



Lake County Continuum of Care Educational Policy

Due to the myriad obstacles surrounding homeless families with school-age children and to best serve youth and families experiencing homelessness in our community, the CoC has established the following policies complying with Federal requirements:

1. The CoC will, and encourage all agencies serving homeless children and youth to, consider the educational needs of children when placing families in interim housing. When families are placed in emergency sheltering, transitional housing, and permanent housing, the CoC and family-serving agencies will, to the maximum extent practicable, place families with children as close as possible to their school of origin so as not to disrupt such children's education, respecting the child's individual needs or history.
2. The CoC requires all family and youth homeless assistance providers receiving Emergency Solutions Grant or Continuum of Care funds and encourages all family and youth homeless assistance providers to establish an internal policy (form policy attached) that supports families and youth experiencing homelessness to enroll in school and access appropriate services within the community.
3. Such policies must be consistent with and not restrict the exercise of rights provided by subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009 and other laws relating to the provision of educational and related services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
4. Such policies must state that the agency will designate a staff person to be responsible for ensuring that children being served in the program are enrolled in school and connected to appropriate services in the community, including early childhood programs such as Head Start, part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and programs authorized under subtitle B of title VII of the HEARTH Act.
5. The CoC will communicate and coordinate regularly with the Homeless Education Liaison in all local school districts [include details as appropriate] to ensure that families and youth experiencing homelessness are being served in the best possible way. The CoC and the Homeless Education Liaison will share data and information.
6. The CoC will ensure local schools to consider the housing situation of children and youth who are homeless and to make accommodations, as appropriate, to assist those children and youth to meet their educational needs, and if they do not will advocate for policy and practice changes.
7. The CoC encourages mainstream services agencies, including public transportation agencies, to provide services and resources to homeless children and youth that will assist them in meeting their educational needs.



Lake County Continuum of Care Sample Policy

Compliant with CoC Program Interim Rule 24 CFR 578.23(c)(4)(iii) and (iv, {agency name} has committed to take the educational needs of children into account when placing families in housing and, to the maximum extent practicable, place families with children as close as possible to their school of origin so as not to disrupt such children's education.

As a result, our agency has implemented the following policies and practices:

- In order to address the fact that many homeless youth and families do not know their legal rights, the agency will post notice of students' rights under the McKinney-Vento Act at each program site serving homeless youth and families in no higher than a fifth-grade reading level, in the frequently encountered languages of limited English proficient groups eligible to be served by the Program, and in a fashion readily accessible to persons with disabilities (e.g., Braille, audio, large type, assistive listening devices, and sign language interpreters);
- The agency has designated a staff person(s) responsible for ensuring that children are enrolled in school and connected to the appropriate services within the community, including early childhood education programs such as Head Start, Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and McKinney-Vento education services. {add details about staff person as relevant} This person(s) will stay informed about resources and information relevant to children enrolled in school. This person will also coordinate with the CoC and other youth-serving resources in the community.
- The agency will ensure that all children 5 years and over are enrolled in school and connected to appropriate services within the community. The agency will not require children and unaccompanied youth to enroll in a new school as a condition of receiving services {Include details for the local school district.}
- The agency will be sure to allow parents or the youth (if unaccompanied) to make decisions about school placement. The agency will not require children and unaccompanied youth to attend after-school or educational programs that would replace/interfere with regular day school or prohibit them from staying enrolled in their original school.
- During the intake process:
 - Housing and service providers will inform families and youth about their educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Act upon intake and assist families and students in exercising those rights.
 - The staff person conducting intake will ascertain if school-aged children are enrolled in school. If not, the family/youth will be guided through the enrollment

process. When enrolling, the family/youth should note that they are currently/recently homeless.

- Service providers are encouraged to aid parents by helping them obtain school records, health records, and other documentation. Although the McKinney-Vento Act prevents schools from requiring such documents in enrolling students, this will help facilitate a smoother transition for students enrolling in education programs.
- The staff person conducting intake will ascertain if the school district/school have been informed that enrolled children are currently or recently homeless. If not, the staff person will inform the school liaison of the youth's homeless status. [Include details about how to do that.]
- Children in school will be assisted to access the resources available to them through the McKinney-Vento program, including, as available and appropriate, free breakfast and lunch, tutoring, backpacks, uniforms, after-school and summer programs, and bus passes.
- If children in school encounter any issues obtaining the resources or support, they need, the program staff, in partnership with the children's parents, will contact the school staff or school liaison as soon as possible for assistance to resolve the problem.
- Program staff will support children in school, as appropriate and desired by the children's parents, by:
 - Tracking the enrollment and attendance of students in their care,
 - Collaborating with the school students attend and the school district liaison,
 - Reporting children who are late to school to parents and case managers,
 - Connecting children and youths with additional resources, such as after-school and summer-term programs or medical providers, if appropriate and available, and
 - Gathering students' report cards and grading information, truancy and suspension notices, and other communications with school staff to further the ability of an agency to keep track of its clients' academic progress and quickly identify potential concerns.
- For young children, program staff will identify Head Start, Even Start, and other available programs, and assist parents in accessing those services, as appropriate and available.
- Program staff will remind parents to inform the school when the family moves to permanent housing to assist the school district in maintaining accurate information about who is eligible for McKinney-Vento-related services, and with the parent's permission will email the homeless education liaison when the family moves out of the program.
- Records of the agencies' activities complying with this policy should kept and reviewed to ensure compliance.