



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Immunizations for Homeless Students Education of Homeless Children and Youth Arizona Guidance

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Public Law 107-110, Title X, Part C, Sub-Title B, Section 722(g)(3)(C)(i) and 722(g)(3)(C)(iii) reads:

“Children and youth have the right to enroll in school immediately, even if they do not have required documents, such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, or other documents.” (emphasis added)

“If a student does not have immunizations, or immunization or medical records, the liaison must immediately assist in obtaining them, and the student must be enrolled in school in the interim.” (emphasis added)

The McKinney-Vento Act requires immediate enrollment, even if students are unable to produce immunization or other medical records, recognizing that families and youth who are homeless are frequently unable to obtain and keep copies of records. The vast majority of homeless students have been enrolled in school before and have had required immunizations. These records should be a part of their school records. Since the enrolling school is required to contact the previous school for records, the information should be available quickly. The enrolling school and the McKinney-Vento liaison should work together to get immunization records as soon as possible. If a student has not had immunizations, arrangements should be made with the appropriate medical professional for initial doses to be administered as soon as possible, unless the student has a philosophical, religious, or medical exemption. The McKinney-Vento statute places no deadline or period of time to get the immunization record in place.

According to M. Jocelyn Elders, MD, former U.S. Surgeon General, “from a healthcare perspective, there is no reason for these children to be denied access to school. The healthcare schools provide is a critical resource for the overall good health of students and families, particularly those experiencing extreme poverty and homelessness. Not only does attending school allow children to work toward their educational goals, it also gives them access to school nurses, who are the backbone of healthcare services for young people in our country.” To read the full memo visit: http://www.naehcy.org/dl/elders_memo.pdf



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Revised 11/13/2014