



## Homeless Children and Youth Educational Rights Public Notice

The mission of the DCPS Homeless Children and Youth Program (HCYP) is to ensure free, appropriate, public educational opportunities for homeless children and youth and students in temporary or transitional housing and to ensure students in homeless situations have equal access to the same educational opportunities and services as their permanently housed peers. The program's mission is to ensure students have the opportunity to meet the same challenging academic achievement standards to which all students are held pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015.

### What is the definition of homeless children and youth?

- Children and youth who lack a **fixed**, **regular**, and **adequate** nighttime residence;
- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelter (including DC transitional housing); are abandoned in hospitals;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; and
- Unaccompanied youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, who qualify as homeless because they live in circumstances described above.

### Can a homeless child enroll in school?

**Yes.** Schools must immediately enroll homeless children and youth, even when:

- School or health records are unavailable at the time of enrollment,
- Birth certificates are not available,
- Proof of residency is not available.

*Students may stay in their school of origin (the school they were attending when they lost their housing), the school in boundary for their current, temporary residence, or the school in the best interest of the student. Unaccompanied youth must be provided educational access through the support of the local school-based liaison.*

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## **Who should be contacted if a dispute arises regarding enrolling a homeless child or youth in school or if other assistance is needed?**

If a homeless child or youth is experiencing difficulty in enrolling in school, please contact the Homeless Children and Youth Program at (202) 576-9502. The HCYP is available to assist DCPS children and youth and their families who are experiencing homelessness regarding educational issues.

## **What supports do local schools provide students in homeless situations?**

Every school is mandated by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to have a School-based Homeless Liaison who supports students experiencing homelessness. The school-based homeless liaison can assist students and families with transportation assistance, school uniforms, school supplies and provide information regarding in-school or community-based resources.

## **What services are provided by the Homeless Children and Youth Program?**

The Homeless Children and Youth Program provides the following services: identification of the number of DCPS students in homeless situations or temporary housing, transportation, uniform, and school supply assistance, dispute resolutions, school enrollment assistance, support with Homeless Awareness Month activities, staff development and training for parents of homeless students.

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For more information or to get assistance, contact the School-based Homeless Liaison at the school where the student is enrolled

or

Tierra Washington  
Homeless Children and Youth Program  
DCPS Homeless Liaison  
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