

# PLAN FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Title I and McKinney-Vento Provisions

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*PLAN FOR HOMELESS  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH*

*Title I and McKinney-Vento Provisions*

*The Lamar Consolidated Independent School District Plan for Homeless Children and Youth was adapted by the State and Federal Programs Office utilizing information disseminated by the TEA Texas Education Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) Program. Information will be changed and updated as guidelines are revised.*

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## **Section 1**

### **Overview/General Information**

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Definition of Homelessness

Policies and Procedures

Dissemination of Educational Rights

## McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

*The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B-Education for Homeless Children and Youth), was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently reauthorized in December 2015, ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth, experiencing homelessness. Services to homeless children are required by Local Educational Agencies in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and are primarily found under Subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.).*

### Definition of Homelessness (McKinney-Vento Act 725(2); 42 U.S.C. 11431)

The term “homeless children and youth”

- (A) Means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;  
And
- (B) Includes-
  - (i) Children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; or living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals;
  - (ii) Children and youth who have a primary residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
  - (iii) Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
  - (iv) Migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

## **Policies and Procedures**

Students must be provided with the opportunity to enroll immediately and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in the schools of Lamar Consolidated Independent School District. The intent of McKinney-Vento Act is to ensure that students in homeless situations are given the opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic achievement standard all students are expected to meet. It is the policy of Congress that students in homeless situations should have access to the education, including preschool education, and other services they need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

Schools should not provide services in settings within a school that segregate homeless children and youth from other children and youth, except as is temporarily necessary. Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. States that receive McKinney-Vento assistance (as Texas does) are prohibited from segregating homeless students in separate schools, separate programs within schools, or separate settings within schools. Homeless children are entitled to participate in the regular after-school programs provided by the school, and schools must address all barriers to their full participation in these programs.

The temporary necessity for segregation of homeless children and youth can often arise when he or she resides in a domestic violence shelter. Schools will take all necessary steps to protect children who are victims of domestic violence, such as protecting children's identity in school database systems, arranging for anonymous pick up and drop off locations for school buses, enrolling children in a different school, sensitizing bus drivers and school personnel to the child's circumstances, training school staff on confidentiality laws and policies, and helping families to file copies of protective orders with schools. In this way, schools can address safety concerns and provide equal educational opportunities without causing further disruption in children's lives.

## **Dissemination of Educational Rights**

All schools within the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District shall ensure that public notice of the educational rights of students in homeless situations is disseminated where children and youth receive services under the Act. Posters in English and Spanish will be posted in all LCISD campuses, family shelters, soup kitchens, employment offices, public housing authorities, low-cost motels, faith-based organizations, community action agencies, libraries, and welfare departments. Posters will also be placed at laundromats, convenience stores, libraries, video arcades, and other businesses that families who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing may learn about their educational rights and who to contact for help. Campus Homeless Contacts will be provided with posters and place posters where they are visible to parents.

## **Section 2**

### **Identification and Eligibility**

Identifying Homeless Students

Eligibility of Homeless Students for Title I Services

Educational Related Opportunities

## **Identifying Homeless Students**

Children and youth in homeless situations are difficult to identify for many reasons and often go unnoticed by school personnel. Students and parents may try to hide their situation because they are embarrassed by their homelessness. In addition, the fear of having children taken away often prevents families from informing school officials of their living circumstances. Unaccompanied youth may not report their homeless status for fear of being returned to unsafe family environments. Children and youth not enrolled in school and not living in shelters are even more invisible to schools and their communities. Yet these students must be identified as homeless if they are to enroll, attend, and succeed in school. The law, therefore, requires all school districts, ensured by the District Homeless Liaison and in coordination with school personnel and other agencies to identify homeless situations. Identifying students in homeless situations is also an important way to create greater awareness of homelessness in the school district and community.

The district liaison should also collaborate with the school district special education program. The Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that highly mobile children with disabilities, such as migrant and homeless children who need special education and related services, are located, identified, and evaluated. Additionally, IDEA requires that homeless preschoolers and all homeless children can be included in the “Child Find” process for early identification of special education needs.

The most difficult children to identify are preschool age children. This is because such children may have never enrolled in school before. Consequently, LCISD may be oblivious as to the existence of such children. Local liaisons should identify preschool-aged homeless children by working closely with shelters and social service agencies in their area. In addition, the liaison should work with school personnel, who can inquire, at the time they are enrolling homeless children and youth in school, whether the family has preschool-aged children.

## **Eligibility of Homeless Students for Title I Services**

Students experiencing homelessness who are not on a Title-I campus are eligible to receive Title-I services. A child or youth that is homeless and is attending Lamar Consolidated Independent School District is automatically eligible for Title I homeless services, regardless of their current academic performance. There is no need to restrict the use of Title I set asides to non-Title I schools.

## **Educational and Related Opportunities**

The Campus Homeless Contacts or other staff members must inform parents or guardians of educational and related opportunities available to their children and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. Notification of the educational rights and opportunities may be done in part through the posting of posters, welcome packets, and enrollment conferences.

## **Section 3**

### **School Options**

School Selection

School of Origin

Written Explanation of the Denial of School Selection

## **School Selection**

Homeless students may choose to enroll in any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend, or in their school of origin. Lamar Consolidated Independent School District will enroll the child to be served in the attendance area school or continue their enrollment in the school of origin based on what is in the child's best interest.

## **School of Origin**

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District must keep homeless students in their schools of origin, to the extent feasible, unless it is against the parent or guardian's wishes. Homeless students are permitted to remain in their school of origin until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing. "School of Origin" is defined as the school that child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled." McKinney-Vento paperwork must be updated annually to determine continued eligibility.

Changing schools impedes students' academic and social growth. A "rule of thumb" is that it takes a child four to six months to recover academically after changing schools. Highly mobile students have also been found to have lower test scores and lower overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools. Therefore, the law requires that we do what is in the best interest of the child, including keeping a child in the school of origin, to the extent feasible unless it is against the parent's or guardian's wishes. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the District Homeless Education Liaison will assist with the placement and enrollment of the youth and must take the youth's wishes into account.

## **Written Explanation of the Denial of School Selection**

District Homeless Education Liaison must provide a written explanation of the decision and the right to appeal. if a student is sent to a school other than that requested by a parent or guardian, or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, at the request of the Campus or District Homeless Liaison. The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the child or youth lives with the homeless parents or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

## **McKinney Vento Homeless Student Enrollment Dispute Resolution Process**

1. Whenever a placement or enrollment dispute arises, the student must be admitted immediately to the requested school while the dispute is being resolved.
2. The school must refer the student, parent, or guardian to the local homeless education liaison to conduct the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.
3. The same access to the dispute resolution process is also provided to unaccompanied youth.
4. Parent/Guardian or unaccompanied youth will be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment.
5. Written explanation must include information about the rights of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to appeal this decision.
6. Dispute Resolution Form can be issued by the campus and/or the homeless education liaison.
7. If a parent wants to appeal the resolution decision, the parent can contact the State and Federal Programs Department to file a complaint through Lamar CISD's complaint process, as set out in FNG (LOCAL) beginning at Level Two.
8. If parent does not agree with the district resolution decision, they have a right to appeal to the Texas Education Agency, McKinney Vento Homeless Education State Coordinator, Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs Division, 512-463-9414, [HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov](mailto:HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov).

## **Section 4**

### **Enrollment**

Immediate Enrollment of Students

How to Help with Enrollment of Homeless Students

Enrollment of Unaccompanied Youth and Notice of Appeal

Enrollment of Students Pending Resolution of Disputes

Potential Enrollment Barriers and Possible Solutions

TAC 89.1605 Requirements for Highly Mobile Students

## **Immediate Enrollment of Students**

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District will ensure immediate enrollment of students in homeless situations. LCISD will enroll students even if they do not have the required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documents. Students will be allowed to attend classes and participate fully in school activities.

Children and youth experiencing homelessness often do not have the documents ordinarily required for school enrollment. However, school may be the only opportunity for children and youth to benefit from a stable environment, uninterrupted adult attention, peer relations, academic stimulation, and reliable meals. Immediately enrolling students in homeless situations in school provides stability and avoids separating children from school for days or weeks while documents are located.

### **How to Help with Enrollment of Homeless Students**

- To protect privacy, take the family to a private location for enrollment.
- Offer help in completing forms. Hesitation may indicate an inability to read.
- Assure parent(s) their child can enroll even if the family does not have a “fixed, regular, and adequate place to live” right now.
- Enroll the child immediately (without medical records). Ask the name of the last school attended and contact for records.
- \*Complete the *Student Residency Questionnaire* online. Necessary paperwork will be completed and recorded by State and Federal Programs.
- If school records are missing, solicit help from a teacher or counselor in assessing academic status to avoid misplacement.
- Contact Common Threads for school supplies, clothing, and toiletries.
- Arrange lunch and breakfast.
- Be sensitive, patient, calm and reassuring. You make a difference.

## **Enrollment of Unaccompanied Youth and Notice of Appeal**

The Campus Homeless Contact or trained school staff must help unaccompanied youth choose and enroll in a school after considering the youth's wishes and provide youth with notice of their right to appeal an enrollment decision that is not their choice. The District Homeless Education Liaison must ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement.

Unaccompanied youth have the right to:

- Remain in their school of origin (to the extent feasible) or attend any public school that students living in the same attendance area are eligible to attend.
- Receive notice from the District Homeless Education Liaison of their right to appeal an enrollment decision that is not their choice.
- Attend classes and participate fully in school activities immediately, even if they do not have a parent or guardian to enroll them or have the required documents, such as school records, proof of residency, or other documents.
- Be free from segregation, isolation, and stigmatization.
- Have comparable access to school meals, English language services, vocational and technical education, transportation if applicable, gifted, and talented services, special education, pre-school, and Title I services; and
- Have disputes resolved promptly and attend the school they choose while disputes are pending.

### **Enrollment of Students, Pending Resolution of Disputes**

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment in a school, the child or youth shall be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The child, youth, parent, or guardian shall be referred to the District Homeless Education Liaison, who shall conduct the dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible as in accordance with the Enrollment Disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act as follows.

- Work with the Campus Administration and the District Homeless Liaison to ensure that enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with the enrollment disputes section of the McKinney-Vento Act as follows:
  - (i) The child or youth **shall** be immediately admitted to the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute.
  - (ii) The parent or the guardian of the child or youth **shall** be provided with a written explanation of the school's decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the rights of the parent, guardian, or youth to appeal the decision.
  - (iii) The child, youth, parent, or guardian **shall** be referred to the District Homeless Education Liaison who shall initiate the dispute resolution process.
  - (iv) In the case of an unaccompanied youth, the District Homeless Education Liaison **shall** ensure that the youth is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of the dispute.

## Potential Enrollment Barriers and Possible Solutions

This chart provides useful information; however, enrollment may not be prohibited if barriers cannot be addressed.

Potential Enrollment Barriers	Possible Solutions
Residency Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow alternative proof               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Affidavit</li> <li>- Hotel or motel receipt</li> <li>- Letter from shelter, community agency, or parent verifying homelessness and indicating location of residence</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Original birth certificate Requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow alternative proof               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other original documents: baptismal record, passport, immigration certificate, notice of birth, or verification of birth date from the hospital where the child was born.</li> <li>- Copies of school records, birth certificate, or birth date verification from appropriate social service agency</li> <li>- Affidavit</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
School records, including special education IEP's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept parent with phone call verification from previous school</li> <li>• Have records forwarded from previous school.</li> <li>• If a previous school cannot be identified or the student was not previously enrolled, consider creating a procedure for immediate screening and placement.</li> </ul>
Health records and immunization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept copies, faxes, or references from previous school records as verification. If no records exist or immunizations have not been received, the Campus Homeless Liaison or Campus Nurse will help the parents in obtaining the necessary immunizations and/or records. This is a requirement of liaisons, according to the McKinney-Vento Act.</li> </ul>
Parent or guardianship verification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept an affidavit.</li> <li>• Accept documentation of a court date for pending custody hearings.</li> </ul>
Unaccompanied youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enroll student and work with appropriate agencies to assist the student.</li> <li>• Have adult living with student complete an affidavit</li> </ul>

Most educators feel a connection to the students they teach. They want the best for them. However, few educators have had the experience of being homeless and may not be aware of what it is like to be homeless. They may not know the telltale signs of homelessness. When a student is identified as homeless, the teacher should be told privately. Sensitivity to homeless issues must be nurtured and concrete strategies to meet the education needs of homeless students should be implemented.

**Note: For questions regarding health records and immunizations, please contact the School Nurse or the Lamar CISD Lead Nurse, at 832-223-0435.**

## **Texas Administrative Code 89.1605 Requirements for Highly Mobile Students**

Each school district and open enrollment charter school shall develop systems to ease transition of a student who is homeless or in substitute care during the first two weeks of enrollment at a new school. These systems shall include campus tours, distribution of welcome packets and mechanisms to ensure that a process is in place for all students who qualify to receive nutrition benefits upon enrollment.

### **Campus Tours**

The homeless campus contact or campus designee must conduct campus tours. These tours should include introductions for new students and an overview of school processes.

### **Welcome Packets**

Welcome packets containing applicable information regarding enrollment in extracurricular activities, club activities, information on fee waivers, tutoring opportunities, the student code of conduct, and contact information for pertinent school staff must be made available to all McKinney-Vento eligible students.

### **Enrollment Conferences**

A school district or an open-enrollment charter school shall convene an enrollment conference with the student within the first two weeks of enrollment (or as soon as feasible) at a new school. The enrollment conference shall address the student's credit recovery, credit completion, attendance plans and trauma informed interventions, interests and strengths, discipline or behavior concerns, previous successes, college readiness, and social and emotional supports. The enrollment conference must also address district policies relating to transfers and withdrawals and communication preferences with parents or guardians.

## **Section 5**

### **Student Records**

Obtaining School Records

Maintenance of Records

Immunizations and Immunization Records

## **Obtaining School Records**

Enrolling schools must request school records from the previous school. Students must be enrolled in school while records are obtained.

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District will immediately enroll students in homeless situations, even if they do not have required documents such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documents. The term “enroll” is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities. There is a 30-day “grace period” from the time a child enrolls in a public school for the documents establishing the child’s identity, school records from the most recently attended school, and the required immunization record to be supplied to the school district. Schools within Texas are required to comply with records transfer requests within 30 days, and Federal guidelines also require districts to transfer records to schools in other states when requested.

## **Maintenance of Records**

Any record ordinarily kept by the school, including immunization or medical records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs, regarding each homeless child or youth shall be maintained so that the records are available, in a timely fashion, when a child or youth enters a new school or district and, in a manner, consistent with section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g).

## **Immunizations and Immunization Records**

If the child or youth needs to obtain immunizations or medical records, the Campus Nurse will assist in obtaining immunizations or medical records. Students must be enrolled in school in the interim.

The Texas Education Code requires that students be granted a 30 day “grace period” from the time a child enrolls in a public school for the record of required immunizations to be supplied to the school district.

## **Section 6**

### **Services**

Coordination of Services

Comparable Services

Transportation Coordination of Services

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District shall coordinate the provision of services with local social services agencies and other agencies or programs providing services to homeless children and youth and their families, including services and programs funded under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C.5701) to minimize educational disruption for homeless children and youth who become homeless. This coordination shall be designed to ensure that homeless children and youth have access and reasonable proximity to available education and related support services (such as referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services) and to raise awareness of school personnel and service providers of the effects of short-term stays in a shelter and other challenges associated with homelessness.

Agencies providing services to children, youth and families in homeless situations may be identified through a variety of resources. Many of the communities in Texas have local homeless coalitions that coordinate services to the homeless and have listings of services available in the community for specific needs. A listing of all the homeless coalitions in Texas may be found on the Texas Homeless Network (THN) website at <http://www.thn.org>. Shelters for the homeless, food banks, community churches, welfare assistance programs, Texas Workforce Commission offices, and employment centers may also have information on community resources and referrals for persons experiencing homelessness.

### **Comparable Services**

Each homeless child or youth to be assisted shall be provided services comparable to services offered to other students in the school selected, including transportation services, educational services for which the child or youth meet the eligibility criteria (Title I homeless services, pre-school, educational programs for children with disabilities or for students with limited English proficiency), programs in vocational and technical education, programs for gifted and talented students, school nutrition programs.

### **Transportation**

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District must provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin, at a parent or guardian's request. "School of origin" is defined as the school that the child or youth was last enrolled. If the student's temporary residence and the school of origin are in the same district, that district must provide or arrange transportation. If the student is living outside the school of origin's district, the district where the student is living and the school of origin's district must determine how to divide the responsibility and cost of providing transportation, or they must share the responsibility equally. In addition to providing transportation to the school of origin, the district must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.

Transportation requests should be included with the Student Residency Questionnaire. If a change in address occurs, a new transportation form will need to be completed and submitted to the McKinney Vento Student Support Specialist.

## **Section 7**

### **Educational Support**

District McKinney-Vento Liaison's Role

McKinney-Vento Student Support Specialist's Role

Campus McKinney-Vento Contacts Role

What the Principal Can Do

What the Teacher Can Do

What the Counselor Can Do

What the School Nurse Can Do

What the Support Staff Can Do

### **District McKinney-Vento Liaison's Role**

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District's Homeless Liaison will:

- Disseminate critical information concerning the rights of homeless students to all campuses.
- Ensure that procedures are established and followed on each campus to provide each homeless student with a free and appropriate education.
- Distribute information and provide in-service training regarding homelessness.
- Work with campus staff and administration to facilitate success for the homeless program and each homeless student.
- Will ensure that House Bill 692 is enforced with all homeless children and unaccompanied youth. HB (House Bill) 692 Prohibits a district or charter school from placing a homeless student in out-of-school suspension except in the case of conduct including weapons, violence, or drugs/alcohol on school property or during a school related activity. The campus behavior coordinator can coordinate with the district's Administrator for Discipline and Placement for appropriate alternatives.

### **District McKinney-Vento Student Support Specialist's Role**

Lamar Consolidated Independent School District's McKinney-Vento Student Support Specialist will:

- Monitor student academics and attendance to identify and remove barriers.
- Conduct Highly Mobile Data Team meetings each grading period with campuses to discuss student progress and recommend interventions to support McKinney-Vento eligible student needs.
- Work with campus staff and administration to facilitate success for the homeless program and each homeless student.
- Ensure that parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth are informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin and assist in accessing transportation services.
- Ensure that parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth are provided with names and numbers of where to call for both school and community services assistance.
- Advocate for students and parents to facilitate immediate enrollment, attendance, and academic needs, and provide resources for additional supports.
- Provide training and resources to each LEA (Local Education Agency) campus upon request.
- Meet with community agencies and volunteers to share resources and information and to evaluate the impact of services.

## **Campus McKinney-Vento Contact's Role**

Each campus will identify a Campus Homeless Contact. Suggested positions from which to choose this person include assistant principals, school counselors, social workers, registrars, parental involvement liaisons, and school nurses. The Campus Homeless Contact will work with the District Homeless Liaison, McKinney-Vento Student Support Specialist, Student Services Counselor, and Family Support Specialists to ensure that:

- Enrollment conferences are conducted for McKinney-Vento students that are new to the campus.
- Procedures are established and followed to provide each homeless student with a free and appropriate education.
- Information is posted regarding the availability of school programs and services for homeless students on the campus.
- Public notice of the educational rights of students in homeless situations is posted at the campus.
- Parents are made to feel welcome and set the tone for further parent involvement.
- Establish a trusting relationship with parents.
- Request services through the State and Federal Programs Department.
- Communicate with parents about the student's achievement, behavior, and attendance.
- Collaborate in Highly Mobile Data Team meetings each grading period to discuss student progress and recommend interventions to support McKinney-Vento eligible student needs.

## **What the Principal Can Do (\*indicates requirements by law)**

- \*Appoint a school contact for homeless students.
- \*Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of students in homeless situations is posted *See Section 1- Dissemination of Educational Rights*
- \*Prepare support staff on enrollment procedures and expectations to make enrollment as quickly as possible for homeless students.
- \*Ensure that House Bill 692 is enforced with all homeless children and unaccompanied youth. HB 692 Prohibits a district or charter school from placing a homeless student in out-of-school suspension except in the case of conduct including weapons, violence, or drugs/alcohol on school

property or during a school related activity. The campus behavior coordinator can coordinate with the district's Administrator for Discipline and Placement for appropriate alternatives.

- Make sure parents feel welcome and set the tone for further parent involvement.
- Remove barriers to promote a stable school environment and experience.
- Appoint a staff person to do a brief educational assessment, if necessary.
- Inform necessary staff that the student is living in a homeless situation.
- Keep in close contact with staff; encourage detection and prevention of problems.
- Facilitate a cooperative working relationship between school staff and community agency staff to ensure the provision of services to meet needs.

### **What the Teacher Can Do**

- Help students feel welcome.
- Refer to Common Threads for necessary school supplies, uniforms, and toiletries as needed.
- Coordinate educational plans with counselor and with school staff in assisting homeless children and youth.
- Be observant of medical and other needs and refer to school nurse and/or counselor.
- Closely monitor reasons for absences to uncover needs.
- Allow students to express frustrations and allow opportunities to do so in other ways in addition to verbalizing (e.g., drawing).
- Build self-esteem by providing work in which the child can experience success.
- Consider homeless situations when making assignments-students needing a place to study or complete projects.
- Plan for the students' need to talk about experiences, individually with you or, if comfortable, during class sharing time.
- Communicate with parents about the student's achievement, behavior, and attendance.

### **What the Counselor Can Do**

- Greet the student and parent(s) as soon as possible and offer assistance.
- Adopt an “open-door” policy in providing assistance.
- Build a trusting and safe relationship with homeless students.
- Ensure the opportunity for homeless students to participate in in-school and after-school activities.
- Communicate with the students’ prior school(s) to obtain necessary information to insure continuation of services.
- Coordinate with other staff in assisting homeless children and youth.
- Assist school staff in understanding how homelessness affects the student’s ability to learn and to adjust at school.

### **What the School Nurse Can Do**

- Assist parents with the completion of all necessary medical records.
- Assist parents in obtaining their child’s medical information from doctors and clinics.
- Inquire about health problems e.g., asthma, epilepsy, sickle cell anemia, lead poisoning, and diabetes.
- Alert school and shelter care staff of any serious medical condition of the students.
- Assist in planning for appropriate supervision if the students become ill and needs to go “home.”
- Coordinate with school staff in assisting homeless children and youth.
- Assist other staff members in understanding health and family issues of homeless students/families.
- As a resource to families, provide/coordinate instruction in first aid, safety, nutrition, and self-advocacy.
- Follow-up on students not attending school to determine and help to resolve the cause, e.g. incomplete immunizations, illness, behavior. The law requires that students be admitted regardless of immunization history.
- Have necessary toiletry items on hand to assure proper hygiene at school.

### **What School Support Staff Can Do**

(Registrar, School Secretary, Homeless Campus Contact, Ancillary Staff)

- Greet the student warmly, make him/her feel welcome.
- Greet parents and shelter staff warmly and make the parents feel welcome.
- Conduct campus tours and enrollment conferences for all newly enrolled McKinney Vento eligible students.
- Distribute welcome packets to all newly enrolled McKinney Vento eligible students.
- Notify counselor, teacher, and nurse when a homeless student enrolls in school or is utilizing the bus.

### **What Student Support Services Staff Can Do**

(Family Support Specialists and Common Threads Staff)

- Educate parents about McKinney-Vento Act requirements.
- Inform students/families of reliable and accessible community programs.
- Refer families for subsidized critical services, e.g., medical, dental, food, housing, adult education, and assist families to access services.
- Identify local community resources to make referrals, e.g., food, housing, transportation, counseling.
- Collaborate and communicate with campus staff to identify student and family needs.
- Provide necessary school supplies, uniforms, and toiletries through Common Threads.
- Conduct home visits to check on student well-being and address attendance concerns in collaboration with the school campus.
- Visit shelters to provide support to shelter staff in helping students succeed in school.
- Keep communication open with shelter care providers, parents, and guardians to collaborate services and to keep them informed regarding school information.
- Encourage and assist community members to sponsor district-based and other support programs.

## **Section 8**

### **Parents Information**

Questions Parents Frequently-Ask

Important Records for Parents in Homeless Situations to Keep

## Questions Parents Frequently Ask

- If we have to change schools can someone help us transfer records quickly?  
**Answer: Yes. Records can be accessed by all schools in LCISD. If you are moving to a school out of the district, the new school/district can access school records via TREX and by contacting the registrar of your prior school.**
- Is transportation available for my child?  
**Answer: Yes. Transportation is provided to eligible McKinney-Vento students.**
- Can my child stay in this school if we move within the district?  
**Answer: Yes. Your child can stay at the school of origin for the remainder of the school year.**
- Can my child receive free meals at school?  
**Answer: Yes. All McKinney-Vento eligible students receive free meals at school.**
- What school supplies does my child need? Can you provide them?  
**Answer: Ask your school and student's teacher(s) to see what supplies are needed for their class. If you need support obtaining supplies, please reach out to your Family Support Specialist.**
- Can uniforms and undergarments be provided?  
**Answer: Yes. LCISD Common Threads supports students with clothing needed for school. Please contact Elida Castillo or your Family Support Specialist to schedule an appointment to visit Common Threads.**
- Is there a preschool program?  
**Answer: Yes. LCISD provides preschool programs to qualifying students.**
- Is there a summer school program?  
**Answer: Yes. Summer school opportunities are available to all students in LCISD.**
- What fees do parents need to pay? Is help available to pay fees?  
**Answer: Parents may be asked to pay for extracurricular activities, classes, supplies, equipment, etc. If you need assistance, support is available. Please contact your Campus McKinney-Vento Contact or Family Support Specialist for more information.**
- Can we use the school for an after-school study place?  
**Answer: Contact your building principal to see what availability they provide.**
- Who can I contact at school for help?  
**Answer: Your first point of contact is your Campus McKinney-Vento Contact. You may also contact the LCISD McKinney-Vento Student Support Specialist or Family Support Specialist for assistance.**

- Can my child get help with schoolwork, e.g., tutoring, and other support?  
**Answer: Yes. Every school provides tutorials for their students. Please contact your Campus McKinney-Vento Contact, Counselor or Teacher to obtain the tutorial schedule and information.**
- Should my child be evaluated for special education services?  
**Answer: If you believe your child should be evaluated for special education services, please reach out to the LCISD Special Education Department at <https://www.lcisd.org/departments/academics/special-programs/special-education-department/the-referral-process> .**
- Are there special classes to benefit a talent my child has?  
**Answer: Contact your student’s counselor to see the available courses/classes offered at your school and discuss the options.**
- Are there sports, music, or other activities my child can be a part of? Does the school provide needed equipment? Can transportation be provided for after-school activities?  
**Answer: Yes. Students may participate in extracurricular activities. Contact your school counselor to see what options are available. All participation is dependent upon the specific requirements for each extracurricular activity. Please contact the appropriate school personnel for more information and questions regarding equipment and transportation options.**
- Will my child be able to go on field trips if we are unable to pay?  
**Answer: Yes. A McKinney-Vento student may still attend field trips if they are unable to pay. The school can contact the McKinney-Vento Student Support Specialist to assist in covering the fees. Students must adhere to all other rules and requirements to attend the field trips.**

## **Important Records for Parents in Homeless Situations to Keep**

- Your child's school records (i.e.- ARD paperwork, teachers' names, schools attended)
- Your child's grades and report cards
- Your child's standardized test results
- Samples of your child's schoolwork
- Your child's birth certificate
- Health records regarding your child
- Social Security Number

## **Section 9**

### **Resources**

Texas Homeless Network (THN)

1-512-482-8270

<http://www.thn.org/>

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children & Youth (NAEHCY)

1-866-862-2562

<http://www.naehcy.org/>

National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

1-800-308-2145

[www.serve.org/nche](http://www.serve.org/nche)

National Coalition for the Homeless (NCHC)

1-202-462-4822

[www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)

Texas Homeless Shelters and Social Services

<http://www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/texas.html>

Texas Education Homeless Children and Youth Program

[HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov](mailto:HomelessEducation@tea.texas.gov)