

# BEST PRACTICES IN MCKINNEY-VENTO

## QUICK GUIDE FOR DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY\*

**Does the living situation of the child or youth fit into one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law?**

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason.
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park, or camping ground due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Living in an emergency or transitional shelter.
- Abandoned in a hospital.
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Living in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting.
- Migratory children in the above living situations.

**If the living situation of the child or youth does not fit one of the specific examples of homelessness listed in the law, is the child or youth living in another type of situation that is not fixed, regular and adequate? Lacking any one of these conditions would make a child eligible.**

Sample Questions:

- Fixed (“A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent and not subject to change.”)
  - Is this a permanent or temporary arrangement?
  - Are you looking for another place to live?
  - Why are you living in your current situation?
  - Where would you go if you couldn’t stay where you are?
  - Where were you living before?
  - Could you be asked to leave at any time?
- Regular (“A regular residence is used on a regular basis.”)
  - Do you stay in the same place every night?
  - How long have you been staying in your current situation?
  - How long do you plan to stay?
  - How long did you live in your last place?
- Adequate (“An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.”)
  - How many people are in the living situation?
  - Where are you sleeping?
  - What are the conditions of the living situation?
  - Is there adequate heat, electricity and water?

\*Adapted from the National Center for Homeless Education’s Best Practice Issue Brief: “Determining Eligibility for Rights and Services under the McKinney-Vento Act” by Matthew Hanafee Area 1 Lead Liaison and Patricia Nix-Hodes, Law Project Chicago Coalition for the Homeless.