



Newburyport Public School Homeless Services

Newburyport Public Schools Homeless Liaison

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Transportation for Homeless

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McKinney- Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

The McKinney-Vento Assistance Act ensures education rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Homeless children and youths: individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. It includes:

1. 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; or are abandoned in hospitals.
2. 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.
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended) who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

In addition, according to McKinney-Vento, a fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change. A regular residence is one which is used on a regular (i.e., nightly) basis. An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments. Therefore, children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate residence will be considered homeless.

Homeless students have the right to:

Enroll and enrollment: attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

School of origin: the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool. When a child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

Unaccompanied youth: a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Enrollment: To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Disputes: If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute. Final decisions in dispute resolution reside with the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education.

Transportation: Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student or will divide the costs equally.

LEGAL REFS: *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as Amended by Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), December 2015*

Resources: Department of Transitional Assistance, Boston (617) 348-8400, Mass. Coalition for the Homeless (781) 595-7570, Department of Housing and Community Development (617) 573-1100, Mass Hotline: Dial 2-1-1

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Our Neighbor's Table

194 Main Street, Amesbury

Telephone 978-388-1907

<https://www.ourneighborstable.org/>

Pettengill House

13 Lafayette Road, Salisbury

Telephone: 978-463-8801

www.pettengillhouse.org/home.html

Salvation Army – Newburyport

40 Water Street, Newburyport

Telephone: 978-465-0883

www.SalvationArmyMA.org/Newburyport

Newburyport Youth Services

Newburyport

Telephone: 978-465-4434

<https://newburyportyouthservices.com/>

Massachusetts 211 Services

When calling Mass 211 for a need related to housing, callers can expect information and referrals to a comprehensive list of available resources. Call-takers cover a wide variety of housing issues including:

1. **Financial Hardship**

For callers lacking the resources to pay rent, mortgage, rental deposits, moving costs and/or certain utilities, Mass 211 will discuss state and local resources, as well as the necessary follow-up steps.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/emergency-housing-payment-assistance-during-covid-19>

2. **Facing Eviction/At Risk for Homelessness**

For callers facing eviction and housing instability, Mass 211 will cover resources available for multiple issues, including:

- a. Landlord/Tenant Mediation, Legal Assistance
- b. Conducting a Housing Search
- c. Applying for Subsidized Housing

<https://www.mass.gov/rental-assistance-programs>

- d. Financial/Credit Counseling

<https://www.mass.gov/guides/facing-eviction-we-can-help>

3. **Homeless/In Need of Shelter**

For callers who are homeless and seeking shelter, Mass 211 will provide information and referrals for shelter or other temporary housing options depending on the caller's particular situation (individual, family, victims of domestic violence, accommodations for disabilities)

<https://www.mass.gov/emergency-housing-assistance-programs>

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/continuum-of-care-programs-coc>

4. **Health and Safety Concerns**

For callers concerned about the condition of their unit, Mass 211 will provide referrals for:

- a. Requesting a health and safety inspection
- b. Landlord/Tenant Mediation
- c. Home Maintenance and Repairs

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cissfsn/sfsnidx.htm>

5. **Housing Discrimination/Fair Housing Matters**

For callers concerned about potential discrimination, Mass 211 can assist with resources and follow-up steps to file a complaint, request a reasonable accommodation, maintain a support animal, etc.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/overview-of-housing-discrimination>