

Higher Education and Homeless Students

Tuesday, July 26, 2016
**Migrant, ELL, Title I, and Homeless
Programs**



McKinney-Vento Assistance Act

42 U.S.C. § 11431 et seq.

Schools use the definition of *homeless* provided in section 11434a of the McKinney-Vento Act. It states that any person who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence is homeless.

Homeless Children and Youth Definitions SEC. 725.

- (1) The terms `enroll` and `enrollment` include attending classes and participating fully in school activities.
- (2) The term `homeless children and youths`—
- (A) means individuals **who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence** (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and
 - (B) includes—
 - (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**; or are **awaiting foster care placement**; **Foster Care definition changes 12/10/16.**
 - (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** (section 103(a)(2)(C));
 - (iii) **...living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations**, or similar settings; and (iv) **migratory children** (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) ...

“It also includes living in the school dormitory if the student would otherwise be homeless” and “A student living in any of these situations and fleeing an abusive parent may be considered homeless even if the parent would provide support and a place to live” (Application and Verification Guide [2015-2016 Federal Student Aid Handbook] Chapter 5, page 127) <http://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/1516AVGCh5.pdf>

Publication Date: July 29, 2015

DCL ID: GEN-15-16

Subject: Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Determinations

Summary: The purpose of this letter is to clarify institutional and applicants' roles and responsibilities related to Title IV dependency determinations for unaccompanied homeless youth.

Dear Colleague:

Section 480(d)(1)(H) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), provides that an applicant for Title IV student assistance is an independent student—that is, an applicant who does not need to provide parental information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)—if the applicant is an unaccompanied homeless youth as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento) (42 U.S.C. 11434a) or is unaccompanied, at risk of homelessness, and self-supporting as verified by one of the sources listed in the HEA. This information is also discussed in Chapter 5, “Special Cases,” of the 2015-2016 Application and Verification Guide in the Federal Student Aid Handbook.

Dear Colleague Letter

<http://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1516.html>



Supporting Youth Experiencing Homelessness

**College Cost Reduction and Access Act
September 2007**

Created in collaboration with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)

- Based on the unaccompanied homeless youth provisions of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act

http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/he_poster.pdf



TRYING TO GO TO COLLEGE?
LIVING ON YOUR OWN WITHOUT STABLE HOUSING?

Do you live in any of the following situations apart from your parents and with no financial support from them?

- In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground?
- On the street, in an abandoned building, or in another inadequate accommodation?
- Doubled-up temporarily with other people because you have nowhere else to live?
- In the dorm, but with nowhere else to live during school breaks when dorms close?
- Supporting yourself, but at risk of losing housing?

If so, you may qualify as an independent student on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) when applying for federal financial aid for college. Speak with any of the following persons to discuss your eligibility:

- The Local Homeless Education Liaison in your school district (graduating high school seniors)
- The director of a HUD-funded or Runaway and Homeless Youth Act-funded shelter where you have stayed or received services
- The college financial aid administrator of the college you attend or where you are applying

CONTACT
Enter agency contact information here.

Additional resources available from:
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth • www.naehc.org • College Cost Reduction and Access Act • www.collegecostreduction.org

Higher Education Poster

The National Center's Higher Education Collaborative on Homeless Youth (HECHY) seeks to smooth the transition to college for unaccompanied students who are experiencing homelessness.

National Center for Homeless Education
(NCHE)

Helpline: 800-308-2145 or
homeless@serve.org

NCHE

“Single Point of Contact” Is a supportive college administrator on each campus who is committed to helping homeless youth (and often foster youth) successfully navigate the college-going process on campuses.

Assist students with the following:

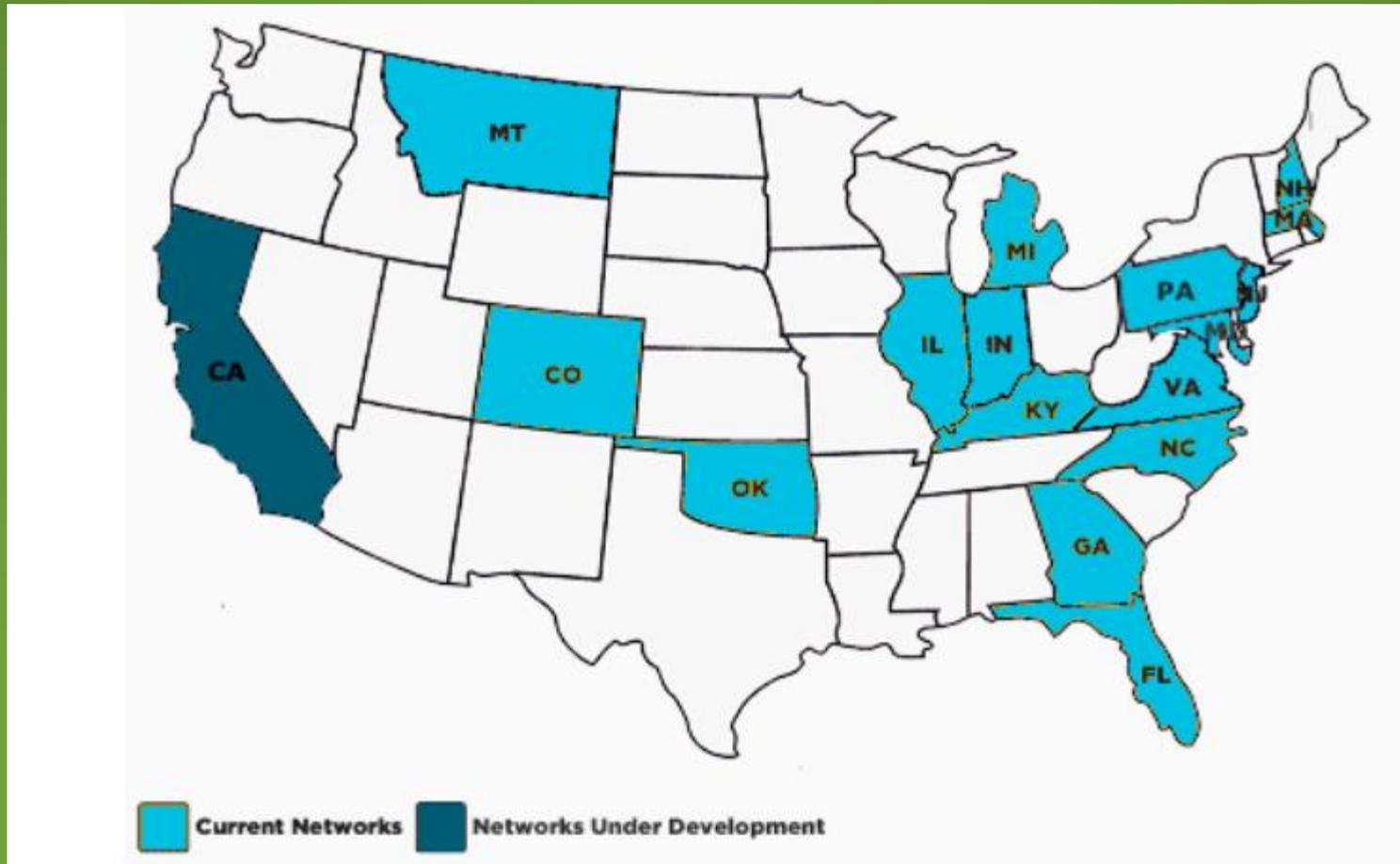
- Admissions
- Financial aid
- Academic advising
- Student life
- Community resources



<http://naehcy.org/sites/default/files/dl/spoc-tips.docx>

Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Model

- Many McKinney-Vento State Coordinators have realized they need one person in each higher education campus who understood McKinney-Vento and would be willing to do the outreach for UHY. Think of them as McKinney-Vento Higher Education Liaisons.
- SPOCs could be in admissions, student services, or financial aid. They not only take care of verification, but they help with the whole transition into college, as well as offer support throughout the college experience.
- Each Higher Education Campus can determine how their SPOC program works. Your campus may already have very similar programs. We want to hear from you!



Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Model

Benefits of having a SPOC on campus

- Allow unaccompanied homeless youth to have support finding campus and community resources.
- Reduces the number of times students have to repeat, or relive, situations that led to them becoming homeless.
- Having a staff member on campus that is knowledgeable of federal guidance, and state laws impacting high education access and success for unaccompanied homeless youth.

SPOC Model

- Convene a meeting with local stakeholders from McKinney-Vento K-12, Higher Education, RHYA/HUD shelter communities as well as other local service providers and advocates.
- Allow each to share knowledge about their area of expertise
 - UHY and independent student definitions
 - Financial Aid
 - Campus and community resources
- Build an action plan for serving UHY that makes sense for your community.

Statewide Networks

Kennesaw State University Campus Awareness Resource Empowerment (CARE) Center

Supporting students through:

- Food Pantry
- Linens and Personal Care Supplies
- Case Management
- Donations
- Volunteers
- Events

Examples of current networks

- Admissions
- Financial Aid
- Counseling
- Campus Housing
- Culinary services
- KSU Bookstore
- Faculty and Staff
- Students

Campus Collaborations

- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)
- Fostering Success Michigan
- GA Department of Education (Homeless Liaisons)
- EMBARK
- Atlanta Community Food Bank
- Orange Duffel Bag Initiative
- NSORO Foundation
- Cobb Community Collaborative (Homeless Council)
- Must Ministries (alive Ministries)
- Ecologie Vintage
- Scallywags Pet Services, LLC

Community Engagement

Here is what they accomplish in 2015...

- 301 Food bags were distributed to KSU students
- 84 Students were assessed and/or provided some level of support
- 8,000 Pounds of food have been provided to KSU students
- 14 Students were housed or prevented from eviction
- \$13,506 Donated financial support used to help students obtain housing, meal plans, bus passes, etc.
- 1,575 Students participated in their 8th Annual Homelessness Awareness Week (HAW)

A Year in Review

Higher Education Resources

They provide assistance with issues related to students experiencing homelessness accessing higher education.

NAEHCY High Education Helpline

1-855-446-2673 (toll-free)

highered@naehcy.org

or text NAEHCY to 335577

Cyekeia Lee, Director of Higher Education Initiatives clee@naehcy.org

How can we get started?

Start by asking yourself what resources do we already have in place?

What resources can I access?

Who do I need to contact?

**Develop your own
Student-Centered Plan.**

Student-Centered Plans

Ensure that your students' most basic needs – including access to housing, food and clothing, personal care items, and bathing and laundry facilities – are met.

Strategies, could include:

- **Housing:** assist with securing housing for students, or dealing with issues such as where they may stay during extended breaks when campus housing closes. You may want to elicit privately donated funds to pay for apartment application fees or emergency housing in times of crisis, or may make referrals to local shelters or housing ministries.
- **Food Pantry:** Support the work of the campus food pantry. Many students experiencing homelessness visit the pantry to “test the waters” in terms of how they will be received. Once students receive assistance with no questions asked, they begin to trust pantry personnel and often open up about their other needs.
- **Bathing and Laundry Facilities:** Work to connect students without regular access to bathing and laundry facilities to related facilities on campus and, if needed, to ensure that the students have the necessary funds to pay for said services.

Meeting the student's Basic Needs

Many homeless students have experienced acute stress and trauma as a part of their homeless experience and may benefit from talking with someone about their past and present struggles.

Students through referrals may receive assistance in dealing with issues such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, relationship difficulties, eating disorders, grief, and suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

Personal and Group Counseling

If identified as a need in the student's action plan, connect students with academic and career services.

Students could receive a variety of services in both individual and group settings, including tutoring, time management and study skills workshops, and career advising.

Additionally offers support to students to help with issues such as performance or test anxiety, time management, the pressure to succeed, fear of failure, and low academic motivation.

Academic and Career Support

A student's first year in college oftentimes is viewed as the most critical for all students, but particularly for low-income and/or first-generation students.

These students are nearly four times more likely – 26% versus seven percent – to leave higher education after their first year than students who have neither of these risk factors

Because of this, make special efforts to connect with K-12 educators, including local homeless education liaisons, to smooth students' transition between K-12 and post-secondary education.

- Collaborate with local liaisons to ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth have received a determination of independent student status for purposes of federal financial aid. This facilitates the timely and smooth processing of the student's FAFSA.

Collaboration with K-12 Educators

Through private fundraising, assist students in paying for housing and meal plans, gas and grocery cards, apartment application fees, and first month's rent, according to each student's need.

Depending on funding availability, provide scholarships specifically for your students experiencing homelessness.

Financial Support

NCHE Resources

Increasing Access to Higher Education for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Information for Colleges and Universities

http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/higher_ed.pdf

Making Student Status Determinations for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Eligibility Tool for Financial Aid Administrators

http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/faa_det_tool.pdf

Supporting College Completion for Students Experiencing Homelessness

<http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/he-success.pdf>

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Contact Us

Questions?



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