



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: August 27, 2025
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: District Registrars, District Homeless Liaisons, Principals, School Nurses, All District Staff with Enrollment Responsibilities
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Enrollment of Students Displaced (Homeless) by Natural Disasters

The following information is being provided to facilitate a smooth enrollment process for students displaced by natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, etc.), enabling those students to resume their education as efficiently as possible. Natural disasters throughout the nation often lead to an increase in the number of displaced families seeking shelter in New Jersey. Pursuant to the [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#), students who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless and are eligible for services. [Section 725](#) of the McKinney-Vento Act further defines the criteria for students experiencing homelessness.

Enrollment/School Records

The documents typically needed for school enrollment are waived for students experiencing homelessness. Consequently, local educational agencies (LEAs) cannot delay the enrollment of displaced students and must enroll these students immediately, even if they do not have any school records. Children unable to produce enrollment records, such as previous academic records, records of immunization and other required health records, residency affidavits, or other documentation, should still be immediately enrolled (McKinney-Vento Act §721(2); §722(g)(3)(C)).

Enrollment, as defined in the Act, means attending classes and participating fully in school activities. Though such documents may be intended to ensure that only eligible students can enroll in an LEA, the use of such forms as a requirement for enrollment, or continued enrollment, constitutes an educational barrier for students who do not reside in permanent living situations. The right to enroll immediately in school, even without documents normally required for enrollment, is one of the core protections of MKV ([42 U.S.C. §11432\(g\)\(3\)\(C\)](#)). Additionally, proof of guardianship is not necessary to immediately enroll an unaccompanied child or youth. For more information regarding students' enrollment/school records, see [N.J.A.C. 6A:17-1.1](#).

Health Services

When a student transfers to another school, the sending school district shall ensure documentation is forwarded to the receiving school district pursuant to [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-2.4\(d\)](#). If a student does not have a medical home, as defined in [N.J.A.C. 6A:16-1.3](#), the LEA shall provide the entry medical examination at the school physician's office or other comparably equipped facility, pursuant to [N.J.S.A. 18A:40-4](#).

Additionally, pursuant to [N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.6](#), all immunization records submitted by a parent or guardian in a language other than English are required to be accompanied by a translation

sufficient to determine compliance with the immunization requirements. For additional information, please refer to the May 31, 2023 [Translation of Student Immunization Records broadcast](#).

Tuition and Transportation

Pursuant to [N.J.A.C. 17-2.8\(c\)2](#), when a student's district of origin/residence is outside of New Jersey, the State of New Jersey assumes fiscal responsibility for the student and pays the LEA in which the child is currently enrolled. For information regarding the process for tuition reimbursement for state-responsible students experiencing homelessness, please see the [Tuition Reimbursement for State-Responsible Homeless Children and Youth Guidance](#).

District Homeless Liaisons

District homeless liaisons are a crucial component of the enrollment process for displaced children and youth. Liaisons should work in collaboration with district enrollment personnel, school counselors, parents, and other student support services personnel to ensure all children are enrolled, receiving health services, and being provided educational continuity.

If you have questions or need clarification, please visit the NJDOE's McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth [webpage](#) or email us at McKinney.Vento@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group