

Education rights of students who are homeless

Who qualifies for this help?

The law states, any student that does not have a fixed, regular, and adequate place to sleep at night qualifies for educational assistance. This includes students and families that stay at a shelter, on the street, a car or abandoned building. Families that have lost their housing and need to double-up with friends or relatives because they cannot afford their own place, also qualify.

Choice of Schools

Frequently, changing schools can negatively impact your student's 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 above (*school of origin/school of residence*). Once you and your family become permanently housed, your student may finish the school year at their current school or transfer to the new district. Your school district's liaison can assist you in whichever decision you make for your students.

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, medical records or have any questions, please contact the building principal or Kimberly Dreisbach or Sarah Cammack, the District's McKinney-Vento liaisons.

Transportation

If you, as the caregiver, choose for your student to remain at their home school, the school district will work with you on transportation options.

Free Lunch & School Fees

Because of your unstable housing your student is eligible to receive a free lunch each day. In addition, student fees will be covered by the District.

Settling Disputes

In the event that the District has questions about your McKinney-Vento eligibility, you will be provided with a written explanation of the District's intent to dispute. In this situation, District 203 would 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 the District has filed for dispute, please contact your regional liaison, Heather Britton, at (630) 514-1389 or hbritton@dupageroe.org. In the event of a dispute, the Regional Office of Education or Intermediated Service Center will appoint a mediator. The mediator will set a meeting time that is mutually convenient for all parties 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.