MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

Students in Temporary Housing – Guide for Parents & Youth

TOPIC	IMPORTANT INFORMATION
Children living in the following situations are considered homeless for the purpose of education rights under the McKinney-Vento Act:	• In a shelter, transitional shelter, motel, campground, or abandoned in a hospital. • In a car, park, public place, bus, train, or abandoned building. • Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing.
Unaccompanied Youth	• Youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, and who meets the definition of homelessness set forth in the explanation above. *Unaccompanied homeless youth have the same rights as homeless students who reside with a parent or guardian.*
Students who fall under the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless have the following rights:	• To a free public education. • To immediate enrollment in the zoned school, provided there are available seats. • To attend school no matter how long they have lived at their current location. • To stay in their school of origin (school attended before becoming homeless or the last school attended) or choose to attend their new zoned school. • To transportation services to and from school. • To not be denied immediate school enrollment just because of their situation or because they lack enrollment documentation. • To not be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless. • To receive free school meals.
Important Information:	• Each borough has at least one Students in Temporary Housing (STH) Regional Manager who serves as the STH liaison and manages programs and services designed to help children who are homeless pursue their education. The STH Regional Manager supervises a team of Family Assistants. Contact information for the Regional Managers can be found here[1]. • Each school has an STH School-Based Liaison who works directly at the school to support STH. • Some schools have a STH Community Coordinator who supports STH. • Additionally, District 75 and District 79 each have a designated STH liaison available to assist children who are homeless with their educational needs. • Family Assistants are located at shelters and in some schools. They are responsible for assisting homeless parents and their children with their educational needs. • Family Assistants are available to assist the child's parent with school enrollment, obtaining immunizations, school records, and arranging transportation to and from school. School staff should not hesitate to contact their School-Based Liaison or Community Coordinator, or their Regional Manager, for individual questions, to arrange training, or to assist unaccompanied youth.
School Selection:	• Schools must allow parents to choose the child's school when their child is homeless. The parent may choose among the following: a) The school the child attended when permanently housed (school of origin); b) The school in which the student was last enrolled; or c) Any school available to a permanently-housed child residing in the area where the homeless student is currently residing, provided the child meets eligibility requirements and seats are available.
School Enrollment: (Applies only if your child is not currently enrolled or you want to change school)	• Elementary & Middle School – if you have a zoned school, you can enroll directly at the school anytime during the school year. If you do not have a zoned school or if you would like to explore other school options for your child, visit a Family Welcome Center. For the location of your Family Welcome Center, please call 311. • High School – all high school students must register at the Family Welcome Center. • If you are currently residing in a NYC Department of Homeless Services shelter, the family assistant at your shelter will be able to assist you, if needed. If there is no family assistant in your shelter or if you are not residing in a shelter, please contact your STH Regional Manager for assistance.
Enrollment Disputes:	• If a dispute arises over the assigned school, the student should remain in the school of origin or transfer to the newly-assigned school, your child must be provisionally registered at the school in which they are seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute. • The parent must be provided with a written explanation of the school decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal, and referred to the STH Family Assistant, onsite STH School-Based Liaison, or STH Regional Manager for assistance.
Transportation	• Students who are defined as homeless by the McKinney-Vento Act are entitled to transportation to and from school, if necessary. If available, busses will be provided to students in grades K-6; if not available, they are eligible for a student MetroCard. • For students in grades Pre-K-6 who are eligible for transportation and receive a student MetroCard, their parents are eligible for public transportation assistance (MetroCard) to accompany the child. • Students in grades 7-12 are eligible for a student MetroCard.

For more information, please contact your borough STH liaison or call 311.

6/19/19

[1] A-101 Attachment 5 - Affidavit of Emancipation-Posted 3-1-18.docx