

# **Kentucky Homeless Education Questions and Answers**



**Compiled From the Most Frequent Asked Questions Received  
by  
Kentucky Department of Education**

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*Answers provided below are based upon federal law requirements. For additional information, please refer to USDE Homeless Education Guidance, July 2004.*

**Q1A What is the definition of homeless students?**

Homeless students/people are those who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes children and youth, ages three through 21 who are:

Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship  
Living in motels, hotels, dilapidated trailers or camping ground due to lack of alternative adequate housing  
Living in emergency or transitional housing  
Abandoned in hospitals  
Awaiting foster care  
Having a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations  
Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations  
Migratory students who live in housing described above

“Unaccompanied Homeless Youth” means a homeless youth who is under the age of 18 and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

**Q2A How is school selection made?**

LEAs must to the extent feasible, keep students in homeless situations in their school of origin unless it is against the parent or guardian’s wishes. Some of the factors to consider in determining whether it is in the student’s best interest to keep the student in the student’s school of origin are:

- i) The student's age;
- (ii) The student's academic needs;
- (iii) The student's emotional needs;
- (iv); The student's experiences at the school of origin;
- (v) Continuity of instruction;
- (vi) Any other special needs of the family;
- (vii) Length of stay in the shelter;
- (viii) The school that the student's siblings attend;
- (ix) The likely location of the family's future permanent housing;

(x) Time remaining in the school year;

(xi) Distance of commute and the impact it may have on the student's education and other student-centered, transportation-related factors; and

(xii) The safety of the child.

Under the new federal law, whenever a dispute arise about school selection or enrollment, the student must be immediately admitted to the school of choice while the dispute is being resolved.

**Q3A What is the procedure for enrolling a homeless child?**

A school selected must immediately enroll the students who are homeless, even if they do not have required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documents. The term “enroll” includes attending classes and participating fully in school.

Enrolling schools must immediately contact the previous schools to obtain records. Students must be enrolled while records are being obtained.

If the student does not have required medical records such as immunizations, the liaison must immediately assist in obtaining them. The student must be enrolled in the interim.