

**Does the living situation of the child or youth fit into one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law?**

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason.  
Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or camping ground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in an emergency or transitional shelter.
- Abandoned in a hospital.
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station or similar setting.
- Migratory children in the above living situations.

**If the living situation of the child or youth does not fit one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law, is the child or youth living in another type of situation that is not fixed, regular and adequate?**

**Lacking any one of these conditions would make a child eligible:**

- Fixed (A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent and not subject to change.) Sample questions:

- Is this a permanent or temporary arrangement?
  - Are you looking for another place to live?
  - Why are you living in your current situation?
  - Where would you go if you couldn't stay where you are?
  - Where were you living before?
  - Could you be asked to leave at any time?
- Regular (A regular residence is used on a regular basis.) Sample questions:
    - Do you stay in the same place every night?
    - How long have you been staying in your current situation?
    - How long do you plan to stay?
    - How long did you live in your last place?
  - Adequate (An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.) Sample questions:
    - How many people are in the living situation?
    - Where are you sleeping?
    - What are the conditions of the living situation?
    - Is there adequate heat, electricity and water?

## **CHOICE OF SCHOOL**

- Changing schools frequently can negatively impact students' education, causing them to fall behind. Students that qualify for educational assistance through the McKinney-Vento Act can stay at the school they have been attending or transfer to the district in which they are temporarily staying. The caregiver of the student will make the choice. This does not mean you can go to any school. It has to be one of the schools noted above. Once you and your family become permanently housed, your student may finish the school year at his/her current school or transfer to the new district. Your school's liaison can assist you in whichever decision you make for your student.

## **IMMEDIATE ENROLLMENT**

- School districts are required to enroll McKinney-Vento eligible students without delay even if you do not have your student's school or medical records. If you need assistance getting educational or medical records, ask to speak with the district's liaison. They will assist you.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

- If you, as the caregiver, choose for your student to remain at the home school, the school district will work with you on transportation options. If the ride to school is estimated to be more than one hour, the district or liaison can request a meeting with you to determine how this may affect your student's education.

## **FREE LUNCH AND SCHOOL FEES**

- **Because of your unstable housing situation, your student is eligible to receive a free lunch each day, and if the district provides a breakfast program, that will also be provided at no cost. In addition, your student should not be charged to attend school. This includes books, locks, gym uniforms, class fees, sports programs and graduation fees.**

## **Settling Disputes**

- **With your McKinney-Vento eligibility, you must be provided with a written explanation of the district's intent to dispute. Your school district must also provide you with a list of low-cost or free legal services to assist you during the dispute/appeal process. Once you have received notice that your district has filed for dispute, please contact your regional liaison. In the event of a dispute, your Regional Office of Education or Intermediate Service Center will appoint a mediator. The mediator will set a meeting time that is convenient for you and the school district in an attempt to resolve the dispute. If you do not agree with the decision of the mediator, you can appeal to the Illinois State Board of Education.**