What Families Need to Know

Your Child Can Enroll in School Even if you have:

* Uncertain Housing
* A Temporary Address
* No Permanent Physical Address

EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH LACKING FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE HOUSING

Families should know:

* You do not need a permanent address to enroll your child in school.
* Your child cannot be denied school enrollment when school records or other enrollment documentation are not immediately available.
* Your child may be able to remain in the same school (school of origin) even if you move.
* When in your child’s best interest, he or she has the right to request transportation assistance
* .Schools must provide you with a written explanation if a placement dispute occurs, and you may appeal the school’s decision.
* Your child automatically qualifies to participate in free breakfast and lunch programs.
* Your child has the right to participate in extracurricular activities and all federal, state, or local programs for which he/she is eligible.
* Youth not accompanied by a parent or guardian and lacking fixed, regular, and adequate housing have these same rights.

AT SCHOOL, ASK ABOUT THESE SERVICES

* Basic school supplies
* Before and after school programs
* Contact information for community agencies and helpful resources
* Credit recovery options
* Gifted or talented programs
* Homeless assistance programs
* Mentoring programs
* Preschool programs
* Programs to help children learn English
* Special education programs for students with disabilities, especially if the student has previously received special education services
* Summer school programs
* Tutoring programs

Schools give children and youth experiencing homelessness hope and a chance for a better future.

If you have questions, contact the school division’s local homeless education liaison or Project HOPE-Virginia.

TIPS FOR FAMILIES WHO MOVE OFTEN

* Keep a copy of birth certificates and school records accessible.
* Safeguard all health and immunization records.
* Have a reliable person keep a second copy of the child’s birth certificate, school records, and health information.
* Enroll children in school as soon as possible

WHAT YOU CAN DO BEFORE MOVING

* Tell your child’s teacher and principal that your child is moving and give them the new address.
* Let school officials know if you want your child to stay in his/her school of origin while you are getting the family stabilized.
* Ask for a copy of your child’s school records, including immunizations.

AGENCY INFORMATION LIST

The following contacts may be useful resources to families and children experiencing homelessness.

* [Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/abuse/index2.cgi),  [800-552-7096](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/abuse/index2.cgi%2C%20800-552-7096)
* [Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline](http://www.childhelp.org), 800-422-4453
* [Cover Virginia - Medicaid & FAMIS](http://www.coverva.org), 855-242-8282
* [Free Tax Assistance and Earned Income Tax Credit](http://www.irs.gov/eitc), 800-829-1040
* [Hill Burton Free and Reduced-Cost Hospital Care](http://www.hrsa.gov/gethealthcare/affordable/hillburton), 800-638-0742
* [National Center for Homeless Education](http://www.serve.org/nche), 800-308-2145
* [National Human Trafficking Resource Center](http://traffickingresourcecenter.org), 888-373-7888
* [National Runaway Safeline](http://www.1800runaway.org), 800-786-2929
* [SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/foodstamp.cgi), 800-552-3431
* [Social Security Administration Hotline](http://www.ssa.gov), 800-772-1213
* [Virginia Housing Development Authority](http://www.vhda.com), 877-843-2123
* [Virginia Legal Aid](http://vlas.org/), 866-534-5243
* [Virginia School Immunization Requirements](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements), 800-568-1929
* [VA Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance](http://www.vsdvalliance.org), 804-377-0335

The federal McKinney-Vento Act guarantees school enrollment for anyone who, due to a lack of permanent housing, lives in inadequate or temporary settings, such as:

* Emergency shelters or transitional housing
* Motels, hotels, or campgrounds due to lack of an adequate alternative
* Cars, parks, public places, bus or train stations, or abandoned buildings
* Doubled up with relatives or friends due to loss of housing or economic hardship

Virginia Department of Education

The College of William and Mary – SOE

P.O. Box 8795 Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

Office: (757) 221-4002

Toll Free in Virginia (877) 455-3412 homlss@wm.edu | [Project HOPE – Virginia Website](http://www.wm.edu/hope)

[Find your local Homeless Education Liaison](https://education.wm.edu/centers/hope/liaison-listing/a-b/index.php)

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