

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act – Education for Homeless Youth

In 1987, Congress established the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which was designed to aid homeless youth and adults. Homeless individuals, according to the terms of the act, are those who lack a “fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.”

Categories of children who are considered homeless per the terms of the act include:

- Children and youth who are sharing a residence with someone else due to economic hardship, loss of housing or another similar reason, or who live in a hotel, motel, trailer park or camp ground because adequate housing is not available to them.
- Children and youth who reside in shelters (both emergency and transitional), are abandoned in hospitals or who are in the process of being placed within the foster-care system.
- Children and youth whose primary nighttime residence is a public place, such as cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations and other similar settings.
- “Migratory children” are classified as homeless under federal law because they are living in circumstances described in the first three scenarios. Migratory children are those whose parents are migratory agricultural workers – including dairy farmers and fishermen – and who have moved between school districts several times within a 36-month period in order for their parents to maintain their employment in seasonal/temporary agricultural or fishing work.
- Children and youth who are in the foster care system and waiting to be placed also are considered homeless under this act.
- “Unaccompanied homeless youth” are defined as those who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their homes, been abandoned by parents or guardians or who have otherwise been separated from their parents or guardians.

In addition, Pennsylvania also has an *Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan*, which classifies homeless children as: children living with a parent in a domestic violence shelter; runaway children and children and youth who have been abandoned or forced out of their home by parents or other caretakers; and school-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, Congress has ordered state educational agencies to ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has the same access to a free, appropriate public education that is provided to other children and youth.

More information about the McKinney-Vento Act is available [here](#).

Individuals within the Hampton Township School District who believe they may qualify for these services are encouraged to contact the District Administration Office at 412-492-6302.