

Homeless Definition

Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act defines homelessness as living in the following places due to a lack of a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

- In an emergency or transitional shelter
- In a motel, hotel, or campground due to lack of an adequate alternative
- In a car, park, public place, bus or train station, or abandoned building
- Doubled up with relatives or friends due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- In the above conditions and is a migratory child or youth

The table below includes examples of residences and the appropriate category for classification. Since type of residence is the basis for identifying homelessness, the type of residence should be reported at the time of identification of homelessness. If unsure of the appropriate category, contact your local homeless education liaison or Project HOPE-Virginia.

Initial Primary Nighttime Residence	Category
Children and youth living in abandoned buildings, campgrounds and vehicles, space not meant for habitation, trailers or FEMA trailers, cars, bus and train stations, and abandoned in the hospital. Substandard or inadequate housing does not easily fit into any category as it is not governed by a specific definition and is judged on a case-by-case basis. An inadequate dwelling may shelter but it is not adequate housing.	Unsheltered
Children and youth living in shelters and transitional housing programs (homeless and domestic violence programs).	Shelter
Children and youth (including runaway youth or unaccompanied youth) who live with relatives or friends due to being homeless.	Doubled-Up
Children and youth living in hotels/motels due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations.	Hotel/Motel

This definition of homelessness applies to children and youth with:

- Uncertain housing
- A temporary address
- No permanent physical address

Children and youth living in these settings meet criteria for the McKinney-Vento definition of homelessness and have special educational rights.

Where can a child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate residence attend school?

- The school the child or youth attended before becoming homeless or was last enrolled (school of origin)
- The school in the attendance area where the child or youth is currently living

How can delays be avoided when enrolling a student experiencing homelessness in school?

- *Enroll the student immediately*
- Contact the previous school and ask that the records be sent electronically or shared over the phone
- Contact the principal, school counselor, or local homeless education liaison with any concerns
- Contact the local homeless education liaison to support unaccompanied youth when enrolling in school