

McKinney-Vento and Act 1 Eligibility Screener

Students who lack regular, fixed, and adequate nighttime residence are “McKinney-Vento eligible” because they are considered to be experiencing homelessness under federal law. They need to be recognized and provided with support from their school.

Students who have changed school entities more than one time in a single school year due to experiencing homelessness are also eligible for protections under Pennsylvania’s Act 1, which seeks to eliminate barriers to full participation and graduation for these students as well as students in foster care and in the juvenile justice system.

Please use these questions to determine if a student is eligible for these supports upon enrollment, after each move, and at the beginning of each school year. If so, refer the student to the McKinney-Vento liaison. If the student has changed school entities at least once during a school year due to experiencing homelessness, being in foster care, or involvement in the juvenile justice system, the student should be referred to the [Act 1 Point of Contact](#) (the person at the school entity or school building who supports students who have experienced “educational instability”).

Determining McKinney-Vento Eligibility

☐ Does the student have a consistent and stable place to stay at night?

Yes ☐ No ☐

☐ Is the student’s current housing permanent?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If either answer is “no,” refer the student to the McKinney-Vento liaison to be recognized as McKinney-Vento eligible. Note: A student who is temporarily living doubled up with others due to economic hardship does not have permanent housing.

☐ If temporary, is the housing:

☐ with family, friends, or others due to losing housing or for financial reasons,

☐ shelter or emergency housing,

☐ motel, hotel, or RV,

☐ in a campground, unsheltered, or living in a public space

- ☐ substandard, in a place that isn't ordinarily used to live in, or has been abandoned

If any of these apply, the student should be referred to the McKinney-Vento liaison.

If the housing is permanent, is it adequate?

Yes ☐ No ☐

For example:

- ☐ Does the student have basic necessities like a kitchen and bathroom?

Yes ☐ No ☐

- ☐ Is the housing free from Licensing and Inspections (L&I) violations, has heat for the winter, running water, no problem with pests?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If the answer to any of these questions is “no,” the student is McKinneyVento eligible because they lack *adequate* housing and should be referred to the McKinney-Vento liaison for services and supports. This law may apply even if a family holds a lease, deed or otherwise has a legal right to remain in a property.

Unaccompanied Youth Are Also McKinney-Vento Eligible

Is the student living away from or outside of the physical custody of their parent or guardian in a temporary living situation?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, the student is an “unaccompanied homeless youth” under the McKinney-Vento Act and needs to be recognized as both McKinneyVento eligible and unaccompanied. The liaison should work with the student directly to provide additional support.

Does the student have special education needs or are they suspected to have special education needs?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, the student should be screened to see if the student has an adult who is able or legally authorized to make education decisions on their behalf. If there is not a person in the student's life who can serve in the role, the Local

Education Agency (LEA) must appoint a permanent Surrogate Parent who has sufficient experience and expertise to make education decisions on the student's behalf within 30 days. Shelter staff, street outreach workers, and housing program workers can serve in this role temporarily until a permanent Surrogate Parent can be appointed.

Language Access

Does the student or caregiver require interpretation and translation services?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, indicate student's preferred language: _____

If Yes, indicate caregiver's preferred language: _____

If yes, refer the student to the point of contact at the school responsible for providing interpretation and/or translation.

Determining If a McKinney-Vento Eligible Student Is Also Act 1 Eligible

Has the student ever been recognized as Act 1 eligible by a prior school entity?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, the student is also eligible for Act 1. If no, the student should be screened for Act 1 eligibility.

Did the student ever need to change school entities during the school year?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, was the move caused by experiencing homelessness, being in foster care, or due to involvement in the juvenile justice system?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, the student should be referred to the school entity's Act 1 Point of Contact and provided with all protections and supports under the Act.

If yes, is the student currently in the 9th-12th grade or should be in the 9th-12th grade?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, the student needs to be provided with a **Graduation Plan** to enable the student to graduate on time from their current school, a prior school, or through the Keystone diploma process as a last resort.

See these resources to learn more about students' rights under the federal [McKinneyVento Act](#) and Pennsylvania's [Act 1](#).