

Rights under the McKinney-Vento Act

Parents, if your family lives in any of the following situations:

- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground;
- On the street;
- In an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or
- Doubled up with friends or relatives due to economic hardship, such as loss of housing or income;

then your preschool- and school-aged children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. Your children have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there. They must be given access to the same public education, including preschool education, provided to other children.
- Continue in the school they attended before you became homeless or the school they last attended, if that is your choice and is feasible. If a school sends your child to a school other than the one you request, the school must provide you with a written explanation and offer you the right to appeal the decision.
- Receive transportation to the school they attended before your family became homeless or the school they last attended. (If you are a guardian, request such transportation.)
- Attend a school and participate in school programs with children who are not homeless. Children cannot be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.
- Enroll in a school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend class while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend class in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve a dispute over enrolling your children.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs.
- Receive transportation services comparable to services offered to other students.

When you move, you should do the following:

- Contact the homeless concerns liaison in your area for help in enrolling your child in a new school or arranging for your child to continue in his or her former school. (Or, someone at a shelter, social services office or the school can direct you to the person to contact.)
- Contact the school and provide any information you think will assist the teachers in helping your child adjust to new circumstances.
- Ask the homeless concerns liaison, the shelter provider or a social worker for assistance with clothing and supplies, if needed.