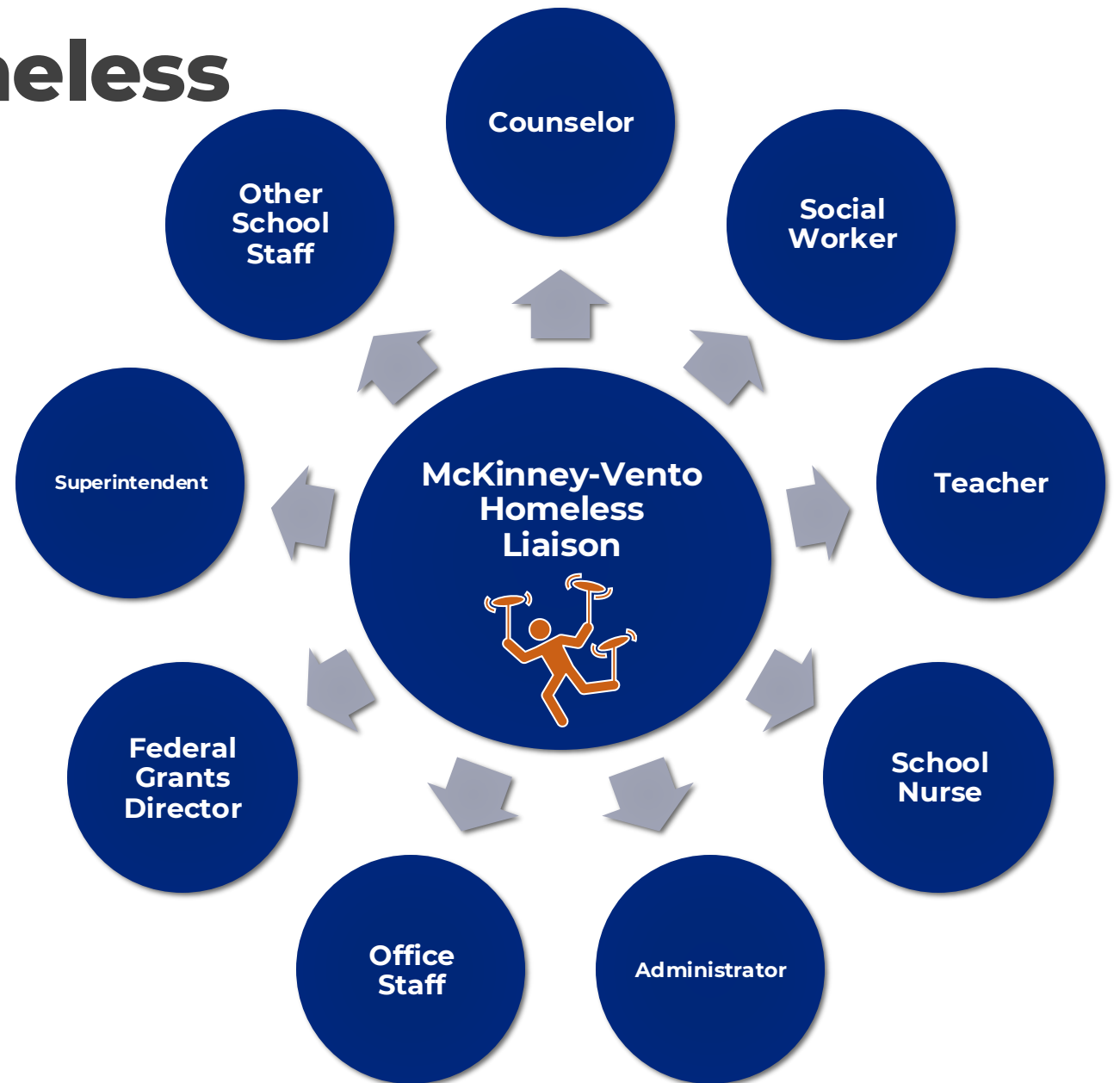
McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison Capacity

- **Statutory Requirements**

- LEAs must designate a liaison
- Liaisons must be able to carry out ten specific duties

- **The Arizona HEP Recommends LEAs**

- Increase the Liaisons capacity to ensure implementation of the statutorily required roles and responsibilities.
- Asses the ability for the designated Liaison to help address the identification and provision of services for homeless children and youths.





Today's Session

Common Acronyms and Terms

DOE Department of Education	ADE Arizona Department of Education	HCY Homeless Children and Youth	SIS student information system	BID best interest determination
SEA State Education Agency	HEP Homeless Education Program	UHY Unaccompanied Homeless Youth	TA technical assistance	NCHE National Center for Homeless Education
LEA local educational agency	McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison of Record Site-Based McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison		SHC SchoolHouse Connection	CBO community-based organization

Objective

McKinney- Vento Homeless Liaisons will...

- Become familiarized with the **common experiences** and **challenges** faced by unaccompanied homeless youth, as well as **solutions** to support them;
- Explore **guidance** and **procedures** for ensuring the **identification, enrollment, and removal of barriers** for unaccompanied homeless youth.

Agenda

- Understanding the Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Experience
 - Common Experiences of UHY
 - Key Definitions
 - Unique Challenges and Solutions
- Identifying and Enrolling UHY
 - Guidance and Resources
- Additional Support for UHY and Resources
 - Arizona State Laws Supporting UHY
 - Additional Resources

Pre-Assessment

Let's test your knowledge.

Pre-Assessment

1. True or False: A child that continues to live with a caregiver for several years doesn't qualify as an unaccompanied homeless youth after the first year they are identified.
2. The definition of an unaccompanied homeless youth is
 - a) A child experiencing homelessness that is not in the physical care of a parent or court-appointed legal guardian.
 - b) A youth that is experiencing homelessness and is living on their own.
 - c) An unaccompanied child that is living with a family member that has obtained court-appointed legal guardianship.
3. A Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit
 - a) Is a tool utilized by LEAs to ensure enrollment barriers are removed for unaccompanied homeless youth.
 - b) Is a requirement for the caregiver to complete to enroll a student.
 - c) Is not necessary for an unaccompanied homeless youth living on their own.
 - d) Is a requirement for LEAs to have implemented in their McKinney-Vento identification procedures.

Understanding the Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Experience



- Common Experiences Leading to UHY Eligibility
- Key Definitions
- Unique Challenges, Impact, and Solutions for UHY
 - Early Childhood & Preschool
 - Kindergarten – 8th Grade
 - High School



SchoolHouse
Connection

A Look at Youth Experiencing
Homelessness on Their Own

SchoolHouse Connection





Share Your Knowledge

What **common experiences** leading to **UHY eligibility** have you encountered among the families and students you serve?

Type your
answer in
the chat!

Common Experiences Leading to UHY Eligibility

Unaccompanied youth arrive in their situation for a variety of causes:

Family Dysfunction

- “Blended family” conflict - parent has a new partner, who may have children of their own
 - Substance abuse
 - Pregnancy
 - Sexual activity
 - Sexual and/or gender orientation
-
- Family homelessness, yet the child or youth is not able to stay in shelter or placement

Parental Absence

- Neglect and abandonment
 - Abuse
 - Incarceration
 - Mental and/or Physical Illness
 - Deportation
 - Death
-
- Aging out of foster care, yet still obtaining high school diploma



Legal Definition of UHY

Homeless



Fixed: Stationary, permanent, not subject to change.



Regular: Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis.



Adequate: Lawfully and reasonably sufficient.

Does it sufficiently meet the physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment?



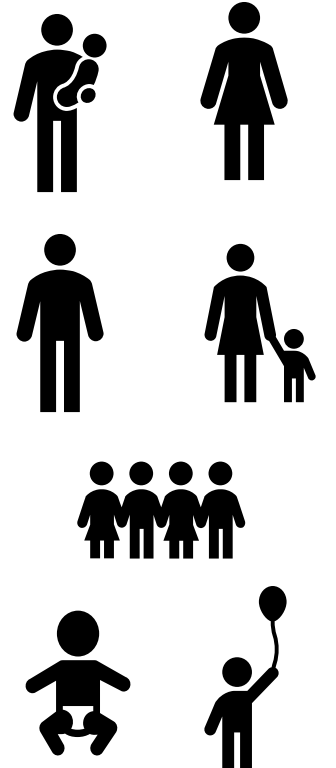
Unaccompanied

“Not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian”

- Friend
- Family member
- Unsheltered on their own
- “Couch-Surfing”
- Homeless youth shelter



UHY



UHY: Terms to Understand

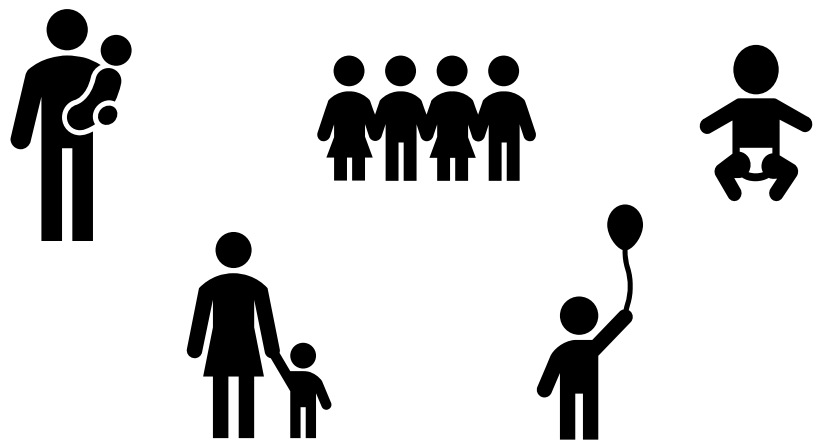
Homeless



Unaccompanied



UHY



Caregiver



Youth on Their Own

UHY: Terms to Understand

Court-Appointed Legal Guardian

A “court-appointed legal guardian” is an individual authorized by a court to care for a minor.

Caregiver

A “caregiver” is an adult who does not have court-appointed legal guardianship and is caring for and housing a minor child.

UHY: Terms to Understand

Court-Appointed Emergency Guardianship

Emergency guardianship is used when an adult needs immediate assistance in making decisions regarding a minor. It begins on a specific date and ends not more than six (6) months later.

Court-Appointed Temporary Guardianship

Temporary guardianship may be sought when parents are temporarily unable to care for the child. It begins on a specific date and ends not more than six (6) months later.

Parental Power of Attorney (PPOA)

A PPOA is used to give another adult temporary authority over a child. It does not take away the parent's custody rights and may be revoked by the parent. It begins on a specific date and ends not more than six (6) later.

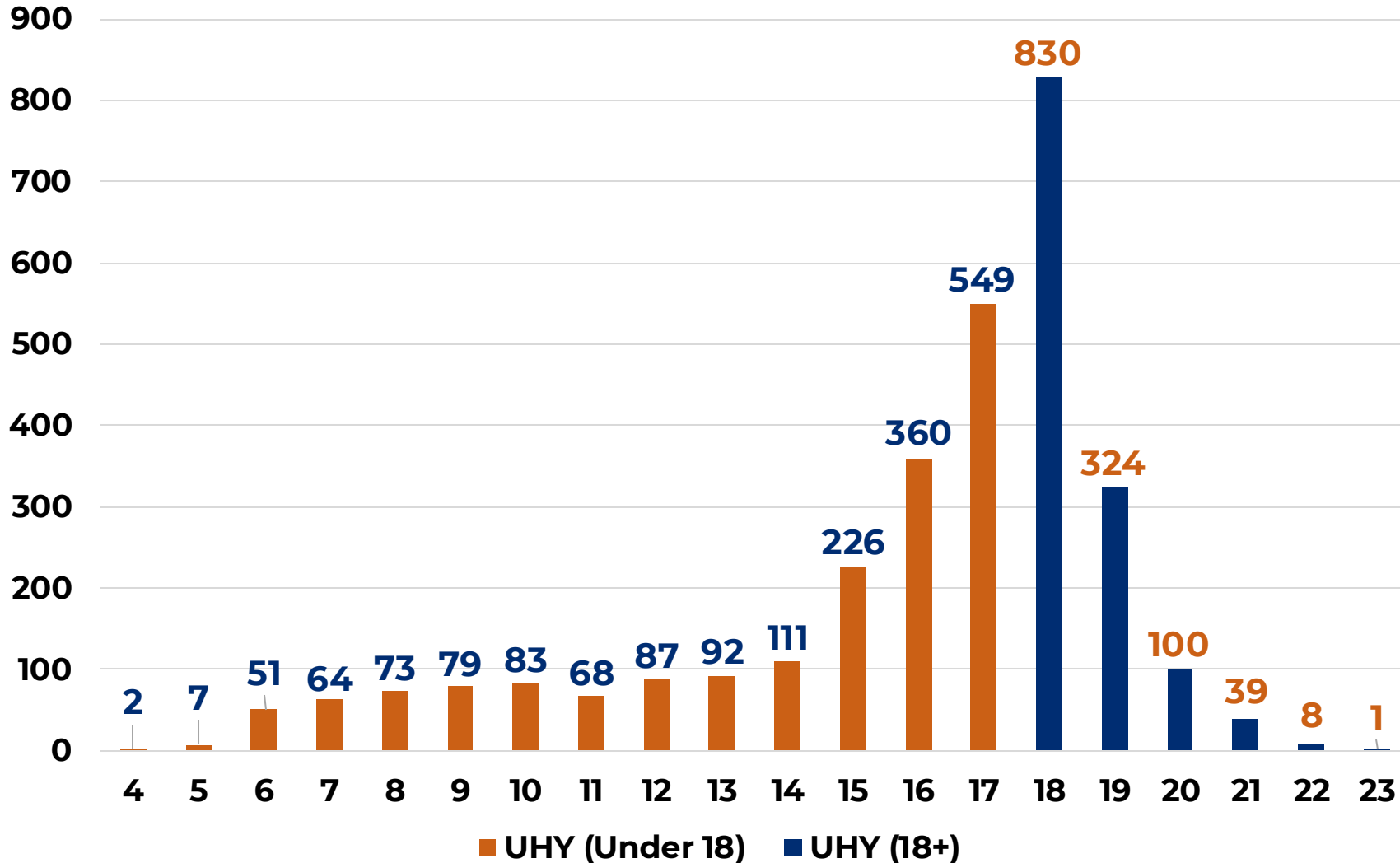
Requirements and Guidance for UHY

LEAs should **not implement a blanket policy to contact DCS or law enforcement agencies upon identifying UHY.**

- Avoid practices that “chill” or discourage identification of UHY.
- Ensure the message youth receive is that they are safe, supported, and have rights under the law.
- Ensure leadership are trained and understand what is needed to remove barriers for UHY.
- Ensure Liaisons are empowered to support UHY.
- Include school resource officers in specialized training.
- Remember that McKinney-Vento law may give additional rights to UHY, unlike many other educational laws.
- A report to the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) should be conducted in situations of [abuse or neglect](#).

2025 Total Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY) by Age

(identified by schools & districts)



2025 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Point-In-Time (PIT) Count Data Maricopa Regional Continuum of Care

Estimated Unaccompanied Youth (age 18-24) Experiencing Homelessness in Arizona	690
Percentage of Unsheltered Unaccompanied Youth (age 18-24) Experiencing Homelessness in Arizona	4%

Unique Challenges & Impact on UHY in Early Childhood & Preschool

Educational Impacts

Students may lack...

- The early years of life from birth to age six are among the most formative and developmentally critical.
 - The brain is growing
 - Motor skills are being developed
 - Social emotional skills are being learned
- Caregivers may not have the capacity to help support with school readiness. The lack of school readiness may impact the child's success as they transition into Kindergarten.
- Some children remain with a caregiver and without a guardian for years. Awareness of the McKinney-Vento requalification process may not always be explained which may impede school enrollment.

Lifelong Impacts

- The younger and longer a child experiences homelessness, the greater the cumulative toll of negative health outcomes.
- Increases the chance of experiences of homelessness and housing instability as adults.
- Long-term mental health ailments due to instability may cause
 - Anxiety
 - Chronic stress
 - Depression
 - Behavioral issues
- Inconsistent housing prevents learning general life skills which may cause the inability to secure regular employment as an adult.

Solutions for Supporting UHY in Early Childhood & Preschool

- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, LEAs must **enroll homeless students immediately**, even if students do not have required documents, or have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.
- Liaisons are required to ensure that homeless families, children and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible. **Referrals can be made on behalf of the family** to
 - Head Start
 - Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP), established under IDEA Part C
 - Preschool programs administered by the LEA
- Childcare, preschool, Head Start, and **other early childhood programs define homelessness the same as the [McKinney-Vento Act](#)**.
- **Caregivers** caring for a child experiencing homelessness **may in fact, request enrollment** under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act.

Unique Challenges & Impact on UHY in Kinder-8th Grade

Educational Impacts

Students may lack...

- These children struggle with hunger, fatigue, and lack of access to healthcare.
- Stress from the homeless experience and being disconnected from a parent may be misunderstood as bad behavior and punitive actions are taken.
- Some children remain with a caregiver and without a guardian for years. Awareness of the McKinney-Vento requalification process may not always be explained which may impede school enrollment.

Lifelong Impacts

- Lack of support at critical and formative and adolescent years may create distrust as an adult.
- Long term mental health challenges
- Disruption in social bonds can lead to broken relationships with family later in life.
- Socioeconomic disadvantages
- Predisposed to continuing the cycle of homelessness

Solutions for Supporting UHY in Kinder-8th Grade

- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, LEAs must **enroll homeless students immediately**, even if students do not have required documents, or have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.
- McKinney-Vento **identification aids in** ensuring the child is **referred to additional academic support** like,
 - Tutoring
 - Summer school
 - Counseling referrals
 - LEA based after school programs such as 21st-century education or other clubs
 - Community-based after school programs such as the Boys and Girls Club
- The **Liaison** can help **streamline communication** with the classroom **teacher** to ensure awareness of the situation to ensure necessary interventions are considered.
- The Liaison can provide community-based referrals to the caregiver to receive support, counseling and assistance with exploring guardianship options.

Unique Challenges & Impact on UHY in High School

Educational Impacts

- Lack safe, stable housing
- Lack support from a caring adult
- Lack basic needs resulting in hunger, fatigue, and poor health
- Lack consistent access to bathing and laundry facilities
- Lack access to school records or paperwork
- Difficulty accumulating credits due to school mobility
- Lack clothing, school supplies
- Employment that interferes with attendance
- Lack reliable transportation

Lifelong Impacts

- Mental health and substance abuse
- Physical health needs – pregnancy, STDs, untreated illness
- Victimization - physical and sexual assault, human trafficking
- Pushed to criminal activity to survive
- Suicide risk heightened
- These youth are 4.5 times more likely to experience homelessness later in life.

Solutions for Supporting UHY in High School

- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, LEAs must **enroll homeless students immediately**, even if students do not have required documents, or have missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.
 - A youth on their own may enroll without an adult (self enroll)
- **Identification decreases** the likelihood of **dropping out** and provides a safe learning environment and **increases** support with **academic and social necessities**.
- During the Liaisons **interview**, the **need** for **community-based programs** serving UHY such as Homeless Youth Connection or Youth On Their Own (YOTO) may take place.
- **Liaisons provide** high school **UHY with individualized case management** to ensure **college** readiness, **FAFSA** completion and that they obtain knowledge regarding their status as an independent student.

Key Provisions of the FAFSA Simplification Act

Via the **FAFSA Simplification Act** and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education, **new FAFSA provisions** for **unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY)** and **foster youth** were implemented beginning in 2024:

1. **Homeless** and foster care status does **not** need to be **redetermined** every year.
2. **Determinations** of unaccompanied homeless and foster youth status must be made as **quickly** as practicable.
3. The **list of officials** and programs authorized to verify that an applicant is an UHY has **expanded**.
4. Financial aid administrators must **accept an expanded list of documents** to determine UHY status.
5. **Financial aid administrators** must make a determination of **UHY** for youth who cannot get determinations from other authorities.
6. **Financial aid administrators** must make **UHY** and foster youth **determinations** following the processes **outlined in the law** - it is not a matter of professional judgment.

([SchoolHouse Connection, 2023](#))

FAFSA Considerations for LEAs Serving High School UHY

- LEAs **may assign** and train additional **designees** to make UHY determinations in addition to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison, such as:
 - Counselors
 - Administrators
- LEAs **must** be prepared to **adjust HCY determinations** if a student becomes **unaccompanied** at a later point in the school year
- LEAs **must** be **prepared** to **support UHY** students who have graduated with **accessing** a copy of a **Written Notification of Eligibility Letter** to provide to their college or university's financial aid administrator
- LEAs **must** be prepared to **support graduated students** who were not experiencing homelessness while enrolled, but have since lost housing by **sharing resources** and next steps to receive a UHY determination from their financial aid administrator

Identifying and Enrolling UHY



- ***New Guidance!*** Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process Guidance & Resources
- ***Updated!*** Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit (Sample Form)



Share Your Knowledge


Share a **process** or **method** you have implemented at your LEA that has helped to **identify UHY**.

Type your
answer in
the chat!

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process Guidance & Resources

The Arizona HEP has developed the following procedure and flowchart to detail a **general identification and enrollment process** for unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY).


This resource may be used as **reference** during the **development and revision** of local education agency policy and procedure **to ensure the effective identification, immediate enrollment, and removal of educational barriers** for UHY.



Homeless Education

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process Guidance & Resources


The Arizona Homeless Education Program (HEP) has designed this document to provide local education agencies (LEAs) and McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaisons with the information needed for identification, immediate enrollment, school retention, and removal of educational barriers for unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This resource includes children and youth from preschool through high school.



Homeless Education

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process Guidance & Resources

The following procedure and flowchart detail a general identification and enrollment process for unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY). This resource may be used as reference during the development and revision of local education agency policy and procedure to ensure the effective identification, immediate enrollment, and removal of educational barriers for UHY.

Task	Guidance	Resource
<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Following enrollment form completion, the individual supporting enrollment shall check the completed SRQ to evaluate how the screening questions were answered.</p>	<p>Person Responsible:</p> <p>Individual Supporting Enrollment (Front Office, Counselor, Registrar, etc.)</p>	
<p>Review Section A Questions (page 1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is this address based on a temporary living arrangement due to the loss of housing? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> 	<p>To qualify as an unaccompanied homeless youth, a young person must meet two primary criteria under the federal McKinney-Vento Act:</p> <p>Homeless: The youth must lack a "fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence".</p> <p>Unaccompanied: They must not be in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.</p> <p>The questions in Section A highlight if a student may be experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>Identification Process Guidance & Resources</p> <p>Arizona Student Residency Questionnaire and the Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youths</p>

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process Guidance & Resources, 10/2025

1

[Click here to access this resource!](#)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process

Step 1

Step 1: Following enrollment form completion, the individual supporting enrollment shall check the completed SRQ to evaluate how the screening questions were answered.

Person Responsible:
Individual Supporting Enrollment (Front Office, Counselor, Registrar, etc.)

Review Section A Questions (page 1):

Is this address based on a temporary living arrangement due to the loss of housing?
Yes No

Homeless Education Arizona Student Residency Questionnaire

Information contained on this form is confidential and used to determine whether a child or youth meets the definition of homeless under the McKinney-Vento Act. The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under Title VIII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.). Please note, false claims about living situations may affect enrollment.

Section A

Today's date: 10/15/24

Name of individual completing this form: Mrs. Brown

Your telephone number: 480-000-0000 Your email address: mrsbrown@gmail.com

Student name: Charlie Brown

Last school attended: Great Pumpkin Elementary Current grade: 4 Birth date: 1/1/2014

Do you have additional children attending school in our district? Yes No

Do you have children of the preschool age? Yes No

Please provide information about additional children attending school in our district or of preschool age.

Last Name	First Name	Grade	School	District

Address of where the student slept last night: 123 N Anytown, Anytown, USA

Is this address based on a temporary living arrangement due to the loss of housing? Yes No
Examples sharing the housing with others due to economic hardship or similar reason, homelessness, shelter, transitional housing, car, park, campsite, and inadequate housing, including no running water, electricity, or adequate space.

NOTE: If you checked "No" to the temporary living arrangement, you may STOP here. If you checked "Yes", please continue to the next section.

Arizona Student Residency Questionnaire, 8/2024

Review Section B Questions (page 2):

- Name of the parent, guardian or adult caring for the student
- Relationship to the student
- Please place an "X" in each box that best describes where the student sleeps at night.
 - With an adult that is not a parent or court appointed legal guardian
 - Alone, not in the care of a parent or court appointed legal guardian
 - None of the above (please explain):

Section B

Name of the parent/guardian/adult caring for the student: Mrs. Brown

Relationship to the student: Grandmother

If the address you provided in section A is based on a temporary living arrangement, is it due to loss of housing or economic hardship? Yes No

Please place an "X" in each box that best describes where the student sleeps at night.

In a place that does not have windows, doors, running water, heat, electricity, or overcrowded

Staying with a friend or relative because of loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (Example: eviction, foreclosure, fire, flood, lost job, divorce, domestic violence, kicked out by parents, ran away from home)

What date did you begin staying here? _____

In a shelter/transitional housing program (name of agency): _____

What date did you begin staying here? _____

In an unsheltered location (e.g. tent, vehicle, abandoned building, streets, campground, park, bus/train station, or similar place)

Provide the main cross streets of this unsheltered location: _____

In a hotel/motel (name of hotel/motel & address): _____

What date did you begin staying here? _____

With an adult that is not a parent or court appointed legal guardian

Alone, not in the care of a parent or court appointed legal guardian

None of the above (Please explain): The parents are currently incarcerated and we are taking care of him.

The following signature certifies that the information provided above is accurate. False claims about living situations may affect enrollment.

Mrs. Brown 1/15/24

Signature of Person Providing Information Date

Parent/legal guardian/Caregiver/Student

For School Use Only

Please note, the student's cumulative file should not include a copy of this form. Do not make copies of this form. If Section B is filled out, please notify the LEA Homeless Education Liaison, and provide the original form to them.

Name of school site personnel who enrolled the student: _____

Please check the housing types that apply:

Sheltered Doubled-up Unsheltered/FEMA/Substandard Hotel/Motel

Unaccompanied youth: Yes No Transportation to school of origin needed: Yes No

Arizona Student Residency Questionnaire, 8/2024

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process

Step 2

Step 2: Immediately enroll the student if any of the options mentioned in step 1 are selected.

Person Responsible:

Individual Supporting Enrollment (Front Office, Counselor, Registrar, etc.)

Remove barriers to the student's enrollment, such as requirements to provide documentation such as:

- Birth certificate
- Immunization records
- Proof of guardianship or Power of Attorney (POA)
- School records, including special education records
- Proof of residence or require completion of the [Arizona Residency Documentation Form and Affidavit of Shared Residency](#)
- Open enrollment application
- Any other forms that are required by the LEA
- Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process

Step 3

Step 3: Provide notice of educational rights and collect additional information.

Person Responsible:

Individual Supporting Enrollment (Front Office, Counselor, Registrar, etc.)

For All Enrolling Individuals:

- Ensure awareness of the Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youths and direct the caregiver or youth to the contact details for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison.

For Youth Enrolling Themselves:

- Explain that they may qualify for immediate enrollment under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act which includes the right to enroll without a parent, guardian, or caregiver.

For Caregivers Requesting Enrollment of a Child or Youth:

- Explain that the student may qualify for immediate enrollment under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Provide a copy of the **Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit** to the caregiver for completion. Gather the completed form when possible.
- Advise the caregiver that the completed form will be sent to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison for review and they will be following up to provide further support.

Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit (Sample Form)

The Arizona HEP has updated this sample form for LEAs to remove barriers to the immediate enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness, who may not be living with a parent or court-appointed legal guardian, as required by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Updates to the form include:

- Definitions and information for caregivers
- Parent/Guardian information (if available)
- Clarified acknowledgements and options for selection by caregivers

Homeless Education Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit (Sample Form)

This form is designed to remove barriers to the immediate enrollment of children and youth experiencing homelessness, who may not be living with a parent or court-appointed legal guardian, as required by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. There are situations when a child or youth who is homeless may not be able to reside with their parent or court-appointed legal guardian; however, this fact does not nullify the child's or youth's right to receive a free, appropriate public education (42 U.S.C. §11431; 34 CFR 300.101).

The following definitions are provided to aid understanding and accurate completion of this form:

- The term "homeless children and youths" includes individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (42 U.S.C. §11434a (2)).
- An "unaccompanied homeless youth" includes a homeless child or youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or court-appointed legal guardian (42 U.S.C. §11434a (8)), and may be temporarily in the care of an adult who does not have court-appointed legal guardianship or may be residing on their own and is not in the care of an adult.
- A "caregiver" is an adult who does not have court-appointed legal guardianship and is caring for and housing a minor child or youth.
- A "court-appointed legal guardian" is an individual authorized by a court to care for a minor.

Information for the Caregiver

- The caregiver should notify the school office if the minor student named below will be absent on any given day and share whether the student's absence was approved or not by the caregiver.
- The caregiver may choose to make educational decisions on behalf of the minor and stand in for the authorizing party with respect to federal, state, and district educational policies. Applicable policies include, but are not limited to, accessing the minor's educational records, representing the minor in enrollment, disciplinary, curricular, special education or other matters, signing permission slips for school activities, and any other decision that facilitates the minor's educational experience.

Student Information

Name of the minor student: _____ Date of birth: _____
Last school or district the student attended: _____

Caregiver Information

Name: _____ Relationship to student: _____
Home address: _____ The student is staying at my home address.
Telephone number(s): _____ Email address: _____

Information About the Parent or Court-Appointed Legal Guardian (if available)

Name: _____ Relationship to student: _____
Home address: _____
Telephone number(s): _____ Email address: _____

Select All That Apply

While I am currently helping with the care of the minor student, I do not wish to assist school officials with making education-related decisions.

I have notified the parent(s) or other person(s) with court-appointed legal guardianship of the minor of my intent to assist school officials with making education-related decisions in the best interest of the student and have received no objection.

I am unable to contact the parent(s) or court-appointed legal guardian(s).

Caregiver Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
I am the caregiver, and by signing above, I acknowledge I am 18 years of age or older and have agreed to fulfill the role of caregiver for the student named above, who is unaccompanied by a parent or court-appointed legal guardian. I also understand that signing this document does not make me the legal guardian of the student listed above or make me financially responsible for the student, even if I am providing financial support to the student.

Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit, 10/2025

[Click here to access this resource!](#)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process

Step 4

Step 4: Complete internal referral and coordination process.

Person Responsible:

Individual Supporting Enrollment (Front Office, Counselor, Registrar, etc.)

Immediately utilize the LEA's coordinated system to refer the UHY to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison. Consider including the following information on a referral form:

- **Referring Individual Contact Information**

- Faculty or staff member name
- Name of school site they work at
- Email address
- Phone number
- Name of school site where enrollment is being requested at (if applicable)

- **Caregiver Contact Information**

- Name
- Phone number
- Email address

- **Child or Youth Details**

- First and last name
- Age
- Grade level

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process


Step 5

Step 5: Once the Caregiver’s Authorization Affidavit and referral form is received, follow up with the caregiver or youth is conducted.

Person Responsible:
McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

An **interview and needs assessment** shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible to gather additional details regarding the circumstances involving the housing situation.

During the interview process, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison shall seek information to **determine eligibility**, as well as to establish awareness of factors regarding the child or youth’s **housing, academics, and related needs**.



Homeless Education

ADE Sample Identification & Eligibility Interview Questions & Checklist

Each local educational agency McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons for homeless children and youth designated under paragraph (1)(A)(i), shall ensure that homeless children and youth are identified personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies (42 U.S.C. (a)(6)(A)(i)).

The process of identification and eligibility determination involves three basic steps:

Gather all the relevant information.

➔


Analyze what you know.

➔

Seek consultation as needed.

Each student has a unique housing situation, as a result, determinations regarding eligibility and so on under the McKinney-Vento Act must be determined on a case-by-case basis for each student. Rent McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons are responsible for developing rapport and trust during the interview process to facilitate the acquisition of pertinent information. In other words, it is important to allow them to share their story to ensure you are obtaining necessary details to make a proper determination. Use 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 for information about the student’s situation. Staff often build a relationship with the student, or parent, prior to additional details. Remember to be mindful of confidentiality requirements when collaborating outlined within [The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).



McKinney-Vento awareness is a key way of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison offering yearly trainings to school service providers, community partner service agencies, and advocates.


By providing this training, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison can rely on these stakeholders in the future with the referral, identification and information gathering to support children and youth experiencing homelessness.

For additional support regarding awareness, interview process, and identification best practices, refer to [NCHS Homeless Liaison Toolkit](#) and [NCHS Brief: Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations](#).

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act provides a definition of homeless for children and youths to be used by state educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs). It defines homelessness for children and youth to be those who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)).

Use the following checklists 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 Sample Identification & Eligibility Interview Questions & Checklist Revised 8/2023



Homeless Education

ADE Sample Identification & Eligibility Interview Questions & Checklist

This form serves as a tool to assist McKinney-Vento personnel with determining if a student qualifies as “homeless”. This interview form is organized into the following sections:

Step 1 – Homeless Determination	Step 2 – Assessment of Need Planning Guide
<p>Sections: Fixed, Regular, Adequate, & Other Considerations</p>	<p>Sections: Basic Supports, Educational/Academic Supports, & Additional Supports</p>
<p>Instructions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct the interview. Take detailed notes. Make a determination by analyzing the student’s situation as a whole. If the student is not determined to be homeless, complete necessary notification and documentation. If the student is determined to be homeless, continue to Step 2: Assessment of Need Planning Guide. 	<p>Instructions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct the interview. Take detailed notes. Determine what next steps will be taken, with emphasis on addressing the high needs (H) by setting a timeline and designee responsible for addressing each need. Finalize documentation.

Remember, McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons are responsible for developing rapport and trust during the interview process, consider meeting or talking with the parent or guardian in a private space. It is important to allow families to share their story to ensure you are obtaining necessary details to make a proper determination. **Ensure they are aware of their rights and the procedure of making a homeless determination prior to beginning the interview.**

Interview Conducted By: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Persons Interviewed: _____ Relationship to Student(s): _____

Student(s) Eligible: _____

School(s) of Enrollment: _____

[Click here to access this resource!](#)

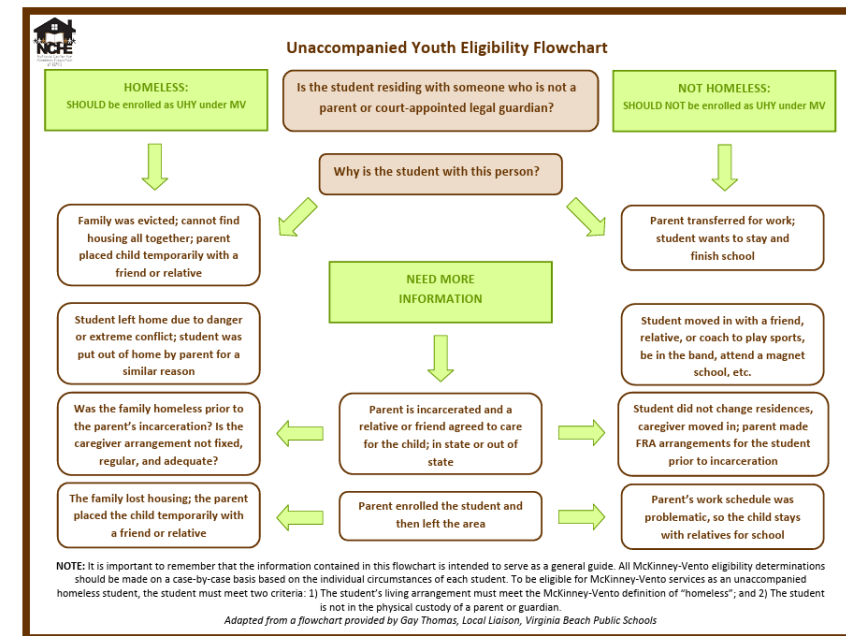
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process

Step 6

Step 6: Once the interview and needs assessment is complete, the information shall be evaluated.

Person Responsible:
McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

Evaluation of the relevant information and details gathered during the interview (**Step 1: Homeless Definition** and **Step 2: Assessment of Need Planning Guide**) must be completed to determine if the student lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and if they are an unaccompanied homeless youth.



[Click here to access this resource!](#)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Identification Process


Step 7

Step 7: Immediately following the eligibility and school placement decision, written notice is provided.

Person Responsible:
McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

Following the interview and evaluation of information gathered, **written notice of McKinney-Vento eligibility and school placement determination** shall be provided to the parent, guardian, or youth immediately.

Details regarding the **right to appeal** must be shared **and** the letter must be accompanied by the **Educational Rights of Homeless Children and Youths**.

 **Homeless Education**

Written Notification of McKinney-Vento Eligibility Decision (ADE Sample form)

(Date) _____

This letter shall serve as written notification of the decision made regarding McKinney-Vento eligibility, school selection and enrollment determination, in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(E)(iii)).

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Name of Student(s): _____

It has been determined that your situation qualifies the student(s) noted in this letter as McKinney-Vento eligible based on the following:

- The student(s) qualifies for McKinney-Vento services, and it is in the best interest of the student(s) to remain in the School of Origin. *(Enter the school district and school name in this section.)*
- The student(s) qualifies for McKinney-Vento services and are not in the physical care of a parent or legal guardian due to hardship, which meets the definition of an Unaccompanied Homeless Youth.
- The district will provide transportation. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison will arrange this.
- The district will not provide transportation based on the following: *If you disagree, you have the right to dispute this decision. Please contact the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison within seven (7) business days of receiving this notification. (Provide details surrounding the decision.)*

The student(s) qualifies for McKinney-Vento services, but it may not be in the best interest of the student(s) to remain at their School of Origin. *(Enter the school district and school name.)* and will be supported in enrolling in their new Local Attendance Area School. *(Enter the school district and school name.)* This determination was based upon the following factors: *(Provide an explanation of the decision. If it was based on the outcome of a BID meeting provide those details in this section, including the date.)*

If you disagree with this determination, you have the right to dispute this decision. Please contact the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison within seven (7) business days of receiving this notification.

It has been determined that your situation does NOT qualify the student(s) noted in this letter as McKinney-Vento eligible. If your living situation changes, you may re-apply. The student(s) listed above has the right to enroll or remain enrolled in the requested school pending the resolution of the dispute. The decision was based on the following:

- The current primary nighttime residence is considered fixed, regular, and adequate.
- The current living situation reported is considered a choice or preference and not due to hardship.
- The student is in the company of a parent or legal guardian.
- Other: *(Provide an explanation of the decision.)*

If you disagree with this determination, you have the right to dispute this decision. Please contact the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison within seven (7) business days of receiving this notification.

Please see the accompanying document, *Rights of Homeless Students*, for additional information regarding our commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth, and unaccompanied homeless youth.

If you disagree with eligibility regarding school placement and/or services, you have the right to dispute the decision. Please contact the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison within seven (7) business days of receiving this notification.

Thank you,
McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison Name _____
LEA Name _____
Email address _____
Phone _____

Enclosure: Rights of Homeless Students

ADE Written Notification of Eligibility School Placement Determination 2/2025

[Click here to access this resource!](#)

Identification and Enrollment Process for UHY

Step 1
Following enrollment form completion, the individual supporting enrollment shall check the completed SRQ to evaluate how the screening questions were answered.

Step 2
If responses provided on the SRQ indicate the child or youth is experiencing homelessness, the child or youth shall be enrolled immediately.

Step 3
Provide notice of educational rights and collect additional information.

Step 4
Complete internal referral and coordination process.

Step 5
Once the Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit and referral form is received, follow up with the caregiver or youth is conducted.

Step 6
Once the interview and needs assessment is complete, conduct an evaluation of the relevant information and details gathered during the interview.

Step 7
Immediately following the eligibility and school placement decision, written notice is provided.

LEA Staff Responsible:

- Individual Supporting Enrollment (Front Office, Counselor, Registrar, etc.)
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison

Additional Support for UHY and Resources



- Arizona State Laws Supporting Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
- Additional Resources

Arizona State Laws Supporting Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Minor Consent for Routine Medical Care

[Arizona Revised Statute \(A.R.S. §44-132\)](#)

Any emancipated minor, any minor who has contracted a lawful marriage or any **homeless minor** may give consent to the furnishing of hospital, medical and surgical care to such minor, and such consent shall not be subject to disaffirmance because of minority. The consent of the parent, or parents, of such a person is not necessary in order to authorize hospital, medical and surgical care.

Arizona State Laws Supporting Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

Law Empowering Minors Experiencing Homelessness to Consent for Shelter Services

[Arizona House Bill 2079 \(HB2079\) of the 57th Legislature](#) was signed into law on April 18, 2025. This law provides a safe, legal housing pathway for **unaccompanied homeless youth ages 16 and 17**.

The bill modifies the conditions under which a court may appoint a guardian for an unmarried minor and requires the court to find the appointment is in the minor's best interest and that either the parents' consent, parental rights have been terminated, or the minor is at least 16 years old (not in an open dependency case) with no parent willing or able to act as guardian. Exceptions to notice requirements are allowed if a parent cannot be located after due diligence and the minor is at least 16. Courts are permitted to extend temporary guardianships if doing so serves the minor's best interest.

Additional Resources

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) provides many resources designed to aid State and local education agencies support children and youth experiencing homelessness. The following resources provide guidance specific to supporting unaccompanied homeless youth.



- [Brief into Practice Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations](#)
- [Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Students Living with Caregivers: Tips for Local Liaisons and School Personnel](#)
- [Meeting the Educational Needs of Students Displaced by Disasters: Youth on their Own](#)

Post-Assessment

Let's test your knowledge.

Post-Assessment

1. True or False: A child that continues to live with a caregiver for several years doesn't qualify as an unaccompanied homeless youth after the first year they are identified.
2. The definition of an unaccompanied homeless youth is
 - a) A child experiencing homelessness that is not in the physical care of a parent or court-appointed legal guardian.
 - b) A youth that is experiencing homelessness and is living on their own.
 - c) An unaccompanied child that is living with a family member that has obtained court-appointed legal guardianship.
3. A Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit
 - a) Is a tool utilized by LEAs to ensure enrollment barriers are removed for unaccompanied homeless youth.
 - b) Is a requirement for the caregiver to complete to enroll a student.
 - c) Is not necessary for an unaccompanied homeless youth living on their own.
 - d) Is a requirement for LEAs to have implemented in their McKinney-Vento identification procedures.

Post-Assessment

1. True or False: A child that continues to live with a caregiver for several years doesn't qualify as an unaccompanied homeless youth after the first year they are identified.
 - **False**
2. The definition of an unaccompanied homeless youth is:
 - a) **A child experiencing homelessness that is not in the physical care of a parent or court-appointed legal guardian.**
 - b) **A youth that is experiencing homelessness and is living on their own.**
 - c) ~~An unaccompanied child that is living with a family member that has obtained court-appointed legal guardianship.~~
3. A Caregiver's Authorization Affidavit:
 - a) **Is a tool utilized by LEAs to ensure enrollment barriers are removed for unaccompanied homeless youth.**
 - b) ~~Is a requirement for the caregiver to complete to enroll a student.~~
 - c) **Is not necessary for an unaccompanied homeless youth living on their own.**
 - d) **Is a requirement for LEAs to have implemented in their McKinney-Vento identification procedures.**

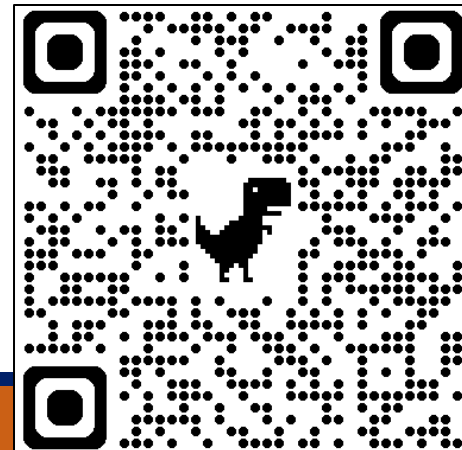


Closing & Next Steps

Register Now for Upcoming Professional Learning Sessions!

- **Office Hours: Navigating Dispute Resolution Processes**
 - November 20th at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: Navigating the Identification Process Step-by-Step**
 - December 4th at 10am and 1pm
- **ESEA Programmatic Monitoring: What Liaisons Should Know About MR5**
 - January 29th at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: The FAFSA Simplification Act**
 - February 26th at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: Supporting Migratory Students Experiencing Homelessness**
 - March 26th at 10am and 1pm
- **Required End of Year Procedures for Local Homeless Education Programs**
 - April 23rd at 10am and 1pm
- **Office Hours: End of Year Programmatic and Data Reporting Requirements**
 - May 14th at 10am and 1pm

[Scan the QR code or click here to register!](#)



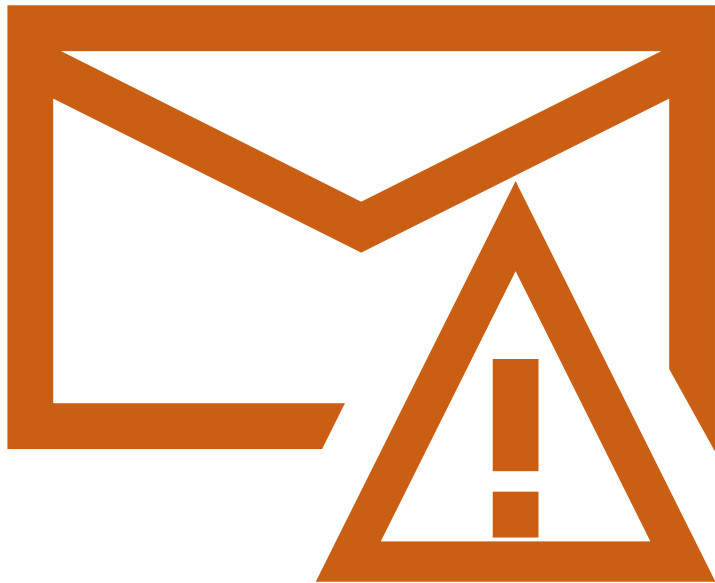
Feedback Survey & Certificates

Feedback survey

- Will only populate once you click **“Leave Meeting”**
- Must complete to receive a professional learning certificate of participation

Recording and slides

- Emailed once available to all registrants
- HEP website



Technical Assistance

Arizona Department of Education
Homeless Education Program

(602)542-4963

homeless@azed.gov