



1021- Students Experiencing Homelessness Procedures

Commission LEA Policy 6503 – Students Experiencing Homelessness lays out the broad requirements and expectations for serving students experiencing homelessness to ensure that these students have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth. This document provides the standard operating procedures for compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act for Commission-authorized charter schools. These procedures cover:

- Homeless Point of Contact
- Identification
- Enrollment
- Records
- Transportation
- Services and Title I Homeless Set Aside Funds
- Placement
- Dispute Resolution Process
- Forms and Appendices

Homeless Point of Contact

Each charter school shall name a Homeless Point of Contact ("POC") who will be the main contact for families and students in the school as well as for the Commission's homeless liaison. The school's POC shall communicate on at least a monthly basis, but as frequently as necessary, with the Commission's homeless liaison with regard to services for students experiencing homelessness. The school's homeless POC shall also be responsible for completing the relevant sections of the school's annual Subrecipient Monitoring Self-Assessment. More information about the Subrecipient Monitoring Self-Assessment can be found in the Commission's Subrecipient Monitoring Guidebook.

Every year, the charter school shall notify the Commission of the school's homeless POC by submitting the individual's name and contact information on a spreadsheet contained within the reporting calendar. The homeless POC shall be familiar with the McKinney-Vento Act as well as the requirements to serve students experiencing homelessness. Resources that are helpful to review include, but are not limited to:

- [McKinney-Vento Toolkit: A Guide for Homeless Liaisons, Districts, and Schools](#)
- [McKinney-Vento Statute](#)
- [McKinney-Vento Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)



- [The Most Frequently Asked Questions on the Education Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations](https://nche.ed.gov/education-rights-poster-youth/)<https://nche.ed.gov/education-rights-poster-youth/>
- [Educational Rights Poster \(Parent\)](#)
- [Educational Rights Poster \(Youth\)](#)
- [Multilingual Educational Rights Posters](#)

Identification

- **New Student Enrollment:** Each school's homeless POC is responsible for ensuring that students experiencing homelessness are quickly identified. Therefore, upon enrollment, all parents/guardians shall complete the Student Residency Questionnaire in order to identify students experiencing homelessness and/or unaccompanied youth and ensure these students have access to education and support services. If a parent/guardian indicates on the questionnaire that the family lives in a residence that is not permanent, fixed, or adequate, the school's homeless POC should immediately initiate the McKinney-Vento checklist included in these procedures, which includes giving the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth the Notification of Rights form.
- **Mid-Year Change of Status:** The school must conduct ongoing awareness and outreach strategies during the school year to identify students who may be homeless or become homeless during the school year. These activities include placement of posters in the school setting, offering training to parents/guardians, and outreach to local shelters or community service organizations. If a school is notified that a student has become homeless during the academic year, the homeless POC should work with the parent/guardian to complete the required residency questionnaire and initiate the McKinney-Vento checklist included in these procedures.

A completed copy of the checklist and accompanying documents shall be placed in the student's cumulative file by the school's homeless POC and provided to the Commission's homeless liaison via Teams within two business days of a student being identified as homeless. Additionally, each school's homeless POC shall ensure that informational posters for parents/guardians and youth are posted in the schools' common areas and the central office in a language that parents/guardians can understand. The McKinney-Vento Act does not require the use of a specific poster or template; however, Educational Rights posters must include all required information, including contact information for the Commission's homeless liaison and the State's homeless coordinator, as well as a brief explanation of McKinney-Vento rights, and must be clearly visible and translated into the school district's most commonly used languages. Questions throughout the process should be directed to the Commission's homeless liaison.



Enrollment

A charter school shall immediately enroll a student experiencing homelessness if the charter school has capacity based on the approved charter agreement, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment (i.e., academic records, immunization records, health records, proof of residency), or missed the charter school's application or enrollment deadlines.

Records

The charter school's homeless POC shall ensure that each student who is identified as experiencing homelessness is coded accurately in the Commission's student information system with an H code. The Commission will run reports on the students identified as homeless in EIS on a regular basis and cross-reference with the data reported to the Commission homeless liaison by each charter school.

The charter school homeless POC shall maintain a list of the students experiencing homelessness who enrolled in the charter school without immunization or proof of immunization and the length of time required for these students to be immunized or to obtain immunization records. An annual report with this data is due to the Commission using a template provided within the reporting calendar.

Transportation¹

The school is responsible for developing a policy to provide transportation services to students experiencing homelessness, at the request of the parent/guardian. The school policy shall include a description of transportation options that are available. If requested, transportation must be arranged promptly to ensure immediate enrollment and to ensure barriers are not created for homeless students' attendance, retention, and success. The excess costs of transportation to the school of origin (costs above what the school would have otherwise provided to transport the student) may be paid for using Title I, Part A funds reserved to defray the excess costs of transportation of homeless students to and from their school of origin or from McKinney-Vento subgrant funds (a system of providing gas vouchers, cards, or reimbursements can be utilized and funded through the Title I, Part A homeless set-aside funds). The cost of transportation will be the responsibility of the school or shared equally with another LEA, if the school and LEA mutually agree.

¹ TN Department of Education, "[Students in Transition Program Guide](#)," March 2018, p. 8

Services and Title I Homeless Set-Aside Funds

The charter school's homeless POC shall ensure that each student experiencing homelessness is provided services comparable to those offered to other students within the school, including transportation, special education services, programs in career and technical education, programs for gifted and talented students, and school nutrition. These services include, but are not limited to, obtaining or providing:²

- Items of clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school's dress or uniform requirement;
- Clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes;
- Student fees that are necessary to participate in the general education program;
- Personal school supplies such as backpacks and notebooks;
- Birth certificate necessary for the student to enroll in school;
- Immunizations;
- Food and access to free meals;
- Medical and dental services;
- Eyeglasses and hearing aids;
- Counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that is impeding learning;
- Outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and other temporary residences;
- Extended learning time (before and after school, Saturday classes, summer school) to compensate for lack of quiet time for homework in shelters or other overcrowded living conditions;
- Tutoring services, especially in shelters or other locations where homeless students live;
- Parental involvement activities specifically oriented to reaching out to parents/guardians of homeless students;
- Fees for AP and IB testing; and/or
- Fees for SAT/ACT testing.

Annually, as a part of the district plan and budgeting process, the district is required to set aside Title I funds on the district level to serve students experiencing homelessness if all other school

² National Center for Homeless Education, "[Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness under Title I, Part A](#)," Winter 2014; and National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, "[The Most Frequently Asked Questions on the Education Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations](#)," September 2016.



and community resources are exhausted. Each year, authorized charter schools must complete the Annual Needs Assessment for Homeless Students form included in these procedures and submit it via the Commission's reporting calendar. A charter school must demonstrate that it has exhausted all school and community resources before requesting to use the reserved funds to serve students experiencing homelessness. Incremental transportation costs for students experiencing homelessness (costs above what the school would have otherwise provided to transport the student) may be reimbursable through the district set-asides.³

Attendance

Students experiencing housing instability or homelessness may be subject to higher rates of absenteeism, including truancy. Under McKinney-Vento, LEAs and schools are required to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of students experiencing homelessness. This includes removing barriers related to attendance, outstanding fees, fines, or other circumstances connected to a student's housing instability.⁴ For this reason, when a student is believed to be experiencing homelessness, schools should carefully consider whether the circumstances leading to the absences are directly connected to the student's housing situation. If absences are a result of homelessness or housing instability, the school should evaluate whether those absences should reasonably be considered unexcused.

When attendance concerns exist for a student experiencing homelessness, the school has a responsibility to make and document every reasonable effort to retain the student, including removing barriers related to housing instability, communication challenges, or transportation. Schools should attempt multiple outreach efforts to contact the student and family, including phone calls, emails, home visits if appropriate, and coordination with available community resources and partnerships. Schools may meet as a team, including parent/guardian or the student in the case of an unaccompanied youth, to determine if continued enrollment best supports the student's educational stability.

Throughout this process, schools must maintain clear and thorough documentation demonstrating:

- Efforts to identify whether the student is experiencing homelessness
- Steps taken to remove barriers to attendance or enrollment

³ U.S. Department of Education, "[Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)," July 27, 2016, p. 28.

⁴ 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(I)



- Outreach and engagement attempts with the student and family

Placement

The charter school's homeless POC shall work with the school leader or designee on the placement process. At all times, a strong presumption that keeping the student in the school of origin⁵ is in the student's best interest shall be maintained, unless doing so would be contrary to a request made by the student's parent/guardian or the student in the case of an unaccompanied youth. When determining placement, student-centered factors, including but not limited to impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety shall be considered. The Checklist for Decision Making shall be completed to assist in the best interest determination. The charter school's homeless POC shall immediately notify the Commission's homeless liaison if a student's placement at the school of origin is being discussed and provide documentation outlining the steps taken to remove barriers related to housing instability, communication challenges, or transportation and outreach efforts including phone calls, emails, home visits if appropriate, and coordination with available community resources and partnerships.

If the charter school determines that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth, the school leader or designee shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the determination, in a manner and form that is understandable to the parent/guardian and unaccompanied youth. The written explanation shall include:⁶

- A statement regarding the right to appeal the placement decision to the Commission's homeless liaison and the dispute resolution process provided in these procedures;

⁵ Per Commission LEA Policy 6503, school of origin shall mean the school that a child or youth attended when last permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool/pre-k program. Therefore, in the case of the Commission's authorized charter school, the school of origin shall mean:

(1) The authorized charter school, if it was the school that a child or youth attended when last permanently housed; or (2) A child or youth's local attendance zone school in which the student was last enrolled, including a preschool/pre-k program, if the student has submitted an application for enrollment into a charter school. School of origin shall also include the designated receiving school at the next grade level when the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin.

⁶ TN Department of Education, "[Students in Transition Program Guide](#)," March 2018, p. 8.



- Notice that if the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth are English learners, use a native language other than English, or need additional supports because of a disability, translators, interpreters, or other support services related to their disability will be made available without charge;
- Notice of the right to be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought pending final resolution of the dispute, which includes receiving adequate transportation to and from the school of origin and the ability to participate in all school activities;
- List of legal and advocacy service providers in the area that can provide assistance during any part of the appeal process; and
- Contact information for the school liaison, district liaison, and state coordinator.

A copy of the written explanation and accompanying documentation of efforts taken to remove barriers shall be sent to the Commission's homeless liaison within 48 business hours of the placement decision.

Dispute Resolution Process

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that each local education agency (LEA) has a dispute resolution process in place. Commission LEA Policy 6503 – Students Experiencing Homelessness states that if a placement decision is appealed, the authorized charter school shall refer the parent/guardian or unaccompanied student to the Commission’s homeless liaison to begin the dispute resolution process. Upon notice of an appeal, the school shall immediately enroll the student in the school in which enrollment was sought pending a final resolution of the dispute including all available appeals. The dispute resolution process is as follows:

Dispute Resolution Process Level 1: Commission’s Homeless Liaison

If a parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal a charter school’s decision related to eligibility, enrollment, or school selection, the case should be appealed to the Commission’s homeless liaison or the charter school where the dispute is taking place.

1. The request for dispute resolution shall be filed by:
 - Submitting the written appeal form that initiates the dispute resolution process to either the Commission’s homeless liaison or the charter school’s homeless POC, who sends the form to the Commission’s homeless liaison.
 - If the form is submitted to the charter school’s homeless POC, the school shall immediately forward the request to the Commission’s homeless liaison.
 - The request for dispute resolution must be submitted within five business days of receiving the written notification of the determination;
 - In the event that the Commission’s homeless liaison is unavailable, a Commission designee may receive the request to initiate the dispute resolution process.
2. The Commission’s homeless liaison shall log their receipt of the complaint, including the date and time, with a written description of the situation and the reason for the dispute, and a copy of the complaint must be forwarded to the liaison’s immediate supervisor and the Commission’s Director of Schools.
3. The Commission’s homeless liaison shall review the record of the complaint and, if possible, interview the parent/guardian either in-person or via telephone.
4. Within five business days of their receipt of the complaint, the Commission’s homeless liaison must make a decision on the complaint and inform the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth in writing of the result. It is the responsibility of the Commission to verify the parent’s/guardian’s or unaccompanied youth’s receipt of the written notification regarding the homeless liaison’s Level 1 decision.



5. If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level 2, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall notify the Commission's homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level 2 within five business days of receipt of notification of the Level 1 decision.
6. If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the Commission's homeless liaison's Level 1 decision, the Commission's homeless liaison shall provide the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with an appeals package containing:
 - A copy of the parent's/guardian's or unaccompanied youth's complaint which was filed with the Commission's homeless liaison at Level 1;
 - The decision rendered at Level 1 by the Commission's liaison; and
 - Any additional information from the parent/guardian, unaccompanied youth, and/or homeless liaison.

Dispute Resolution Process Level 2: Commission's Director of Schools

If after Level 1 of the Dispute Resolution Process the dispute remains unresolved, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal the Commission's homeless liaison's Level 1 decision to the Commission's Director of Schools through the following process.

1. If a parent/guardian disagrees with the decision rendered by the Commission's homeless liaison at Level 1, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal the decision to the Commission's Director of Schools or the Director of Schools' designee using the appeals package provided at Level 1. The designee shall be someone other than the Commission's homeless liaison.
2. Within five business days of receiving the notification of intent to proceed to Level 2 of the dispute resolution process, the Director of Schools, or the Director of Schools' designee, will schedule a personal conference with the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth. It is preferable, but not required, for the conference to be in person if the schedules of the Director of Schools and the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth allow. If an in-person conference is not possible due to time and schedule constraints, a telephone conference may be used. Once scheduled, the meeting between the Director of Schools or the Director of Schools' designee and the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth is to take place as expeditiously as possible.
3. The Director of Schools or the Director of Schools' designee will provide a decision in writing to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth with supporting evidence and reasons. It is the responsibility of the Commission to verify the parent's/guardian's or



unaccompanied youth's receipt of the written notification regarding the Director of Schools' Level 2 decision.

4. A copy of the appeals package, along with the written decision made at Level 2, is to be shared with the Commission's homeless liaison.
5. If the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level 2 and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level 3, the parent/guardian or the unaccompanied youth shall notify the Commission's homeless liaison of intent to proceed to Level 3 within five business days of receipt of the notification of Level 2 decision.

Dispute Resolution Process Level 3: McKinney-Vento State Coordinator

If after Level 2 of the Dispute Resolution Process the dispute remains unresolved, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may appeal the Commission's Director of Schools' Level 2 decision to the McKinney-Vento state coordinator through the following process.

1. If the Commission's homeless liaison is notified by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth of the intent to appeal the Level 2 decision, the Commission's Director of Schools or designee shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the McKinney-Vento state coordinator for review within five business days of receiving the notification from the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.
 - It is the responsibility of the Commission to ensure that the documentation that is submitted is complete and ready for review at the time it is submitted to the state coordinator.
2. The McKinney-Vento state coordinator shall make a final decision within seven business days of receipt of the complaint.
3. The final decision will be forwarded to the Commission's homeless liaison for distribution to the parent/guardian and the Commission's Director of Schools.

Dispute Resolution Process Level 4: Assistant Director of Federal Programs and Oversight

If after Level 3 of the Dispute Resolution Process the dispute remains unresolved, the parent/guardian, unaccompanied youth, or the Commission may appeal the McKinney-Vento state coordinator's decision to the assistant director of Federal Programs and Oversight ("FPO") at the Tennessee Department of Education through the following process.

1. The Commission, parent/guardian, or unaccompanied youth shall forward a written request to have their case reviewed when there is a conflict with the decision rendered by the McKinney-Vento state coordinator within five business days of receipt of the decision rendered at Level 3 to the assistant director of FPO.



2. The assistant director of FPO shall then forward a request to the McKinney-Vento state coordinator to obtain all written documentation and related paperwork for review.
3. Upon request of the assistant director of FPO, the McKinney-Vento state coordinator shall forward all written documentation and related paperwork to the assistant director of FPO for review within three business days of the request for documentation regarding the dispute.
4. The assistant director of FPO, along with the appropriate other department personnel, will make a final decision within seven business days of receipt of all documentation and related paperwork.
5. The final decision will be forwarded to the Commission's Director of Schools and homeless liaison for distribution to the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.

The Commission shall maintain a record of all disputes related to the education of students experiencing homelessness and youths. These records shall include disputes resolved at levels 1, 2, 3, and/or 4 and shall be made available upon request by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Forms and Appendices

The following documents are required forms and sample templates for Commission's authorized schools to use when serving students experiencing homelessness. Unless specifically stated on the document, the charter school may adapt the form to its own context so long as the information requested and provided on the sample template is contained within the adapted form.

The forms and templates included are:

- Annual Needs Assessment Students Experiencing Homelessness – *required*
- McKinney-Vento Checklist – *required*
- Checklist for Decision-Making – *required*
- Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility Flowchart - *guidance*
- Student Residency Questionnaire – *template*
- Caregiver Form – *template*
- Notification of Rights – *template*
- Written Enrollment Decision Notice – *template*
- Written Appeal of Enrollment Decision – *required*
- Parent Transportation Contract – *template*
- Homeless Set-Aside Reimbursement Form – *required*



Annual Needs Assessment for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Annually, the Commission will budget in the Consolidated Funding Application for a homeless set aside of the district Title IA funds to help pay for services for students experiencing homelessness. A charter school must demonstrate that it has exhausted all school and community resources before requesting to use the reserved funds to serve homeless students. Incremental transportation costs for students experiencing homelessness (costs above what the school would have otherwise provided to transport the student) may be reimbursable through the district set-asides.

In order to plan and budget appropriately for the upcoming school year, each school shall complete this Annual Needs Assessment for students experiencing homelessness and turn it into the Commission via the March reporting calendar.

- Number of students experiencing homelessness currently identified: _____
- Estimated number of students experiencing homelessness for upcoming school year: _____

Rationale for estimate number (including an explanation if it is different from what is in EIS/SIS):

The Commission and each authorized charter school are required to provide services that support students experiencing homelessness to succeed in school and to meet academic achievement standards. Title I funds cannot supplant other state or local funds. Therefore, if a school used school or community resources to provide a service, the school cannot request reimbursement of funds for the service.

Needs Assessment for Services⁷

Please mark with an "X" how the school plans to provide the following services to students experiencing homelessness if necessary. This document should be utilized as a part of the school's planning process for the upcoming school year and will help the Commission in the district planning and budgeting process. The school may use multiple resources for a service. If the school plans to use the district set-aside funds for the service, the school must provide an explanation why school or community resources are not available. The submission of this assessment does not constitute approval of the use of funds by the school.

Service	School Resource	Community Resource	Need Set Aside Funds	Explanation
Items of clothing, particularly if necessary to meet a school's dress or uniform requirement				
Clothing and shoes necessary to participate in physical education classes				
Student fees that are necessary to participate in the general education program				

⁷ Title IA funds can be used to provide the following services, but this should not be seen as an exhaustive list. For additional information, please see: National Center for Homeless Education, "[Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness under Title I, Part A](#)," Winter 2014; and National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, "[The Most Frequently Asked Questions on the Education Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless Situations](#)," September 2016.



Service	School Resource	Community Resource	Need Set Aside Funds	Explanation
Student fees required for participation in extracurricular activities or events				
Personal school supplies such as backpacks and notebooks				
Personal hygiene items				
Birth certificates necessary to enroll in school				
Immunizations				
Food				
Medical and dental services				
Eyeglasses and hearing aids				
Counseling services to address anxiety related to homelessness that is impeding learning				



Service	School Resource	Community Resource	Need Set Aside Funds	Explanation
Outreach services to students living in shelters, motels, and other temporary residences				
Extended learning time (before and after school, Saturday classes, summer school) to compensate for lack of quiet time for homework in shelters or other overcrowded living conditions				
Tutoring services, especially in shelters or other locations where homeless students live				
Parental involvement specifically oriented to reaching out to parents/guardians of homeless students				
Fees for AP and IB testing				
Fees for SAT/ACT testing				



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Service	School Resource	Community Resource	Need Set Aside Funds	Explanation
Excess transportation costs (explain)				
Other (please explain)				
Other (please explain)				
Other (please explain)				
Other (please explain)				



McKinney-Vento Checklist (required)

Student Name: _____

School: _____

School Homeless POC: _____

_____ Residency Questionnaire Completed (should be given to every student upon enrollment or if the student experiences homelessness during the school year)

_____ Parent/Guardian Interview

Date of Interview _____ Phone _____ In-person _____

Current living situation _____

Area of assistance needed _____

Immediate provisions _____

_____ Determination of Status

_____ Notification of Rights and Services provided to parent/guardian

Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (Y / N) (Circle One)

_____ Transportation Request (Y / N) (Circle One)

How is the school accommodating this request (manner and funding source)?

School contact for transportation services _____

_____ Notification of Food Service

Only complete the remaining if a student's placement at the school of origin is denied. The Commission's homeless liaison should be included in this discussion.

_____ Written Notification of Enrollment Decision Provided to Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

_____ Written Appeal of Enrollment

_____ Dispute Resolution (use only in appeal situation)

_____ Change of Status



Checklist for Decision-Making (required) School of Origin Considerations	Local Attendance Area School Considerations
☐ Continuity of Instruction - Student is best served due to circumstances that look to his or her past.	☐ Continuity of Instruction -Student is best served due to circumstances that look to his or her future.
☐ Age and Grade Placement of the Student - Maintaining friends and contacts with peers is critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation. The student has been in this environment for an extended period of time.	☐ Age and Grade Placement of the Student - Maintaining friends and contacts with peers in the school of origin is not particularly critical to the student's meaningful school experience and participation. The student has attended the school of origin for only a brief time.
☐ Academic Strength - The student's academic performance is weak and the student would fall further behind if he/she transferred to another school.	☐ Academic Strength - The student's academic performance is strong and at grade level; the student would likely recover academically from a school transfer.
☐ Social and Emotional State - The student is suffering from the effects of mobility, has developed strong ties to the current school, and does not want to leave.	☐ Social and Emotional State - The student seems to be coping adequately with mobility, does not feel strong ties to the current school, and does not mind transferring.
☐ Distance of the Commute and Its Impact - The advantages of remaining in the school of origin outweigh any potential disadvantages presented by the length of the commute.	☐ Distance of the Commute and Its Impact - A shorter commute may help the student's concentration, attitude, or readiness for school. The local attendance area school can meet all of the necessary educational and special needs of the student.
☐ Personal Safety of the Student - The school of origin has advantages for the safety of the student.	☐ Personal Safety of the Student - The local attendance area school has advantages for the safety of the student.

Checklist for Decision-Making (required) School of Origin Considerations	Local Attendance Area School Considerations
☐ Student's Need for Special Instruction - The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504, special education and related services, or ESL can be better met at the school of origin.	☐ Student's Need for Special Instruction - The student's need for special instruction, such as Section 504, special education and related services, or ESL can be met at the local attendance area school.
☐ Length of Anticipated Stay - The student's current living situation is outside of the school of origin's attendance zone, but the living situation continues to be uncertain. The student will benefit from the continuity offered by remaining in the school of origin.	☐ Length of Anticipated Stay - The student's current living situation appears stable and unlikely to change suddenly; the student will benefit from developing relationships with peers in school who live in the local community.

Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility Flowchart (*guidance*)

The following is a chart intended to serve as a general guide for determining the status of unaccompanied youth. Please note that all McKinney-Vento determinations should be made on a case-by-case basis, weighing the individual circumstances of each student. To be eligible for McKinney-Vento services as an unaccompanied homeless student, the student must meet the criteria of both homeless and unaccompanied. If a student is identified as unaccompanied, the school shall institute practices to support the unique needs of unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

Guiding Questions

Is the student residing with someone who is not a parent or court-appointed legal guardian?
 Why is this student with this person?

Examples of homeless and unaccompanied	Examples of homeless but not unaccompanied or unaccompanied but not homeless.
Family was evicted; cannot find housing altogether; parent/guardian placed student temporarily with a friend or relative	Parent/guardian transferred for work; plan for student care and support in place so student can stay to finish school
Student left home due to danger or extreme conflict; student was put out of home by parent/guardian for a similar reason	Student moved in with a friend, relative, or coach to play sports, be in the band, attend a magnet school, etc.
The family was homeless prior to the parent's/guardian's incarceration or the caregiver arrangement is not fixed, regular, or adequate	Student did not change residencies, caregiver moved in; parent/guardian made arrangements for the student prior to incarceration
The family lost housing; the parent/guardian placed the student temporarily with a friend or relative	Parent's/guardian's work schedule was problematic, so that student stays with relatives for school

Determination:

Homeless and unaccompanied: Should be enrolled as an unaccompanied youth under McKinney-Vento	Not Homeless or Unaccompanied: Should not be enrolled as an unaccompanied youth under McKinney-Vento
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Student Residency Questionnaire - (template)

This form is intended to address the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act (Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act). The questions below are to assist in determining if the student meets the eligibility criteria for services provided under the McKinney-Vento Act.

Today's Date: _____

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ Gender: _____

Current Address (Number, Street, City, State Zip): _____

Last Permanent Address (If different from current address): _____

Address you receive mail (If different from current address): _____

SECTION A

Only complete Section A if you are living in a **temporary residence/address**. If you have a **permanent residence/address**, please only complete Section C below.

Where does the student stay at night? (You can choose more than one)

A. In an emergency
shelter/transitional housing

B. In a car or campsite

C. In a motel/hotel

D. In another location that is not appropriate for living (e.g., an abandoned building)

E. Temporarily with another family in a house, mobile home, or apartment because the student's family does not have a place of its own

F. Other – an arrangement that is not fixed, regular, or adequate and is not included in the options above



SECTION B

Only complete Section B if you checked any of the boxes A through F in Section A. If you did not check any boxes in Section A, please only complete Section C below.

Check the box that best describes with whom the student resides. (Note: Legal guardianship may only be granted by a court.)

- ☐ Parent(s)
- ☐ Legal Guardian(s)
- ☐ Caregiver(s) who are not legal guardian(s) (example: relatives, friends, parents of friends, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____
- ☐ Is this student in or awaiting foster care placement? If so, please explain:

Section C

All parents/guardians must complete Section C.

I understand that the information provided above is correct, true, and current. I also understand that enrolling a child in a Tennessee public school under false pretense is punishable by law.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Relationship to Student: _____ Date: _____



Caregiver Form - (template)

This form is intended to address the McKinney-Vento Act (Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act) requirement that homeless children have access to education and other services for which they are eligible. The McKinney-Vento Act states specifically that barriers to enrollment must be removed. In some cases, a child or youth who is homeless may not be able to reside with his/her parent or guardian; however, this fact does not nullify the child or youth's right to receive a free, appropriate public education.

Instructions:

Complete this form for a child or youth enrolling in charter school while not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

I am 18 years of age or older and have agreed to fulfill the role of caregiver for the minor named below:

Name of student _____

Student's date of birth _____

My name (adult giving authorization) _____

My home address _____

My date of birth _____ My state driver's license or identification card # _____

Check one or both (for example, if one parent was advised and the other could not be located):

_____ I have advised the parent(s) or other person(s) having legal custody of the minor as to my intent to authorize medical care and have received no objection.

_____ I am unable to contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) at this time to notify them of my intended authorization.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of this state that the foregoing information is true and correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Notification of Rights - (template)

Students without fixed, regular, and adequate living situations have the following rights:

Immediate enrollment in the school of origin even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment, without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations;

Transportation to the school of origin for the regular school day;

Access to free meals, Title I and other educational programs, and transportation to extra-curricular activities to the same extent that it is offered to other students.

Any questions about these rights can be directed to the charter school's homeless POC at [REDACTED] the Commission's homeless liaison at (629) 259-3814, or the state coordinator at (615) 917-3750.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and understand the above rights.

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Unaccompanied Youth	Date
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Signature of Charter School Homeless POC	Date
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Written Enrollment Decision Notice - (template)

This form is to be completed by the charter school when an enrollment request is denied. A copy of the form shall be sent to the Commission homeless liaison within two (2) business days of the decision.

Date: _____

Name of person completing form: _____

Title of person completing form: _____

Name of school: _____

In compliance with McKinney-Vento Act (Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act), the following written notification is provided to:

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Name of Student(s): _____

After reviewing your request to enroll the student(s) listed above, the enrollment request is denied. This determination was based upon:

You have the right to appeal this decision by completing the second page of this notice or by contacting the Commission's homeless liaison.

Name of Commission's homeless liaison: Ariana Cahoon

Title: Federal Programs Coordinator

Phone number: (629) 259-3814

In addition:

The student listed above has the right to enroll immediately in the requested school pending the resolution of the dispute and to be provided adequate transportation to the school including the right to participate in all school activities.



You may provide written or verbal communication(s) to support your position regarding the student's enrollment in the requested school. You may use the form attached to this notification.

If you are an English learner, use a native language other than English, or need additional supports because of a disability, translators, interpreters, or other support services related to your disability will be made available without charge;

You may seek the assistance of advocates or an attorney. The following are legal and advocacy service providers in the area that can provide assistance during any part of the appeal process:

List names of legal and advocacy service providers in your area here

You may contact the State Coordinator for Homeless Education if further help is needed or desired. Contact information for the State Coordinator: Vanessa Waters, (615) 917-3750.

A copy of our dispute resolution process for students experiencing homelessness is attached.



Written Appeal of Enrollment Decision

(required)

The following should be completed by the parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth when a dispute arises. This information may be shared verbally with the school's homeless POC or the Commission's homeless liaison as an alternative to completing this form.

Date: _____ Student: _____

Person completing this form: _____

Relationship to student: _____

Phone number: _____ School: _____

I am appealing the enrollment decision made by:

I have been provided with:

- A written explanation of the school's decision
- The contact information for the Commission's homeless education liaison
- A copy of the state's dispute resolution process for students experiencing homelessness.

OPTIONAL: You may include a written explanation to support your appeal in this space or provide your explanation verbally.

The school provided me (the parent, guardian, caretaker, or unaccompanied youth completing this form) with a copy of this form when it was submitted. _____ (Initial)



Parent Transportation Contract

(template)[Insert School Name]

TRANSPORTATION MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Dear Parent/Guardian/Student,

Your child(ren) or you, as an unaccompanied homeless youth, are currently eligible for the McKinney-Vento program. Per the McKinney-Vento Act, transportation will be provided to your child(ren) or you, as an unaccompanied youth, to and from school.

The following describes our agreement with you regarding transportation:

Pick-Up

Students must be at the bus stop at the time provided by the charter school. Drivers can wait no more than [X] minutes from your scheduled time.

Drop-Off

An adult pre-approved by parents and guardians must be present at the bus stop to pick-up students too young to be left unsupervised. The transportation department will provide the time that the adult must be present for pick-up of students; parents and guardians must notify the charter school's homeless POC or the charter school's transportation contact if an adult other than the parent or guardian will be picking-up the student.

Communication of Absences

If a student is going to be absent from school and therefore does not need transportation for part or all of a day, parents or guardians must call and inform the designated driver no later than [X] a.m. on the day of the absence so the driver can adjust the route accordingly.

Driver's Name: [Insert]

Contact Phone Number: [Insert]

Violating the Pick-up, Drop-off, or Absence agreement more than [Insert number] times could result in the loss of transportation services or other consequences.

Behavioral Expectations

Students and parents are expected to follow the charter school's policies for behavior. Disciplinary actions for students who violate the behavior policies will be followed as they are for any student in the charter school.



If charter school fails to provide the agreed upon transportation services, the charter school's homeless POC should be contacted. If there is no resolution after contacting the charter school's homeless POC, the Commission's homeless liaison should be contacted. Your charter school homeless POC is [insert name of Charter School Coordinator] and may be reached at [insert contact info] The Commission's homeless liaison is Ariana Cahoon and may be reached at (629) 259-3814.

If a student's residence changes, the charter school's transportation contact must be contacted by [insert time] to allow for transportation to be arranged. Transportation requests and changes may take up to [insert number] days to be routed, so temporary transportation may be provided while routing is arranged. The charter school's transportation contact may be contacted at: [insert info].

Please sign below to acknowledge that you understand and agree with these expectations and terms:

Date	Parent/Guardian/Unaccompanied Youth Name (Printed)	Signature
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Date	Name of Charter School Homeless POC (Printed)	Signature
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Adapted from materials from the National Center for Homeless Education Homeless Liaison Toolkit



Homeless Set-Aside Reimbursement Form

(required)

Authorized charter schools must use this form to request reimbursement of expenses that qualify for the district's homeless set-aside. Forms must be submitted to Ariana.Cahoon@tn.gov on the 15th of the month.

Annually as a part of the district plan and budgeting process, the District is required to set-aside Title I funds on the district-level to serve homeless students if all other school and community resources are exhausted. A charter school must demonstrate that it has exhausted all school and community resources before requesting to use the reserved funds to serve homeless students. Incremental transportation costs for homeless students (costs above what the school would have otherwise provided to transport the student) may be reimbursable through the district set-aside. For additional information on reimbursable expenses and the homeless set-aside, please see Commission Homeless Students Procedures.

Reimbursements may only be requested for expenses that have already been paid by the school. Only those expenses deemed by the District to qualify for reimbursement will be approved.

School Name: _____

Name/Title of Person Completing Form: _____

Email/Phone of Person Completing Form: _____

Expense Description:

Date of Expense/Invoice (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Amount of Expense/Invoice: \$ _____

Justification for Expense (school must demonstrate that all school and community resources were exhausted before requesting use of homeless set-aside funds):



Please attach supporting documentation for the expense including bill, invoice, additional information for justification, etc. Forms received without supporting documentation will be returned.

Signature of Person Completing Form: _____

Date: _____