



HOMELESS STUDENTS 5.15

I. Homeless children who live within the District shall be admitted to school in the District and shall have access to a free public education. The District shall ensure that homeless children and youth are provided with equal access to free, appropriate educational programs, have the opportunity to meet the same challenging State of Florida academic standards, are not stigmatized nor segregated on the basis of their status as homeless.

II. The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless students as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

- a. One who has a primary nighttime residence that is
 - i. An emergency or transitional shelter that is designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
 - ii. Living in motels, hotels, FEMA Trailers, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of adequate accommodations;
 - iii. A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings or normally used for human residence;
- b. Sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; doubled-up;
- c. Abandoned in hospitals;
- d. Awaiting foster care placement;
- e. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard

housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;

f. Migratory children may qualify as homeless for the purpose of this definition if the children are living in any of the circumstances described above.

g. Are an unaccompanied youth (youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian).

III. The District shall, according to the student's best interest, and by parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth request, continue the homeless student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, or enroll the student in a District school in the attendance zone in which the homeless student is actually living on the same basis as other district students. In determining the best interest of the student, the District shall:

a. To the extent feasible, keep a homeless student in the school of origin, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the student's parent or guardian.

b. In the case of an unaccompanied student, ensure that the District Homeless Education Liaison helps in placement or enrollment decisions, considers the views of the student and provides notice of the right to appeal placement and enrollment decisions.

c. The school of origin means the school that the student attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the student was last enrolled.

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The choice regarding placement shall be made regardless of whether the student lives with the homeless parents or guardian or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.

IV. Schools must immediately enroll students in homeless situations, even if they

do not have required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, proof of guardianship (for unaccompanied youth), or other documents. The term "enroll" is defined as attending classes and participating fully in school activities. Enrolling schools must obtain school records from the previous school, and students must be enrolled in school while records are

obtained. The District Homeless Liaison shall assist homeless children to provide documentation to meet state and local requirements for entry into school.

V. If a dispute arises over school selection, enrollment, or any issue covered in this policy:

a. the student shall be immediately admitted to the school of origin or assigned zone school as requested by the parent or guardian, pending resolution of the dispute;

b. The parent or guardian of the student shall be provided with a written explanation of the District's decision regarding school selection, including the rights of the parent, guardian or student to appeal the decision through the District's enrollment dispute procedure and the Florida Department of Education's appeal process;

c. The student, parent or guardian shall be referred to the District Homeless Education Liaison, who shall ensure the resolution process is carried out as expeditiously as possible after receiving notice of the dispute; and

d. In the case of an unaccompanied student, the District Homeless Education Liaison shall ensure that the student is immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of dispute.

VI. The District shall ensure at the request of the parent or guardian, or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, The District Homeless Education Liaison, that transportation will be provided for a homeless student to the school or origin, to the extent feasible, as follows:

a. If the homeless student continues to live in the school district in which the

school of origin is located, transportation will be provided.

b. If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin.

c. If the districts cannot agree upon such method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

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VII. Homeless students shall be provided services and educational programs comparable services to those offered to other students, including:

- a. Transportation services
- b. Meals through school nutrition programs
- c. Educational services for which the child meets the eligibility criteria such as Exceptional Student Education
- d. Title I
- e. Head Start
- f. Limited English Proficiency programs
- g. Preschool programs

VIII. The District shall ensure that there is a District Homeless Education Liaison and his/her duties are communicated to district and school personnel and appropriate agencies and providers.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.42, 1001.43, and 1003.01(12) F.S.; 1003.21 F.S

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act 42 U.S.C.

§§11431 – 11436.

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education

Act, 20 U.S.C. §§6311 – 6315.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C.

§§1400 et seq.

April 6, 2002 Policy of the Child Nutrition Division of the

U.S. Department of Agriculture.

June 5, 1992 Policy of the Administration for Children and

Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services

HISTORY: ADOPTED: November 10, 2008

REVISION DATE(S): n/a

FORMERLY: NEW

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT 5.53

I. Any employee who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families by calling the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1800-962-2873.

II. Definitions

A. Abandoned means a situation in which the parent or legal custodian of a child or, in the absence of a parent or legal custodian, the caregiver responsible for the child's welfare, while being able, makes no provision for the child's support and makes no effort to communicate with the child, which situation is sufficient to evince a willful rejection of parental obligations.

B. Abuse means any willful act or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm that causes or is likely to cause the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Abuse of a child includes acts or omissions. Corporal discipline of a child by parent or legal custodian for disciplinary purposes does not in itself constitute abuse when it does not result in harm to the child.

C. Neglect means that the parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare fails to supply the child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, or health care, although financially able to do so or although offered financial or other means to do so. Neglect occurs when a child is deprived of, or is

allowed to be deprived of, necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment or a child is permitted to live in an environment when such deprivation or environment causes the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired or to be in danger of being significantly impaired.

III. Employees who suspect abuse or neglect are encouraged to first notify the child's principal of the suspicion and that the report will be made. This reporting to the principal, however, does not obviate the employee's responsibility to immediately report the suspected abuse or neglect under Section 39.201, F.S. Other than notifying the principal, the employee should keep the report confidential.

IV. Any employee reporting suspected abuse or neglect in good faith shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action pursuant to Section 39.203, F.S.

V. Notification of Responsibility

A notice providing the following information shall be posted in a prominent place in

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each school:

A. All employees of the District have the responsibility to report all actual and suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment or neglect; immunity from liability if they report such cases in good faith; and the responsibility to comply with child protective investigations, as allowable by statute, and all other provisions of law related to child abuse, abandonment or neglect.

B. Statewide toll-free telephone number for the central abuse hotline.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 120.54, 1001.41, 1001.42, F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: 39.0015, 39.01, 39.201, 39.202, 39.203, 39.205, 39.206,
1001.43, 1006.061, F.S.

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7/5/05

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