

**McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act
Resource Manual**

Last revised: April 1, 2024

Hermitage School District Homeless Liaison:

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CHILDREN/YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program was established to make sure homeless youth have access to a free and appropriate public education while removing barriers that homeless children face. Its goal is to have the educational process continue as uninterrupted as possible while the children are in homeless situations.

Defining Homelessness

Section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act defines "homelessness children and youths" as any individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Furthermore, this includes:

- Children and youths who are:
 - sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as "doubled-up");
 - living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
 - abandoned in hospitals;
- Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.
- Unaccompanied homeless youth including any child who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents or guardians, or separated from their parents for any other reason.

PROVISIONS OF THE ACT:

School Placement Process

Students who are experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth have the right to attend either their original school or the school in the area in which they currently reside for the duration of their homelessness, or until the end of the school year if the family finds permanent housing. A school district must provide you with a written explanation of its position and inform you of your right to appeal the decision if they believe attending the school of origin is not in the best interest of your child

Enrollment of Students

Schools are to immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth, even if they are unable to produce records normally required for

enrollment, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency, and any other required documentation.

Transportation

In the case where the educating district is different from the district where the student is temporarily residing, students shall receive transportation to and from the school of origin if necessary.

Food Services

Immediately upon enrollment, students who are experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth are entitled to receive a daily, free school lunch.

Title I

Students who are experiencing homelessness and unaccompanied youth are entitled to Title I educational services. Title I services include academic assistance for students within the classroom. All students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade are screened three times per year to determine academic programming needs.

Dispute Resolution Process

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment for a student eligible under the McKinney-Vento Act:

The child or youth shall be immediately enrolled into the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. Hermitage School District will provide its share of the transportation to the school selected for the duration of the dispute resolution process.

If the Hermitage School District disputes the identification of an individual, the student and parent/guardian will be contacted in writing to communicate their concerns. The Homeless Liaison will maintain communication until the dispute is resolved.

If dissatisfied with the school's decision, the parent, guardian, or youth may appeal the decision to the state level. Contact information will be provided by the Homeless Liaison to do so.

Contacts include:

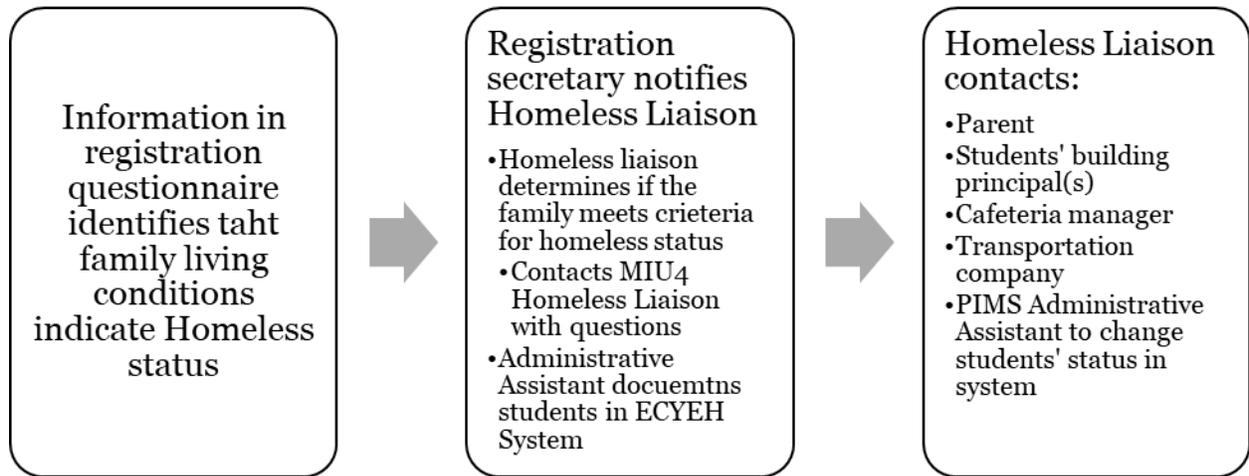
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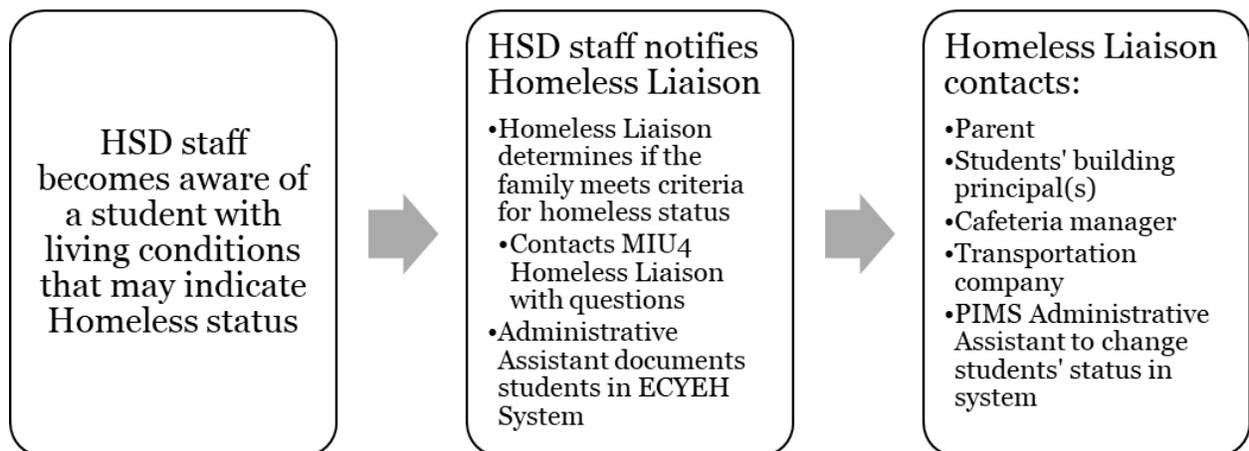
Pennsylvania Department of Education
www.education.pa.gov/homeless

Homeless Designation Process

New Registrants:



Current Students:



HSD School Board Policy #251: Students Experiencing Homelessness,
Foster Care and Other Educational Instability

Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Educational Instability
Code	251
Status	Active
Adopted	December 14, 2009
Last Revised	September 18, 2023

Purpose

The Board recognizes the challenges encountered by students experiencing homelessness, foster care and other educational instability. The Board is committed to facilitating the immediate enrollment; eliminating barriers to the attendance, education and graduation; and providing additional supports in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and Board policy, for such students.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)

Authority

The Board directs the district to collaborate with school staff, other school districts, local agencies and other entities in supporting the needs of students experiencing educational instability.

The Board shall ensure that students experiencing educational instability have equal access to the same educational programs, activities and services provided to other district students.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to waive specific requirements in Board policies, procedures and administrative regulations to the extent that they create barriers for the enrollment and attendance of students

experiencing educational instability. Such waivers include, but are not limited to, requirements regarding:[1][2][3][4][5][6][7]

1. Dress code.[9]
2. Transportation.[10]
3. School-sponsored or extracurricular activities for which students meet placement and qualification requirements, including, but not limited to, clubs, athletics, performing arts, class trips, social events, career and technical education, internships and specialized classes.[11][12][13][14][15][16][17]
4. Fees related to school-sponsored or extracurricular activity participation fees, and other fees including, but not limited to, school identification (badges, cards, etc.), uniforms, materials, lost or damaged items, athletic physical exams, parking or driving, food services, library, locker or padlock rental or replacement, summer school or credit recovery, technology and graduation regalia.[9][13][14][15][18][19][20][21][22]
5. Graduation.[19]
6. Registration deadlines.

It is the policy of the Board that no student shall be discriminated against, segregated or stigmatized based on their status as a student experiencing educational instability.

Definitions

Student Experiencing Educational Instability means a student who has experienced one (1) or more changes in school enrollment during a single school year due to any of the following:[4]

1. Homelessness.[1][3][7]
2. An adjudication of:[23][24]
 - a. Dependency relating to child protective services and juvenile matters;

- b. Delinquency, if disclosed by the student's parent/guardian; or
- c. As part of court-ordered services under a voluntary placement or custody agreement.

A student experiencing foster care may also qualify as a student experiencing educational instability as defined above, if such circumstances apply.[\[25\]](#)

Enroll or Enrollment means attending classes and participating fully in school activities.[\[26\]](#)

Additional costs means the difference between what the district spends to transport a resident student to the student's assigned school and the cost to transport a child in foster care to the child's school of origin.

Foster care means twenty-four (24) hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions and pre-adoptive homes. A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the state, tribal or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption or whether there is federal matching of any payments that are made.[\[25\]](#)

Homeless children and youths means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:[\[26\]](#)

1. Children and youths who are:
 - a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
 - b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - c. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters; or

- d. Abandoned in hospitals;
2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings;
4. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; and
5. School-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations.

School of origin is the school in which the student experiencing educational instability was last enrolled.

- The school of origin for a *homeless child or youth* - the last school in which the homeless child or youth was enrolled when permanently housed or the school in which the homeless child or youth was last enrolled, including preschool.[27]
- The school of origin for a *child in foster care* - the school in which a child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If a child's foster care placement changes, the school of origin is the school the child is attending immediately prior to each change in placement.[8]
- When the homeless child or youth, or child in foster care, completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin shall become the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

Unaccompanied youth means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth who have run away from home; been abandoned or forced out of home by a parent, guardian or other caretaker; or separated from a parent or guardian for any other reason.[26]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board designates the Director of Special Services to serve as the district's point of contact for students experiencing educational instability.[4][5][27]

The name and contact information of the district's point of contact shall be included in the student's education records and provided to the student's education decision maker.[4]

The district's point of contact shall ensure outreach and coordination with the following, as appropriate to each individual student's needs:[4][5][27]

1. Local children and youth agency to:
 - a. Establish formal mechanisms to ensure that the district is promptly notified when a child enters foster care or changes foster care placements;
 - b. Develop a protocol on how to make best interest determinations; and
 - c. Develop and coordinate transportation procedures.
2. Other local service agencies and entities that provide services to students experiencing educational instability.
3. Other school districts on issues of prompt identification, transfer of records, transportation and other inter-district activities.
4. District staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.[11][28]
5. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The district's point of contact, in consultation with the school counselor, school social worker, home and school visitor or school psychologist and the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 Team, shall:[4]

1. Facilitate the student's expedited consultation with the school counselor or other mental health professionals, as appropriate.
2. Facilitate the prompt placement of the student in appropriate courses.
3. Connect the student with educational services that meet the student's specific needs.
4. Immediately request the prior school entity, county agency and the student's education decision maker to provide the complete student information and records, including an IEP or Section 504 service agreement, if applicable. Within ten (10) business days, the prior school entity located within Pennsylvania, including schools with residential placements, shall provide the requested information and records to ensure proper transfer of course credits, grades and an IEP or Section 504 service agreement, if applicable.
5. Develop and execute a graduation plan in collaboration with the student in grades nine (9) through twelve (12). The graduation plan shall be customized to meet the specific needs of the student and shall detail the courses necessary for on-time graduation and transition to postsecondary education or the workforce. The graduation plan shall be included in the student's education records.

Additional Responsibilities to Support Homeless Students -

The district's point of contact shall ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries and soup kitchens. Such notice shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths.[\[27\]](#)

The district's point of contact shall provide reliable, valid and comprehensive data to the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.[\[27\]](#)

Training

The district's point of contact shall provide professional development and training to school staff on the education needs of students experiencing educational instability.

Additional Training to Support Homeless Students -

The district's point of contact shall participate in professional development programs and other technical assistance activities offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.[\[27\]](#)

The district's point of contact shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff.[\[27\]](#)

School personnel providing services to homeless children and youths, including school enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:[\[27\]](#)

1. Improve identification of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths;
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation; and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

Guidelines

Students enrolled in this district experiencing educational instability shall be provided support and services, as appropriate to each individual student's needs, in accordance with Board policy.[\[4\]](#)

Minimal documentation shall be required for a student experiencing educational instability to qualify for supports and services. Information used to determine that a student is experiencing educational instability may be confirmed verbally, in writing or by another manner by shelter providers, outreach workers, case managers, juvenile probation officers and others.

Parents/Guardians and students have the authority to determine what information shall be shared with the district.

Information related to the student's educational instability status shall be confidential and disclosed by the point of contact or other administrators only to other school staff who have a legitimate need to know unless authorized by the student or parent/guardian.[29][30]

Enrollment

Except when an unaccompanied youth or the parents/guardians of a homeless youth request otherwise, it shall be presumed that a student experiencing educational instability shall continue to be enrolled in their school of origin unless it is determined that it is not in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin.[5][27]

In accordance with the homeless child's or youth's best interest, the district shall continue to enroll a homeless student in the student's school of origin within the district while the student remains homeless and through the end of the academic year in which the student obtains permanent housing.[27]

An unaccompanied youth or the parents/guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in any grade-appropriate school within the district regardless of the district attendance area where the student is actually living or a school of origin in another district.[27]

The district's point of contact shall assist an unaccompanied youth in placement or enrollment decisions, giving priority to the views of the student in determining where the student will be enrolled.[27]

Best Interest Determination -

The best interest determination shall be made in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, court orders and established local procedures.

In making a best interest determination, the district shall:[5][27]

1. In the case of a homeless child or unaccompanied youth, give priority to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.
2. Consider student-centered factors related to impact of mobility on achievement, education, appropriateness of the current educational setting, health and safety, and proximity to living arrangements including foster care placement.

The cost of transportation shall not be used as a factor in the best interest determination.

Documentation related to the best interest determination shall be maintained in the student's education record.[29][30]

Timeliness of Enrollment -

When a school receives a student experiencing educational instability, the school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if:[4][5][7][29][30][31][32][33][34][35]

1. The student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.[27][31]
2. The application or enrollment deadline has passed.[27][31][32]

The district's point of contact shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic or other records.[27]

The district may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information.

Grade Level Assignment -

If the district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the district may administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's assignment within the school.[36]

Dispute Resolution

If a dispute involving a student experiencing educational instability arises, the concern shall be addressed and/or resolved at the lowest appropriate level in accordance with Board policy, unless otherwise stated below.[37]

Dispute Resolution for Homeless Students -

If the district determines that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the unaccompanied youth or parent/guardian, the district shall provide the unaccompanied youth or parent/guardian with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be in a manner and form understandable to the unaccompanied youth or parent/guardian and shall include information regarding the right to appeal.[27]

If a dispute arises over eligibility, enrollment or school selection:[27]

1. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the district's point of contact, who shall assist in the dispute resolution process.
2. The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.
3. The district's point of contact shall issue a written decision of the dispute within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the dispute.

A parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may file a complaint with the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

Dispute Resolution for Students in Foster Care -

If a dispute arises over the appropriate school placement for a child in foster care, to the extent feasible and appropriate, the child shall remain in their school of origin, pending resolution of the dispute.[2]

Students Discharged From Foster Care

A student who has been discharged from foster care may be permitted to finish the semester in this district, if appropriate, with payment of tuition.[38]

Education Records

Information about a student's educational instability shall be treated as a student education record subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and shall not be deemed to be directory information.[29][30][39]

The district may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without written consent of the parent/guardian or the eligible student if the disclosure is:[29][30][39]

1. To comply with a court order authorizing the disclosure of education records in a case where a parent is a party to a proceeding involving child abuse or neglect or a dependency matter.
2. To an agency caseworker or other representative of a state or local child welfare agency, or tribal organization, who has the right to access a student's case plan, as defined and determined by the state or tribal organization, when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with state or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student, provided that the education records, or the personally identifiable information contained in such records, of the student will not be disclosed by such agency or organization, except to an individual or entity engaged in addressing the student's education needs and authorized by such agency or organization to receive such disclosure and such disclosure is consistent with the state or tribal laws applicable to protecting the confidentiality of a student's education records.

Comparable Services

Students experiencing educational instability shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to: [3][27][40]

1. Transportation services.[10]
2. School nutrition programs.[21]
3. Career and technical education.[12]
4. Educational programs for which the student meets the eligibility criteria, such as:
 - a. Services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs.[41]
 - b. Programs for English Learners.[42]
 - c. Programs for students with disabilities.[11]
 - d. Programs for gifted and talented students.[16]

Transportation for Homeless Students -

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the district.[3][10][27]

If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or homeless students live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.[27]

Transportation for Students in Foster Care -

The district shall ensure that children in foster care needing transportation to their school of origin promptly receive transportation in a cost-effective manner.[6][10]

To ensure that transportation for children in foster care to their school of origin is provided, arranged, and funded, the district shall collaborate with the local children and youth agency to develop a local transportation plan.[6]

The transportation plan shall address the following:[6]

1. The procedure the district and local children and youth agency will follow to provide transportation for children in foster care in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with applicable law.[8]
2. How transportation costs will be covered if additional costs are incurred. Options include:
 - a. The local children and youth agency agrees to reimburse the district;
 - b. The district agrees to pay for the cost;[6]
 - c. The district and the local children and youth agency agree to share the costs; or
 - d. The district of origin, the district of foster residence, and the placing children and youth agency agree to share the costs.
3. Dispute resolution procedures to ensure that any disagreements regarding the cost of transportation are resolved promptly and fairly,

and do not impact a student's ability to remain in the school of origin during the dispute resolution process.

The district shall submit the local transportation plan, including any updates or revisions, to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Transportation shall be provided to children in foster care in accordance with the local transportation plan regardless of whether transportation is provided to district students.

Course Credit and Graduation

The district shall ensure that each student experiencing educational instability in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) is provided with a graduation plan to facilitate the student's timely graduation. The graduation plan shall specify the courses and other requirements necessary for the student to graduate. The district's efforts to ensure that the student experiencing educational instability graduates in a timely manner may include:[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)[\[6\]](#)

1. Waiving a specific course required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed in another school entity or the student has demonstrated competency in that content area. Evidence as to whether coursework has been satisfactorily completed and the amount of full or partial credit assigned, may be determined through any of the following:[\[4\]](#)[\[19\]](#)

- a. Competency demonstration, which could include, but is not limited to:
 - i. Submission of an essay, presentation or project.
 - ii. Recognition that the student has already successfully completed a higher-level course, an experiential learning opportunity or internship that demonstrates competence in the content area.
- b. Performance on an examination.
- c. Successful completion of a career and technical education course.

- d. Other evidence or method determined appropriate by the district.
2. If a specific course requirement cannot be waived, the district shall provide an alternative or modified course of study that is currently offered to students and that will assist the student with acquiring the required work or competency requirements by the anticipated graduation date.
3. If, after considering full and partial course credits, waiving courses or providing alternative courses of study, the district determines that the student meets the established graduation requirements, the student shall be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and graduate with their peers.

If the student is determined not eligible for graduation, the district may request a high school diploma from the prior school entity. The prior school entity may issue a diploma if the student meets the prior school entity's graduation requirements.

Keystone Diploma –

In any school year for which demonstration of proficiency on a Keystone exam is required for graduation, a student who has successfully satisfied the graduation requirements may obtain a secondary school diploma known as the Keystone Diploma from the PA Department of Education, if both of the following provisions apply:[\[4\]](#)[\[43\]](#)

1. All other graduation options have been exhausted.
2. The student is unable to obtain a diploma from the student's prior or receiving school entity.

The district's point of contact shall assist the student in determining the student's eligibility for a Keystone Diploma and, if eligible, obtaining the Keystone Diploma from the PA Department of Education.[\[4\]](#)[\[43\]](#)

Students with Disabilities –

Students experiencing educational instability who have an IEP shall maintain the right to special education and the right to graduate either through attainment of credits or through the completion of the goals established in

their IEP, in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy, administrative regulations and state guidance.[11][19]

Legal

1. 22 PA Code 11.18

2. 24 P.S. 1305

3. 24 P.S. 1306

4. 24 P.S. 1331.1

5. 20 U.S.C. 6311

6. 20 U.S.C. 6312

7. 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq

8. 42 U.S.C. 675

9. Pol. 221

10. Pol. 810

11. Pol. 113

12. Pol. 115

13. Pol. 121

14. Pol. 122

15. Pol. 123

16. Pol. 114

17. Pol. 231

18. Pol. 124

19. Pol. 217

20. Pol. 223

21. Pol. 808

22. Pol. 110

23. 23 Pa. C.S.A. 6301 et seq

24. 42 Pa. C.S.A. 6301 et seq

25. 45 CFR 1355.20

26. 42 U.S.C. 11434a

27. 42 U.S.C. 11432

28. Pol. 103.1

29. Pol. 113.4

30. Pol. 216

31. Pol. 200

32. Pol. 201

33. Pol. 203

34. Pol. 204

35. Pol. 209

36. Pol. 206

37. Pol. 906

38. Pol. 202

39. 20 U.S.C. 1232g

40. Pol. 146

41. Pol. 918

42. Pol. 138

43. 24 P.S. 121

20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq

22 PA Code 403.1

34 CFR Part 99

67 Fed. Reg. 10698

PA Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan

Basic Education Circular, August 1, 2022: Act 1 of 2022 - Assisting Students Experiencing Education Instability

Ensuring Educational Stability for Foster Care Youth - Transportation Plan Guide

Education for Homeless Youth Basic Education Circular (BEC)

Education for Homeless Youth

42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.

Date of Issue: February 3, 2010

Date of Review: December 10, 2016, August 19, 2015, September 1, 2011

Purpose

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, (subsequently renamed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) to aid homeless persons. The Act defines the term "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was enacted, amending McKinney-Vento.

Procedures

This Basic Education Circular (BEC) explains the categories of children who are "homeless" and entitled to the protections of the federal law. These categories include:

- i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals;
- ii. children and youths who have a primary nighttime 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 youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- iv. "migratory children" who qualify as homeless under federal law because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii) above. The term "migratory children" means children who are (or whose parent(s) or spouse(s) are) migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain (or accompany such parents or spouses in order to obtain) temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work; and,

- v. "Unaccompanied homeless youth" including any child who is "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." This includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents or guardians, or separated from their parents for any other reason.

Communication and collaboration among education and child welfare professionals is critical to support school stability and continuity for children in out-of-home care. The law requires child welfare and local education agencies to work together to promote school stability and continuity including trying to ensure children remain in the school in which they were enrolled at the time of placement when it is in their best interest. Best practice would suggest that decisions be made collaboratively between school personnel, child welfare agencies and any other individual involved in the child's case including the child, resource parent, child advocate and attorney. It is imperative that caseworkers and school district administration and staff work together to help ensure the educational progress of all students.

Under the Pennsylvania Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan, homeless children are defined as "children living with a parent in a domestic violence shelter; runaway children and children, and youth who have been abandoned or forced out of their home by parents or other caretakers; and school-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations."

The McKinney-Vento Act states that it is the policy of Congress that state educational agencies shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths 42 U.S.C. § 11431. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (3) (A) indicates that the local educational agency (LEA) shall, according to the child's best interest: In accordance with Section 722 (g) (3) (B) (ii), the local educational agency:

- I. must presume that keeping a homeless child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest unless doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth;
- II. must consider student-centered factors related to a child's or youth's best interest, giving priority to the request of the child's or youth's parent or guardian, or (in the case of an unaccompanied youth) the youth; or
- III. if the LEA determines that it is not in a child's or youth's best interest to attend the school of origin, or the school requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, it must provide a written explanation of the reasons for its determination, in a manner and form that is understandable.

According to the McKinney-Vento Act the term "school of origin" means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. 42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (3) (G).

Homeless Students Residing in Shelters, Facilities or Institutions

Section 1306 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code (24 P.S. §13-1306) deals with the public school admission of nonresident students living in shelters, facilities or institutions. Implementing regulations for Section 1306 are found in Section 11.18 of the State Board of Education regulations. 22 Pa. Code § 11.18 (a) addresses the public school admission of nonresident children who live in an institution, shelter or custodial care facility:

- a. *The board of school directors of a school district in which there is located a licensed shelter, group home, maternity home, residence, facility, orphanage or other institution for the care or training of children or adolescents, shall admit to the district's public schools school age children who are living at or assigned to the facility or institution and who are residents of the district or another school district in this Commonwealth.*

22 Pa. Code § 11.18, as it applies to homeless children and youth, includes within the definition of "licensed shelter" those facilities which provide temporary shelter for a specified, limited period of time. Therefore, children in temporary shelters and children who "lack a fixed, regular, adequate night time residence" – homeless children – are entitled to free school privileges from either the school district in which their person or the shelter is located or the school district of origin.

Homeless Students Not Residing in a Shelter, Facility or Institution

Homeless students may reside in hotels, motels, cars, tents or temporarily doubled-up with a resident family because of lack of housing. In determining residence and in the case of homeless children, equating "residence" and "domicile" (home) does not apply. They are presently unable to establish "homes" on a permanent basis. Homeless families are not required to prove residency regarding school enrollment. These students should be enrolled without delay, in the district where they are presently residing or continue their education in the district of prior attendance.

Children experiencing homelessness are often highly mobile and may not stay in the same school district each night or each week. This is particularly true regarding children who stay overnight in vehicles, those who stay with different family members or friends, or those who receive services from agencies, organizations or networks which facilitate overnight accommodations in multiple school districts. These children should not be

forced to change school districts every time their overnight accommodations change. Rather, these children are entitled to attend school in any school district where a parent, guardian, an adult caring for them or where an unaccompanied child:

- Spends the greatest percentage of his or her time; or
- Has a substantial connection such as where he or she is
 - regularly receiving day shelter or other services involving any of the 16 McKinney-Vento Activities (42 U.S.C. 11433(d)) for individuals who are homeless;
 - conducting daily living activities; or
 - staying overnight on a recurring basis.

This policy helps maintain continuity and school stability for homeless children in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act.

The child or youth shall continue to be enrolled in the school in which he or she is seeking enrollment until the complaint or appeal is fully resolved by a McKinney-Vento coordinator, state coordinator, through mediation or in court.

School Placement

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that, "local educational agencies will designate an appropriate staff person, who may also be a coordinator for other federal programs, as a local educational agency liaison for homeless children and youth." This person has the following responsibilities:

1. Identify homeless children and youths with assistance by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies.
2. Inform parents or guardians of educational rights and related opportunities available to their children, including Head Start programs (including Early Head Start programs), early intervention services under Part C of the IDEA, other preschool programs administered by the LEA, and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.
3. Disseminate public notice of the educational rights of homeless students where children and youths receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act (such as schools, family shelters and food pantries).
4. Mediate enrollment disputes in accordance with the Enrollment Dispute section.
5. Inform the parent or guardian of a homeless child, youth and any unaccompanied youth, of all transportation options, including to the school of origin, and assist in accessing these transportation services.
6. Liaisons are required to ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment or placement.
7. Liaisons are required to assist children and youths who do not have documentation of immunizations or medical records to obtain necessary immunizations or necessary medical documentation.

8. Understand the guidance issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the education of homeless students and be ready to explain the BEC related to homeless education to school district staff.
9. Get to know the best resources in their community to assist families with referrals for things such as shelter, counseling, food and transportation.
10. Distribute information on the subject of homeless students and arrange staff development workshops and presentations for school personnel, including office staff.
11. Provide standard forms and information about enrollment procedures and key school programs to each shelter in their district.
12. Become familiar with the various program materials that are available from PDE.
13. Ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless students is disseminated in locations frequented by parents and guardians of such children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries, and soup kitchen, in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians and unaccompanied youth.
14. Liaisons must collaborate with a school district's special education program to ensure that homeless children who are in need of special education and related services are located, identified and evaluated. This is a requirement under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which mandates that highly mobile children with disabilities, including homeless children, be identified and served. Liaisons should also ensure that homeless youths who have or may have disabilities have a parent or a surrogate parent to make special education or early intervention decisions. In the case of unaccompanied homeless youth, if a student is disabled or may be disabled and the youth does not have a person authorized to make special education decisions, the following people can be temporary surrogate parents: staff in emergency shelters; transitional shelters; independent living programs; street outreach programs; and state, local educational agency or child welfare agency staff involved in the education or care of the child. This rule applies only to unaccompanied homeless youth.
15. Liaisons should also identify preschool-aged homeless children by working closely with shelters and social service agencies in their area. In addition, the liaison should inquire, at the time they are enrolling homeless children and youths in school, whether the family has preschool-aged children.
16. Liaisons can identify unaccompanied homeless youth while respecting their privacy and dignity by providing specific outreach to areas where eligible students who are out of school may congregate.
17. Liaisons ensure that unaccompanied youths are enrolled in school, and have opportunities to meet the same challenging state academic standards as the state establishes for other children and youths, are informed of their status as independent students under section 480 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) (20 U.S.C 1087vv), and their right to receive verification of this status from the local liaison.

Appropriate school placement arrangements, based on the child's best interest, should be implemented through the cooperative efforts of the respective chief school administrators. Each case presents a unique set of circumstances and, therefore,

requires an individualized response. In all cases, the LEA shall comply, to the extent feasible, with the request made by a parent or guardian regarding school selection, shall attempt to minimize disruptions and shall maintain the highest possible degree of continuity in programs for all homeless students. 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.

Homelessness alone is not a reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment. Homeless children and youths should have access to education and other services that they need to ensure that they have an opportunity to meet the same challenging state student performance standards to which all students are held.

In determining the *best interest* of the child or youth under McKinney-Vento Act, the LEA shall:

- I. Continue the child's or youth's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of the academic year even if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- II. Enroll the child or youth in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

The selected school shall immediately enroll the child or youth in school, *even if the child or youth lacks records normally required for enrollment*, such as previous academic records, medical records, proof of residency or other documentation. Section 722 (g)(3)(C) (i)(II) requires that a school selected based on a homeless child's or youth's best interest must immediately enroll such child or youth even if he or she has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness.

The terms "enroll" and "enrollment" are defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities. The enrolling school must immediately contact the last school attended to obtain relevant records.

In order to ensure immediate enrollment, in accordance with Section 722 (g)(6)(A)(ix), the LEA liaison is required to: train school enrollment staff about the legal requirement that homeless children and youths be immediately enrolled and provided transportation; review school regulations and policies to ensure that they comply with the McKinney-Vento Act requirements; inform families and youth, in a language they can understand, of their rights; develop clear, understandable and accessible written explanations of decisions and the right to appeal; and expeditiously follow up on any special education or language assistance needs presented by a student.

School/Health Records

The educating district should immediately enroll and begin to provide instruction. The receiving school district may contact the district of origin for oral confirmation that the child has been immunized. Oral confirmation between professionals is a sufficient basis to verify immunization with written confirmation to follow within 30 days. The instructional program should begin as soon as possible after the enrollment process is initiated and should not be delayed until the procedure is completed. The law specifies that information about a homeless child's or youth's living situation shall be treated as a student education record, and shall not be deemed to be directory information. (Section 722 (g)(3)(G)).

According to federal law, "(iii) If the child or youth needs to obtain immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the enrolling school shall immediately refer the parent or guardian of the child or youth to the local educational agency liaison designated under paragraph (1)(J)(ii), shall assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, or immunization or medical records, in accordance with subparagraph (D)" 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(c)(iii).

Title I

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (reauthorized December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act) mandates that funds be reserved to serve homeless children. Title I states, "A local educational agency shall reserve such funds as are necessary to provide services comparable to those provided to children in schools funded under this part to serve homeless children who do not attend participating schools, including providing educationally related support services to children in shelters and other locations where children may live." Under Title I, homeless children are eligible for services if they are attending schools served by an LEA.

Transportation

The state and its LEAs are required to adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. If the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another LEA, though continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the LEA of origin and the LEA in which the student is living must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. This includes students enrolled in public school Head Start and Early Head Start education programs. If the LEAs cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally. Distance, time of year, options available, the effects of a transfer, etc., should all be addressed.

The provision of transportation to the school of origin is based on a students' status as homeless. The provision to remain in the school of origin during the remainder of the academic year is offered to provide for school stability. Local education agencies must

continue to provide transportation to and from the school of origin to formerly homeless students who have become permanently housed for the remainder of the academic year during which the child or youth becomes permanently housed. (Section 722(g)(3)(A)(II)).

Fiscal Responsibilities

Fiscal responsibilities apply to all homeless students, whether in regular or special education classes.

The educating district should apply the following criteria when determining fiscal responsibility:

- A. The procedures outlined below will be followed in cases when the education of the child is provided by the district where the homeless student is temporarily living (doubled up, motel, shelter). The procedures shall also apply in cases when the district of prior attendance, where that is not the district the child attended when permanently housed, will educate the child.
 1. Homeless individuals not in facilities (shelters) or institutions, as well as homeless individuals living in hotels, motels, cars, tents, doubled-up with a resident family, shall be reported and reimbursed as resident students;
 2. For homeless individuals in temporary shelters, the educating school district will send a PDE-4605 Determination of District of Residence for Student in Facilities or Institutions in Accordance with Section 1306 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code to the presumed district of residence;
 3. If PDE-4605 is acknowledged by the resident district, the educating district will enter the child on its rolls as a nonresident student from the acknowledging resident school district. The educating district will bill the resident district for tuition and will report membership data according to PDE child accounting procedures; and
 4. If PDE-4605 is disclaimed and a school district of residence cannot be determined, the educating school district should submit a written request to PDE's School Services Office to make a determination regarding the student's "ward of the state" status.
- B. In cases when the education of the child is provided by the district of origin, including preschool children, where that is the district the child attended when permanently housed, that district will continue to educate a homeless student for the period of temporary displacement and should maintain the homeless student on its roll as a resident student. When a child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, it also includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools. (Section 722(g)(3)(I)).
- C. In cases when the student becomes permanently housed during the academic year and continues in the school of origin, which is not in the district of new residence, the educating district will continue to educate the formerly homeless student, if requested by the student's parent or guardian, until the end of the academic year and should maintain the homeless student on its roll as a

non-resident student. The educating district should advise the new district of residence of its financial responsibility for this student and send a tuition bill.

Categorical Eligibility under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs

Effective July 1, 2004, Section 107 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 amended Section 9(b) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make runaway, homeless and migrant children categorically eligible for free meal benefits under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. The following are guidelines set out by PDE for implementation of this amendment.

1. Homeless, runaway or migratory children are automatically certified as eligible for free meal benefits and can begin receiving free meal benefits upon proper documentation for meals. Please note that documentation as runaway, homeless, or migratory can only be provided by a school district migrant education or homeless education staff.
2. School district migrant education or homeless education staff are responsible for providing proper documentation of a child's status to the food service directors in each school district.

Dispute Resolution Process

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, every state must develop procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youths. 42 U.S.C §11432(g)(1)(C). The state must ensure that LEAs comply with requirements set forth in the McKinney-Vento Act including ensuring immediate enrollment, providing written notice to families concerning school selection, enrollment decisions and providing enrollment and pendency in the school of choice while a dispute is being resolved. 42 U.S.C §11432(g)(2)(A).

PDE has developed the following procedures to govern the resolution of disputes regarding enrollment, school selection, homeless status and complaints of non-compliance with legal requirements pertaining to the education for homeless children and youths:

Level 1 – A dispute may be raised with a LEA.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the child or youth involved must immediately be admitted to the school in which they are seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute 42 U.S.C.§11432(g)(3)(E)(i). PDE recommends that the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth who initiates the dispute contact the LEA liaison for individuals experiencing homelessness as soon as possible after receiving notice of the dispute. If the person initiating the dispute does not contact the LEA liaison directly, the

LEA shall be responsible for contacting the LEA liaison regarding the dispute as soon as possible and referring the family or youth involved to the liaison.

The LEA liaison shall ensure that the child or youth is immediately enrolled, explain the dispute resolution process to families and help them to use it 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(E)(iii). The LEA shall issue a written disposition of the dispute within 20 business days after the LEA liaison is notified of the dispute. The disposition shall be provided to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth and shall explain the basis for the decision and advise the parent, guardian or youth of the right to appeal. 42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(E)(i).

NOTE: The LEA should use and maintain copies of PDE’s “Notice of Procedural Safeguards” form (see attached) which ensures that all LEAs (a) inform families of the basis of their decision regarding enrollment or school selection; (b) notifies families of their right to remain in their school of choice pending resolution of the dispute and (c) explains the procedures for challenging the decision of the LEA.

Level 2 – A complaint may be filed with a McKinney-Vento coordinator.

If the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth is dissatisfied with the LEA’s disposition of a dispute or would like to raise any issue of McKinney-Vento Act noncompliance, they may file a complaint or appeal with a McKinney-Vento site or regional coordinator or with the state coordinator. (See attached list which contains contact information for all of the McKinney-Vento coordinators in Pennsylvania). In lieu of filing an appeal with a McKinney-Vento coordinator, a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth may elect to appeal the LEA decision directly to a court of competent jurisdiction. Participation in the appeal procedure is not required prior to taking legal action.

A regional or site coordinator with whom a complaint or appeal is filed must notify the state coordinator immediately. Upon being notified, the state coordinator will review the complaint or appeal and assign it to a site or regional coordinator for disposition. The coordinator to whom the appeal is assigned may contact, interview and accept documentation from any individual or LEA involved, and shall issue a written disposition within 20 business days after the complaint or appeal has been assigned. The disposition shall be provided to the LEA and the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth involved. The child or youth shall continue to be enrolled in the school in which he or she is seeking enrollment until the complaint or appeal is resolved or until a disposition from a McKinney-Vento coordinator is received.

The state coordinator may assist in the mediation of disputes directly and may also invite those involved to have the dispute mediated at any time in the process through the Dispute Resolution Program operated by the Commonwealth Office of General Counsel (OGC). The [OGC Dispute Resolution Program](#) is a voluntary informal process through which a trained mediator assists in reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.

Participating in mediation is not a waiver of the right to file a lawsuit nor is participation in mediation required prior to taking legal action.

NOTE: The parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth may file a complaint with the McKinney-Vento site, regional or state coordinator on the attached complaint form. However, the use of the attached form is not mandatory. Any dispute raised by a homeless family or youth concerning school enrollment or any other right under the McKinney-Vento Act whether received via telephone, letter or any mode of communication shall be treated as a complaint.

References

Purdon’s Statutes

[24 P.S. § 13-1301](#)

[24 P.S. § 13-1302](#)

[24 P.S. § 13-1306](#)

State Board of Education Regulations

[22 Pa. Code § 11.18](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

Federal Regulations

Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as reauthorized by the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)
[McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

US Code

[42 U.S.C. §§11431-11435 \(including section 722\)](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

[20 U.S.C 1087vv](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

Other

[Pennsylvania Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Plan](#) (PDF)

[U.S. Dept. of Education Guidelines – Homeless Children and Youth Programs](#)[Opens In A New Window](#)

[OGC Dispute Resolution Program](#)

[Determination of District of Residence for Students in Facilities or Institutions \(PDE-4605\)](#) (PDF)

Attachments

[Procedural Safeguards Notice of Denial of Enrollment \(PDF\)](#)
[Enrollment Complaint to PA Department of Education \(Word\)](#)
[Pennsylvania McKinney-Vento Coordinators \(State, Regional & Site\)Opens In A New Window](#)

Bureau/Office Contacts

Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 3rd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone: 717-783-6466

Child Accounting questions should be referred to:

Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management
Division of Subsidy Data and Administration
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone: 717-787-5423

Transportation questions should be referred to:

Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management
Division of Subsidy Data and Administration
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone: 717-787-3195

For additional information, please contact:

Storm Y. Camara | Pennsylvania Department of Education
Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program
333 Market Street, 3rd Floor | Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone: 717.772.2066
scamara@pa.gov

Hermitage School District Service Provider List

Housing Services:

<p>Community Action Partnership of Mercer County Provides family and housing supports 1.888.508.5216</p>	<p>2-1-1 United Way www.pa211.org Dial 2-1-1</p>
<p>Mercer County Housing 1 Maple Dr. Greenville, PA (724) 646-2383</p>	<p>Shenango Valley Urban League 601 Indiana Ave Farrell, PA (724) 981-5310</p>
<p>Mercer County Housing Authority 346 W Butler St Mercer, PA (724) 662-1058</p>	

Hotels in Hermitage:

<p>Econo Lodge 2810 S. Hermitage Road 724.979.4330</p>	<p>Quality Inn 3200 S. Hermitage Road 724.981.1530</p>	<p>Royal Motel 301 S. Hermitage Road 724.347.5546</p>	<p>Red Roof Inn 2700 Wilson Road 724.342.7200</p>
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Food Services:

<p>Mercer County Food Bank Mercer County Food Bank 109 S. Sharpsville Ave. Suite A Sharon, PA 16146 724.981.0353</p>	<p>Joshua's Haven City Mission Provides smaller items to those in need 205 Bank Place Sharon, PA 16146 724.983.0304</p>
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<p>Prince of Peace Provides emergency and family services 502 Darr Ave. Farrell, PA 724.346.5777</p>	<p>Central Community Church Food Bank 3553 N. Hermitage Rd Transfer PA 16154 724-985-4048</p>
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Clothing

<p>Samaritan's Closet 237 W Silver St. Sharon, PA 16146 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 11am-1pm</p>	<p>Central Community Church Food Bank 3553 N. Hermitage Rd Transfer PA 16154 Every other Friday from 12pm-5pm</p>
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Medical Services:

Pediatric Care

<p>UPMC Children's Pediatrics 3068 Innovation Way Hermitage, PA 16148 (724) 981-1219</p>	<p>Helping Hands Pediatrics 585 E State St Sharon, PA 16146 (724) 346-6494</p>
<p>Primary Health Network 63 Pitt St, Ste 202 Sharon, PA 16146 (724) 342-4052</p>	<p>Steward Primary Care 2425 Garden Way, Ste 102 Hermitage, PA 16148 (724) 981-1777</p>
<p>Kid's Way Pediatrics 3068 Innovation Way Hermitage, PA 16148 (724) 981-1219</p>	

Dental Care

<p>Aspen Dental - PA 1049 N Hermitage Rd (724) 972-0928</p>	<p>Mobile Hygienist Unit Lisa Tovcimak RDH, PHDHP, TTS 919 Sharon New Castle Rd</p>
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	Farrell, PA 16121 814-227-8172
Kollar-Furey Family Dentistry 2200 E State St (724) 418-2122	Alexander Todd C DDS 2200 E State St (724) 981-4270
Spadafora, Dale - Dale F. Spadafora, DMD, MAGD 752 Brookshire Dr, Ste a (724) 342-7395	Stephanie Misco DMD, PC 3577 E State St (724) 981-4141
Aesthetic Family Dentistry 2200 E State St (724) 981-4270	Derrick Reid DDS 1049 N Hermitage Rd (724) 342-1959
Thomas, Deanna - Thomas Family Dentistry 3705 E State St (724) 347-2722	David Fill DDS 1071 Brandywine Dr (724) 342-9411
Peters Noelle M DMD - Thomas Family Dentistry 3705 E State St (724) 347-2722	Stigliano, Gilda DDS 701 N. Hermitage Rd, #23 (724) 347-4144
ACT Family and Cosmetic Dentistry 2213 Shenango Valley Fwy, Ste 2d (724) 346-5173	Kevin E Gagliardi DMD 3577 E State St (724) 981-4141
Kevin E Gagliardi DMD 3577 E State St (724) 981-4141	

Occupational Therapy / Physical Therapy / Speech Services

Capable Kids, LLC 135 Snyder Road Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 342-3898	Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV 453 Maple Street Grove City, PA 16127 Phone: (724) 458-6700
Adventure Time Pediatric Therapy and Learning Center 120 South Broad Street Grove City, PA 16127 Phone: (724) 458-1500	

Social/Emotional/Behavioral Services:

Emergency/Crisis Services:

<p>Main Crisis Line – Mercer County (724) 662-2227</p>	<p>Mercer County Children and Youth Services 8425 Sharon Mercer Road Mercer, PA 16137 Phone: (724) 662-2703 Emergency: (724) 662-6130</p>
<p>Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission 8406 Sharon Mercer Road Mercer, PA 16137</p>	<p>AWARE 109D South Sharpsville Avenue Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 342-4934</p>
<p>National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800) 273-TALK (8255)</p>	<p>National Runaway Switchboard (800) 621-4000</p>
<p>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) SUICIDE or (800) 784-2433</p>	

Outpatient Mental Health Services:

<p>All About Life 4056 E State Street Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 981-5433</p>	<p>Davis Counseling Services 689 North Hermitage Road Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 983-1940</p>
<p>Associates in Counseling and Child Guidance 272 East Connelly Boulevard Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 983-1131</p>	<p>Dr. Albert J. Scott 609 North Hermitage Road Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 342-2330</p>
<p>Catholic Charities 995 Linden Street Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 346-4142</p>	<p>Gallo and Associates Psychological Services 60 Snyder Road Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 346-3838</p>
<p>Children’s Aide Society (Family-Based MH) 350 West Market Street Mercer, PA 16137 Phone: (724) 662-4730</p>	<p>Materna Psychological Services, PC 701 North Hermitage Road Suite 9 Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 346-4510</p>

<p>Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh One Children’s Hospital Drive 4401 Penn Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15224 Phone: (412) 692-5325</p>	<p>New Wilmington Child & Family Counseling 174 Waugh Avenue New Wilmington, PA 16142 Phone: (724) 974-9007</p>
<p>Christian Counseling Associates of Western PA Grove City Location 309 N. Broad Street Grove City, PA 16127 Phone: (724) 372-7003</p>	<p>St. Anthony’s Point 3679 East State Street Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 982-0414</p>
<p>Christian Counseling Associates of Western PA Greenville Alliance Church 63 Conneaut Lake Road Greenville, PA 16125 Phone: (724) 396-1510</p>	<p>Stairways Behavioral Health 847 North Main Street Meadville, PA 16335 Phone: (814) 337-8762</p>
<p>Clover Psychological Association 3030 Wilmington Road, Rear New Castle, PA 16105 Phone: (724) 658-9398</p>	<p>Turning Point Counseling Services, Inc. 611 Belmont Avenue Youngstown, OH 44502 Phone: (330) 744-2991</p>
<p>Community Alternatives, Inc. 700 Scotland Avenue New Castle, PA 16101 Phone: (724) 652-2211</p>	<p>Valley Counseling Services 150 East Market Street Warren, OH 44481 Phone: (330) 399-6451</p>
<p>Community Counseling Center 2201 E State Street Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 981-7141 Fax: (724) 981-7148</p>	<p>Vocational & Psychological Services 76 Jefferson Avenue Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 982-4790 Fax: (724) 982-4792</p>
<p>Community Counseling Center (Greenville) 77 N. Main Street Greenville, PA 16125 Phone: (724) 981-7141 Fax: (724) 981-7148</p>	<p>Watson Institute Psychological Services 301 Camp Meeting Road Sewickley, PA 15143 Phone: (412) 741-1800</p>
<p>Oasis Counseling LLC 3135 Wilmington Road New Castle, PA 16105 Phone: (724) 856-4040</p>	<p>Paoletta Counseling Services 456 North Pitt Street Mercer, PA 16137 Phone: (724) 662-7202</p>
<p>Craig Psychological Associates, Inc. 420 Hillcrest Avenue Grove City, PA 16127</p>	<p>Primary Health Network 63 Pitt Street Sharon, PA 16146</p>

Phone: (800) 242-9106	Phone: (724) 704-7272
Primary Health Network (Greenville) 348 Main Street Greenville, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 588-5250	Youth Advocate Programs 80 East Silver Street Suite 302 Sharon, PA 16146 Phone: (724) 342-1455
Psychological Counseling and Consulting Services 40 Cohasset Drive Hermitage, PA 16148 Phone: (724) 346-5220	Renewed Hope Behavioral Health 15 Woodland Center Drive Grove City, PA 16127 Phone: (724) 458-0811
Regional Behavioral Consultants, Inc. 18282 Technology Drive Suite 204 Meadville, PA 16335 Phone: (814) 336-2848	Richardson Psychiatric Associates 11 Shenango Road, Suite 1 New Castle, PA 16105 Phone: (724) 657-1881
Wilmington Psychotherapy & Counseling 142 North Market Street New Wilmington, PA 16142 Phone: (724) 946-0033	Rock Creek Wellness 60B Franklin Rd., Mercer, PA 16137 (724) 269-7222

Early Childhood Providers:

Buhl Child Development Center (724) 981-3700 https://www.buhlclub.org/	Mercer County Head Start 724.346.4482 https://mchs-ehs.org/
Blessed John Paul (724) 342-2205 https://www.eriesd.org/School31151-Saint-John-Paul-II-Elementary-School-and-Preschool.html	Mother's Day Out (724) 981-0275 https://www.facebook.com/people/Mothers-Day-Out/100063849974156/
Building Blocks Child Center (724) 962-5000 https://www.buildingblockschildcenter.org/contact	Tender Care (724) 962-1998 https://www.tendercarelc.org/locations/hermitage/
Children's Center of Mercer County 724.324.3738	Tree House PreSchool (724) 589-5433

https://www.ccmcpa.org/our-team	https://treehouseprek.org/
Creative PreSchool (724) 962-0788 https://www.creativepreschoolanddaycare.com/	Wee Wisdom 724-813-4999 https://newweewisdom.com/
Dream Builders (724) 979-4420 https://dbchildcare.com/	Zion Education Center (724) 866-9292 https://www.zioneducationcenter.org/
KidZone Learning Center (724) 815-8469	

Early Intervention Services:

Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV 724.458.6700 x1247

Public Agencies:

Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission Provides needs assessments, services planning, linkage to community supports Crisis Hotline: 724.662.2227 Central Intake: 724.662.2230	Mercer County Assistance Office Department of Health services 724.983.5000	Mercer County Children and Youth Services 724.662.2703
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Additional Resources

[Children/Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)
[Education for Homeless Youth](#)
[Education Rights](#)