



Every Child. Every Day. For a Better Tomorrow.

50 Shades of Confusion: McKinney-Vento or Not?

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Purpose:

- Focus on identifying homeless children and youth
- Focus on complicated situations in relation to housing to determine McKinney-Vento eligibility
- Learn assessment tools/questions to obtain all information needed to identify McKinney-Vento students



What is McKinney-Vento?

The McKinney-Vento (MCV) Homeless Assistance Act-reauthorized in 2015, under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Removes barriers to students' enrollment, attendance, and success in school caused by homelessness.

Main themes:

- School access
- School stability
- Support for academic success
- Child-centered, “best interest” decision making

Is there a problem?

Nationally

- Approximately 3.5 million people of all ages experience homelessness each year. Children make up the largest part of this population.

Locally

- Jan 26, 2017 PIT count: 1,476 homeless people in Mecklenburg County. Does not include doubled-up.
- MCV in CMS

2016-17: 4,191 students

Today: 2,897 students

Important Eligibility Considerations

- Reference legislative wording
- Make determinations on a case-by-case basis based on the circumstances of each child
- Understand that some cases will be clear-cut; others will require further inquiry and a more nuanced analysis
- Use **fixed**, **regular**, and **adequate** as guiding principles
- Remember that the list of living arrangements included in the law describes common homeless situations, but is not exhaustive

Who is Eligible?

Children and youth who lack a *fixed, regular, and adequate* nighttime residence

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (doubled-up)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a place not designed for human habitation
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus/train station
- Migratory children living in above circumstances
- Unaccompanied youth living in above circumstances

Fixed Living

A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.

- Is this a permanent arrangement or just temporary?
- Are you looking for another place to live?
- Do you plan to move out soon?
- Why are you staying in your current place?
- Are you staying with friends/relatives just for a little while?

Regular

A regular residence is one that is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis.

- Do you stay in the same place every night?
- Do you have a key to the place where you are living?
- Do you move around a lot?
- How long have you been at that place? How long do you plan to stay?

Adequate

An adequate residence is one that is not meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

- How many people are living in the home? How many bedrooms/bathrooms does it have?
- Are you and your children sharing a room? How many people are staying in one room?
- Are you and your children sleeping in a bedroom, or public area, like a living room?
- Does the home have heat/electricity/running water? Is it safe?

School Selection

MCV students have the right to attend:

Home School – Where you are living temporarily

- Any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend
- Transportation provided just like any other child living in attendance area

School of Origin – Where you lived before crisis

- The school attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled
- Transportation is provided to and from school of origin, *even if outside local school district*

- The placement determination should be a student-centered, individualized determination
- There is no time or distance limit placed on school of origin transportation; consider the unique situation of the student and how the transportation will affect the student's education
- Students may continue attending the school of origin the entire time they are homeless, and until the end of any school year in which they move into permanent housing
- Students who become homeless in between school years may continue attending the school of origin for the following school year

Disputes

- States must establish a process for the prompt resolution of enrollment or school selection disputes
- If a disagreement occurs, the district must:
 - Provide a written explanation of its decision, including the right to appeal the decision
 - Refer the parent/guardian/youth to the local liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible
- Unaccompanied homeless youth have the same right to dispute as parents/guardians
- While the dispute is in process, students must be:
 - Enrolled immediately in the school in which enrollment is sought
 - Provided with school of origin transportation, if requested
 - Provided with all services for which they are eligible

Things To Consider

- Homelessness is a temporary condition and has no “look”.
- Text is often the best way to reach a parent or student because it is unlimited on most service plans.
- Nighttime conditions at shelters and overcrowded homes not conducive to study or sleep
- Most homeless parents work.
- The word “homeless” carries lots of baggage – use terms like housing crisis, in transition, not in your own place.
- **Homeless children/youth often identify school as their only source of stability during a housing crisis.**

Decisions must be **child-centered** and in the student's **best interest**.

Early identification and response can be the difference in academic success and emotional stability for a student experiencing a housing crisis. Please listen with an ear for the issue!