



# McKinney-Vento Quick Guide

## A Basic Guide for Ensuring Educational Access and Success for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

You play a critical role in identifying students experiencing homelessness and giving them the support they need to succeed in school.



### What is McKinney-Vento?

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Education for Homeless Children and Youth program guarantees rights and services to ensure the enrollment, attendance, and success of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Students eligible under McKinney-Vento have the right to:

- 🍏 Enroll in school immediately, even without required documents;
- 🍏 Attend the same school (school of origin), if it is determined to be in their best interest, OR immediately enroll in the local school (school of residency based on their current residence). Transportation must be provided, even across school division lines;
- 🍏 Access services such as Title I and free school meals, as well as preschool, special education, and gifted programs, (if eligible); and
- 🍏 Confidentiality: homeless information should only be shared with school staff who need to know.



### Which Students are Considered Homeless Under McKinney-Vento?

Students who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence are eligible under McKinney-Vento. These nighttime residences include:

- 🍏 Staying with family or friends (doubled-up) due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason
- 🍏 Motels, hotels, or campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- 🍏 Emergency or transitional shelters
- 🍏 Cars, parks, public places, bus or train stations, or abandoned buildings

Students in these situations who are not staying with their parents or guardians are considered **unaccompanied homeless youth** and have the same rights to enrollment, school stability, and support for academic success.

### Is the Student's Residence Fixed, Regular, and Adequate?

*Ask yourself can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?*

## Doubled-Up

70% of Virginia students in homeless situations are “doubled-up” with relatives or friends due to loss of housing or economic hardship



### What Signs to Look for?



While these signs could indicate many other problems, they provide a basis for further exploration and discussion.



### Who is Your McKinney-Vento Liaison?

Every school division is required by law to appoint a McKinney-Vento liaison who is responsible for determining a student's eligibility for McKinney-Vento services and programs. If you know a student who might be experiencing homelessness, reach out to your school division's McKinney-Vento liaison right away. The liaison can connect students to the supports they need to succeed like immediate enrollment, transportation, free school meals and other services.



PROJECT  
**HOPE**  
VIRGINIA

Find Your Local  
McKinney-Vento  
Liaison



### For More Information

Learn more about how to support children and youth experiencing homelessness with these resources:

- [Project HOPE-Virginia](#)
- [Common Signs of Homelessness](#)
- [SchoolHouse Connection](#)
- [NCHE](#)