

# McKinney-Vento Homeless Education

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## About Homeless Education

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is the primary piece of legislation related to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Specific provisions ensure the enrollment, accessibility, and educational stability for students lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

## Who qualifies for McKinney-Vento?

Any child or youth who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence including:

- Those who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship,
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;\*
- Those who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Those who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Those identified by the [Migrant Education Program](#) (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances described in the bullet points above

## UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS YOUTH

In addition to providing a definition of homeless, the McKinney-Vento Act defines unaccompanied youth as youth who fit the definition of homeless and are "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian" [42 U.S.C. § 11434a (6)].

The number of unaccompanied homeless youth identified and served by Colorado public schools reached 2,045 during the 2022-23 school year. Many of these students are living in doubled-up situations, several are couch surfing without a constant and predictable place to sleep every night and entirely dependent on the kindness of others. These youths are among the most vulnerable, as they are dealing with the crises of homelessness without a safe, supportive parent or guardian.

## Educational Rights of McKinney-Vento Eligible Children and Youth

- A McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison in every school district who has the skills and capacity to carry out the duties of the position.
- Identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness through outreach and coordination activities.
- Immediate enrollment with full and equal opportunity to succeed in school.
- Choice between the neighborhood school or the school of origin (school last enrolled in or attended).

- Transportation to the school of origin (including preschool).
- Immediate access to free school meals and educational services for which they are eligible.
- Automatic eligibility for Title I, Part A of Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.
- Referrals to health care, dental, mental health and substance abuse, housing, and other appropriate services.
- Unaccompanied youth are informed of their status as independent students on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

If you believe you may be eligible, contact the local liaison to find out what services and supports may be available. Local liaison: Teresa Nelson 970-565-7282 x1107, [mckinneyvento@cortez.k12.co.us](mailto:mckinneyvento@cortez.k12.co.us) or contact Colorado State Coordinator Paula Gumina 303-551-3851 for more information.

<https://www.cortez.k12.co.us/parents-students/supporting>

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/studentssupport/mkvfactsheet2024>

Colorado Dept. of ED McKinney Vento page:

[mailto:https://www.cde.state.co.us/studentssupport/homeless\\_index](mailto:https://www.cde.state.co.us/studentssupport/homeless_index)