

RIGHTS OF HOMELESS STUDENTS

The school district shall provide an educational environment that treats all students with dignity and respect. Every homeless student shall have equal access to the same free and appropriate educational opportunities as students who are not homeless. This commitment to the educational rights of homeless children, youth, and youth not living with a parent or guardian, applies to all services, programs, and activities provided or made available.

A student is considered **"homeless"** if he or she is presently living:

- in a shelter * sharing housing with relatives or others due to lack of housing
- in a motel/hotel, camping ground, or similar situation due to lack of alternative, adequate housing
- at a train or bus station, park, or in a car * in an abandoned building
- temporarily housed while awaiting DCFS foster care placement

All Homeless Students Have Rights To:

- **Immediate school enrollment.** A school must immediately enroll students even if they lack health, immunization or school records, proof of guardianship, or proof of residency.
- **Enroll in:**
 - *the school he/she attended when permanently housed (school of origin)
 - *the school in which he/she was last enrolled (school of origin)
 - *any school that non-homeless students living in the same attendance area in which the homeless child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.
- **Remain** enrolled in his/her selected school for as long as he/she remains homeless or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.
- **Priority** in certain preschool programs.
- **Participate** in a tutorial-instructional support program, school-related activities, and/or receive other support services.
- **Obtain** information regarding how to get fee waivers, free uniforms, and low-cost or free medical referrals.
- **Transportation services:** A homeless student attending his/her school of origin has a right to transportation to go to and from the school of origin as long as (s)he is homeless or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.

Dispute Resolution: If you disagree with school officials about enrollment, transportation or fair treatment of a homeless child or youth, you may file a complaint with the school district. The school district must respond and attempt to resolve it quickly. The school district must refer you to free and low cost legal services to help you, if you wish. During the dispute, the student must be immediately enrolled in the school and provided transportation until the matter is resolved. Every Illinois Public School has a Homeless Education Program Liaison who will assist you in making enrollment and placement decisions, providing notice of any appeal process, and filling out dispute forms.

If you have questions about enrollment in school, or want more information about the rights of homeless students in Illinois Public Schools, call the appropriate Homeless Education Liaison from the listing below or call the Illinois State Board of Education at (1-800) 215-6379.

Area 3 Homeless Liaison Project Project Coordination/Lead Liaison - Regional Office of Education #26 - Hancock/McDonough – 309/837-4821

ROE 1	217/277-2080	Regional Office of Education #1 - Adams Pike
ROE 22	309/518-8029	Regional Office of Education #22-Fulton/Schuyler
ROE 26	309/837-4821	Regional Office of Education #26 - Hancock/McDonough
ROE 27	309/734-6822	Regional Office of Education #27- Henderson/Mercer/Warren
ROE 33	309/345-3828	Regional Office of Education #33-Knox
ROE 38	217/732-8388	Regional Office of Education #38-Logan/Mason/Menard
ROE 46	217/323-5559	Regional Office of Education #46-Brown/Cass/Morgan/Scott
ROE 48	309/672-6086	Regional Office of Education #48-Peoria
ROE 51	217/535-3281	Regional Office of Education #51-Sangamon
ROE 53	309/477-2290	Regional Office of Education #53-Tazewell

**Illinois McKinney-Vento Homeless Programs – Curriculum & Instruction Division
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First St. C-215, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
217-557-7323 Phone 217-782-7937 Fax
800-215-6379 Homeless Hotline**