

## Settling Disputes

If your school district does not agree with your McKinney-Vento eligibility, you must be provided with a written explanation of the district's intent to dispute. Your school district must also provide you with a list of low-cost or free legal services to assist you during the dispute/appeal process. Once you have received notice that your district has filed for dispute, please contact your regional liaison, named on the back tab of this pamphlet.

In the event of a dispute, your Regional Office of Education or Intermediated Service Center will appoint a mediator. The mediator will set a meeting time that is convenient for you and the school district in an attempt to resolve the dispute. If you do not agree with the decision of the mediator, you can appeal to the Illinois State Board of Education.

During the entire dispute process, the school district must continue to provide all educational services, including transportation.



## Contact Information

If you have questions regarding the educational rights of your students, please contact any of the following numbers below:

School District  
McKinney-Vento Liaison

Regional McKinney-  
Vento Liaison

ISBE  
(800) 215-6370  
[www.isbe.net/homeless](http://www.isbe.net/homeless)

## Understanding the Educational Rights of Children in Temporary Living Situations



McKinney-Vento



A Guide to Provide  
Support and to Ensure  
Success for All Students

# The Educational Rights of Students in Temporary Living Situations

When families are in temporary living situations, it is frequently difficult for students to get to school and maintain their enrollment in a specific school for an extended period of time. During these frequent moves, your student's school records may get lost in the shuffle between schools. All school districts have an assigned liaison whose job it is to assist you in obtaining these important records.

This brochure will explain how the Illinois Education for Homeless Children Act and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act can assist you and your student to obtain a high quality education.

## Who qualifies for this help?

The law states, any student that does not have a *fixed, regular, and adequate* place to sleep at night qualifies for educational assistance. This includes students and families that stay at a shelter, on the street, a car, or abandoned building. Families that have lost their housing and need to double-up with friends or relatives, also qualify for educational assistance.

## Choice of Schools

Frequently changing schools can negatively impact your student's education, causing them to fall behind.

Students that qualify for educational assistance through the McKinney-Vento Act, can stay at the school they have been attending or transfer to the district in which they are temporarily staying. It is the choice of the caregiver, not the school. This does not mean you can attend any school. It has to be one of the schools above.

Once you and your family become permanently housed, your student may continue the school year at their current school or transfer to the new district. Your school's liaison can assist you in whichever decision you make for your students.

## Immediate Enrollment

School districts are required to enroll McKinney-Vento eligible students without delay. If you need assistance receiving your student's educational or medical records from the previous school, ask to speak with the district's liaison. The liaison will assist you with acquiring this information in a confidential manner.



## Transportation

If you, as the caregiver, choose for your student to remain at their home school, the school district will work with you on transportation options. If the ride to school is estimated to be more than one hour, the district may request a meeting to determine how this may affect your student's education.

## Free Lunch & School Fees

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, your student is entitled to receive a free lunch each day and if the district provides a breakfast program, that will also be provided at no cost. In addition, your student will not be charged to attend school. This includes books, locks, gym uniforms, class fees, sports programs and graduation fees.

## Early Childhood

Children under the age of five (5) may also qualify for educational services. Speak with your liaison or district's early childhood staff for available programs in your area. Studies show PreK programs can help children get off to a good start in school.